

## Maryland Farmers Involved In Tractor Pull

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WESTMINSTER, Md. —  
Sometimes farmers just have to have fun!

But these farmers did, last month, with wheel spinning, gear grinding, smoke belching fun at the Heart of Maryland Tractor Pull held at the Carroll County Agricultural Center in Westminster, Md.

Proceeds from the tractor pull were to benefit the Agricultural Center, and hundreds of volunteers from various organizations gave of their time and energy to help the event go off as planned.

"This is our first pull of the year," said Heart of Maryland organizer, Helen Erb. "Heart of Maryland averages about 16 of these pulls a year all over the state of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia. Today's turnout looks good!"

An estimated crowd of 5,000 came out on the sunny afternoon to cheer on the 120 entries in the categories of farm stock, modified, superstock, four-wheel drive and two-wheel drive.

Trophies were provided for the first, second, third and fourth place winners in the farm stock divisions but pullers earning points in the modified and superstock divisions had cash prizes as an added incentive.

"This is a sanctioned pull and there's big money involved," said Bill Clem, a representative from the National Tractor Pullers Association. "A promoter like the Carroll County Agricultural Center has to put \$10,000 up front to the Heart of Maryland Tractor Pullers (the state association representing the National) to bring these pullers in here. If the pullers come to compete, the money is guaranteed."

Local machinery dealers and businesses lent their support as did

volunteer groups such as the Grange, The Junior Troopers, the Young Farmers and the Farm Bureau. They operated all the concession booths and monitored the grounds with all profits going to the Agricultural Center.

"The thing I like about this," said Clem, who has been involved since 1974, "is that it is a family thing. You'll get dad building one and then the whole family joins in. These are all home-built by the drivers and the families. The wives and the kids and everyone gets involved and works along with it. It is a chance for the farmers to have fun, and that is what they are doing today!"

"I took two seconds (placements), and I was tickled to death," said puller Bob Colson, Frizzelburg, Md. Colson was also one of the organizers of this annual event.

"Randy Devaugh beat me in the heavy class. I went down to Anne Arundel County and pulled Saturday," Colson explained, "and I beat him by about sixty feet. He asked me if I could help him set up his injection pump a little and so I helped him out. then, he came back and beat me! Hey, that's an unselfish puller, isn't it?"

The Heart of Maryland Tractor Pull, like all sanctioned pulls, was monitored by the National Association. A new digital board supplied by Westminster Chevrolet not only kept the crowds apprised of the longest distance pulled and the puller in the lead, but was also equipped with a laser beam that measured each pull.

As the spectators watched the classes progress throughout the day they also got to see how the puller's tractors have progressed. The first, stock tractor classes were an example of typical farm tractors. The next class, the modified division, showed how pullers



Donald Belt, dairy farmer from Westminster makes a pull of 186.9 feet. The front wheels rise at the end of the pull.

opted for more power.

"This is where they take a tractor rear end, stretch the frame out and put any combination of engines on it," said Bill Clem. "There is no limit to the horsepower, but they have to weigh under 7,200 pounds. The secret to winning is how they put the weight on the tractor," Clem said. "They have to keep that front end down. It takes a long time to get the engines set just right and to make two or three engines run together at the same time, so they are all pulling the same."

According to "Pull Magazine," innovative competitors often use V-12 Allison airplane engines and even tank motors!

"The super stock tractors look like farm tractors, but they're all souped up," Clem said. They must

have just one engine and with the exception of having wider tires and custom paint they must retain their original manufacturers sheet metal design. "These guys will burn three to five gallons of diesel fuel in one pull," Clem admitted. "The smoke gets so thick out here it looks like a tornado!"

Two wheel drive trucks are the next category and the newest addition to the pulling lineup, introduced in 1984. In a short time they have gone from an oddity to being one of the sports hottest divisions. Four wheel drive trucks also sport big classes in the tractor pulls. "Pull Magazine" says the secret to winning with the trucks is in becoming a master track reader.

"A lot of volunteers came together, donating a lot of time to pull-off the event," said Clem of the Sunday tractor pull. As the smoke rose like thunderclouds, the crowd cheered and the drivers grinned and signaled thumbs up, it

was apparent that Sunday was indeed a day for fun.

Winners in their divisions were as follows:

FARM STOCK-6,000 lb.-John Harrison of Woodbine Md. driving a John Deere 8. FARM STOCK -8,000 lb.-Herbert Catterton of Harwood, Md. driving a John Deere 4010. FARM STOCK-13,000 pound-Keith Grifit of Boonsboro, Md. driving an International 1206. FARM STOCK-16,000 lb.-Randy Devaugh of Upper Marlboro, MD. driving an International 1466.

MODIFIED-7,200 lb.-Mike Mills of Fallston, Md. driving a Wycomics.

FOUR WHEEL DRIVE TRUCKS-Willy Ompps of Winchester, Va. driving a Ford F350.

TWO WHEEL DRIVE TRUCKS-Bryan McDonald of Harwood, Md. driving with an Oldsmobile motor.

## Hatfield Awards Scholarship

ALFRED, N.Y. — An Auburn, N.Y. resident majoring in animal science at Alfred State College is the winner of a \$1,000 scholarship from the Hatfield Packing Co.

He is Michael Dennis, son of Ronald and Penelope Dennis of

70124 Cherry Road, Auburn, and a 1987 graduate of Auburn High School.

Dennis was recognized for the award at Alfred State's 10th annual Honors Convocation May 1.

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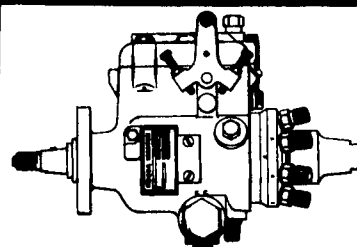
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