



Outlaw Truck and Tractor Pulling Association  
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To: Modified Tractor Competitors

From: Doug Roberts, OTTPA President

Sorry it took so long to get back to everyone on the limits in the modified tractor class. Most of this information I had gathered and finished 3 weeks ago, but just did not have the time to put it all together. I have been extremely busy in the shop, with all the Outlaw business in preparation for the 2008 summer tour, along with being the promoter of the first Outlaw event at Diamond, MO. The increased concern I mentioned in the previous letter is in regards to the direction this class has been going in the last three years. Since 2004 the class is down 17% in competing vehicles and down 30% in the average of vehicles per event. At seven hooks last year we had five vehicles or less and some of these were two hook events. This is not acceptable for our promoters or fans. There were nine events that had the lowest turnout of modified tractors since I started keeping records in 1998. Even places like the Iowa State Fair have lost 9 different modified tractors in the last two years. The OTTPA Finals at Spencer, IA, has lost 7 modified tractors in the last two years. Both of these events were tied in with other events where the modified tractor class got 3 to 4 hooks in a row. This has happened even with 8 less total hooks last year. I wanted to discuss these issues with you at the OTTPA meeting, but instead the entire time allotted for the mod class meeting was about the 70% points payout rule that didn't even effect the mod class. I want to apologize to the modified tractor competitors present at the meeting for not bringing these concerns up at that time. The modified tractor class is now averaging less than 8 vehicles per event and we have to do what we can to make sure this class does not drop down to a 6-vehicle average or less. At that point there will be a lot of promoters that will be unhappy with the vehicle turnout and will look at other classes or even other associations for their event. I crunch a lot of numbers and do event review along with class review spreadsheets every year to see trends that are starting to develop. I try to make changes to keep the average number of vehicles at these events at an acceptable level for the promoters and fans. It is easier to make changes now to fix problems than wait until a class is broke and then try to fix it. Some of the changes I make to keep a class successful are the schedule, purse, number of vehicle payout in the class, rules for fair competition, etc. When it comes to the schedule this year, I tried to keep everyone between 20 to 30 hooks and 9 out of the 10 classes are close to that with 17 to 31 hooks. The USS class has

been in trouble for years and has only 7 hooks this year. The new schedule reflects a lot of 2 and 3 hook events along with sweeps and a better purse paying more places.

When it comes to rules for fair competition it has made a positive difference in the other classes. Rules such as fuel, turbos, tires, etc. that lead to less cost, less breakage and fair competition have always lead to more vehicles at events. The new limited pro stock class has a lot of rules to keep the cost and maintenance down, this along with fair competition will lead to a class with a good average of vehicles per event. The same goes for putting a turbo limit on the big pro stock class as it should lead to less cost, breakdowns, maintenance, and more even competition, which will also lead to a increase in the number of vehicles at the events. The pro stock class has seen a decline in vehicles at events the last 3 years just like the mod class is seeing now. In the pro stock tractor class the average got down to 6 vehicles and a lot of the promoters were going to drop this class this year and some did. After they saw that we were making some rule changes to keep the vehicle numbers up, they decided to give it a try again this year. The OTTPA Western Sweep just added the pro stock tractors and all three events are now a OTTPA Super National Event. I attend most of the pulls, know most of the vehicles, and set the sled. When I look at these distances, I try to be fair and look at the distances that show fair competition. I take out exceptional hooks due to a good draw, a bad track, out of bounds, etc. Some of these are judgment calls but I am mainly looking for patterns. This is why I sent every competitor a print out of the hooks and distances with my letter. Some competitors will see good and bad hooks that they made for one reason or another. Every competitor will look at the results differently.

In Wayne's letter, he said I skewed my figures. I am not sure what that means, but with my figures, I gave River Rat the benefit of the doubt with some of these distances. River Rat beat Say Goodbye by 69 feet at Sac City. I wasn't at the pull but the results show Say Goodbye was just 8 foot behind Ready to Run and 9 feet behind Turbinator. River Rat beat Say Goodbye by 64 feet at Hinton and Say Goodbye was just 4 feet behind the next competitor. I did not count these pulls as these are not good numbers in my opinion. Even when using Wayne's calculations from his letter, River Rat ended up with 13 wins by an average of 10.5 feet for a total of 136½ feet, and Say Goodbye had 6 wins by an average of 7.5 feet for a total of 45 feet. With that said, in the total of 19 hooks, River Rat won over twice as many times by a total distance of 91 feet. With my figures I had River Rat winning 16 times by an average of 15.08 feet for a total of 250 feet. Say Goodbye won 5 times by an average of 7.8 for a total of 39 feet. Out of 21 hooks, River Rat won over 3 times as many hooks by a total distance of 210 feet. With that said, I think Wayne and I would agree that at every 20 hooks, River Rat will beat Say Goodbye somewhere between twice as many to 3 times as many times from somewhere between 91 to 210 total feet. The pattern I see is if the River Rat draws a good number, makes a good hook, and things go Wayne's way he will win by 35 to 50 feet. When things do not go Wayne's way he will still win by 5 to 10 feet. This is why we have a problem with fair competition. When I look at this class I think that the Griffon is way ahead of the rest of the field. The 3 Chevys and the international are pretty even, followed next by the twin Hemis, Turbines, and then the Allisons.

