

County for State Plowing Contest

Aycock chosen



State plowing contest winners who are now eligible to compete at the national level are from left, Frank Burkhart, Lancaster, large plow; Neil Leffler, Gratz, contour; and Robert Miller, Millersburg, small plow.



Contest judge Margaret Kocevar measures a furrow.

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — M. Kenneth Aycock, Jr., of Greenbelt (Prince Georges County) has been named interim agronomy department chairperson in the College of Agriculture at the University of Maryland. Dr. Aycock succeeds James R. Miller, who retired on June 30 after 27 years of service to the state's agricultural community.

A faculty member at the College Park campus since 1966, Aycock is well-known among the nation's professional tobacco research workers. More than two-thirds of Maryland's tobacco crop is grown from varieties which Aycock helped to develop in cooperation with the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station.

In addition to development of new varieties, Aycock has been involved in cooperative research on disease resistance, fertilization response and air pollution effects on Maryland tobacco.

In 1970 the University of Maryland's College of Agriculture alumni chapter honored him with its "Excellence in Research" award. The Northeastern branch of the American Society of Agronomy presented him with its annual research award in 1982.

A native of Warrenton, N.C., Aycock holds B.S. and M.S. degrees from North Carolina State University and a Ph.D. degree in plant breeding from Iowa State University.

After receiving his baccalaureate degree, Aycock spent a year (1959-60) as the first vocational agriculture teacher in Bear Grass high school at Williamston, N.C. He is married and the father of two children.

to the very latest in conservation tillage machines shown by the numerous local equipment dealers who participated.

Working perhaps the hardest under the broiling sun, in addition to those sweating it out from the tractor seat, were the judges who evaluated the edges, depth, uniformity and finishing touches of the freshly turned plots.

Among them was Margaret Kocevar, daughter of contestant Frank Kocevar, and a plowing expert in her own right. Armed with yardstick, clipboard and broad brimmed hat to fend off sunburn, she spent several hours fieldside measuring and marking down points on the detailed score sheets.

"The beginning and the end furrows are crucial parts," she explained. "And the ends must be uniform."

By national rules contestants are allowed 20 of their total 90 minutes to make the "opening split," the first through slice which must be straight and shallow but clean cut through the trash cover.

"Furrows must have clean walls and be uniform between rounds," she added. "You shouldn't be able to determine the passes of the plow or where a three, four, five or whatever sized plow was used."

Contestants can't relax even at the very end, since the finish furrow is a sort of final plowman signature to the job.

"The finish furrow separates the men from the boys," attested judge Kocevar. "It should be consistent with the plowed depth of the other furrow. Shallow, but no more shallow than other passes to prevent soil erosion or allow a deep furrow where water could collect."

While she claims to never have

really plowed in competition, Margaret has put in plenty of hours at the job on the family's home farm at Harrisburg R1. After accompanying her father to contests since 1960 and watching as

a spectator for a number of years, she attended a plowing judging school at Penn State and became a certified judge. Two years ago she served as one of the officials at the National Plowing Contest hosted in York County.

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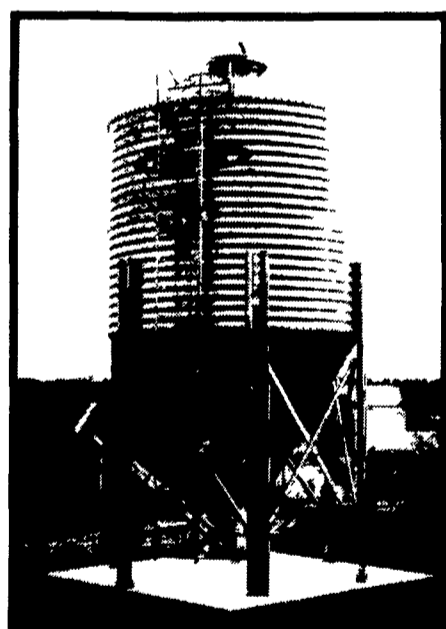
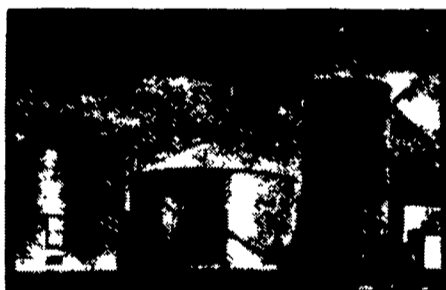
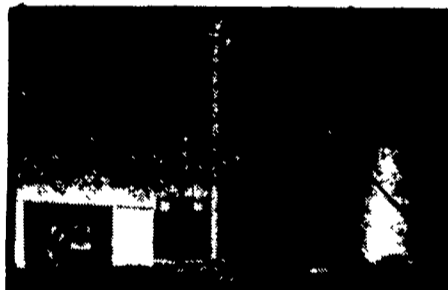


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