Wayne claims in his letter that my figures are inaccurate, incomplete, and misleading. The one fact that cannot be disputed is the finishing order at our events last year. The one Rolls Royce Griffon tractor won 16 times out of 39 hooks for a 41% winning percentage, you take out the ten breakdowns and it is 16 wins out of 29 hooks for a 55% winning percentage. The five different 3-Chevy tractors won 16 times out of 82 total hooks for a 25% winning percentage. The one international tractor won 5 times out of 17 hooks for a 29% winning percentage. The two turbines tractors won two times out of 50 total hooks for a 4% winning percentage. The 4 Allison tractors did not win any of their 98 hooks. The Packard tractor did not win any out of its 13 hooks, and the new twin hemi tractor did not win any out its 9 total hooks. When you look at the big picture, the one Rolls Royce Griffon tractor won 41% of the hooks in just 39 attempts while the rest of the 18 modified tractors won the other 59% taking 269 hooks to do so. The Griffon broke down almost  $\frac{1}{4}$  th of the time (10 out of 39 hooks). If Wayne gets the problems fixed, using last years winning percentage he would have won 21 times out of 39 hooks for a 54% winning percentage.

The one thing I have learned over the years is that fair competition leads to more vehicle participation which is good for the fans and promoters. Just the opposite happens when you have one vehicle with an unfair advantage over the rest of the competitors. In 1995 when I won at Bowling Green, OH, there were 38 in the class and 13 in the pull off. Two years later at Bowling Green I got second but there were only 18 in the class and 3 in the pull off. By then NTPA was setting the sled to stop Lehn, Russell, Dickerson, etc. at about 290 feet while Lustick, Blackburn, and myself were taking the back of the sled past 300 feet. We had an unfair advantage being alcohol powered over the diesels and it was leading to less participation in the class. NTPA even put a cubic inch limit on Johnson and Schroder before they even finished their new engines because of the dominance of the alcohol tractors. The class eventually split and then it didn't matter. The light super stock class is what gave Bluegrass pulling and ATPA its start. The class had lots of vehicles and put on a great show. When ATPA let Meese in the class with the overhead cam and hemi style head, he dominated the class. ATPA finally changed the rules, but grandfathered the Meese tractor (Squealer) in the class and it lead to less and less vehicles until the class died due to not enough vehicles. Everyone knew if Meese didn't break or get sideways he would win. I think he won Louisville 4 times in a row until they cancelled the class. Can you blame Darrell Meese for this, No, because everybody wants to win. But you can blame the sanctioning body that did not make changes to save this class.

In all classes you are going to have some vehicles that will win lots of pulls for various reasons: experience, spend more money, run better parts, run on kill, etc. We have that in some of the Outlaw classes right now. Take for example the DSS class, Dennis and Matt Goodwin have won lots of pulls with the rules OTTPA has. Others in the class could do just the same if they choose to, and they would be competitive. But in the OTTPA modified class there is such a variety that not all can do that and be competitive with the rules we have, no matter how much they spend or how hard they run their equipment.

We have lots of competitors in the modified tractor class that have been pulling for 15 years to over 35 years. Experience helps, but it will only get you so far. For example, I think most any of our competitors could pull the Griffon tractor and win more hooks than they ever had with today's OTTPA rules. Even the few times when Wayne had a different driver take his place, the Griffon won twice this year. When I look at fair competition, I look at what competitors could do on other tractors. Could Wayne Longnecker get on a 3-Chevy tractor and win more hooks? No. Why? The 3-Chevy have an 8-71 blower limit at 43% overdrive and that's all you can do. Could Wayne win more on the twin hemis? No. Why? The twin hemis have a 14-71 blower limit. You cannot buy better parts and run it harder than Billy Loftice does. Could Wayne win more on the turbines? No. Why? The turbines have a factory horsepower rating on them. Could Cody or Kyle win more than 2 hooks out of 50 attempts if they drove the Griffon? Of course they would. Could Wayne win more times on the Allison? No. Why? The Allisons are at their maximum because of their connecting rods and that is why Wayne quit pulling an Allison several years ago. Wayne works on all the Allisons that pull with the OTTPA and none has won in 2 years out of 209 attempts. In Wayne's letter he states "I think I can say that almost all of the competitors in the mod class have upgraded their vehicles to be more competitive in 2008." With today's OTTPA modified tractor rules, Wayne's only limit is 1 industrial engine. He could be running it harder this year than last. He could run the blower at a higher ratio. He could go to two stages. He could go to a bigger blower, because ultimately the only limit on the Griffon engine is 1 industrial engine. So, yes Wayne could be upgrading, but the rest of the class is at the limits of the rule book or their engines. Two years ago Wayne had a lot of head work done to his tractor and with the way it was dominating then, I knew it was the last tractor in the class that needed to keep improving.

Wayne's argument that his tractor is not dominant because in 6 years he finally won his first points championship is without merit. Since 1999 every tractor that has won the points championship has had to go to every event. We have had some great finishes at the finals in Spencer, IA because of this. Last year is the first year that Wayne's tractor has gone to every hook and he won the points.

In 2002, Wayne came out late with his new tractor powered by the Rolls Royce Griffon engine and missed lots of hooks. That year Dave Geiger, Don Nelson, and Cameron Neaves finished 1½ points apart.

In 2003, the second year Wayne had his new tractor he won the Mid-Summer Sweep, the State Fair Sweep, and missed winning the Championship by just 15 points after missing 2 hooks. Wayne won 10 out of the 25 hooks for a 40% winning average.

In 2004 & 2005 Wayne missed a lot of pulls do to breakage and other reasons. Don Nelson and Cameron Neaves ended up tied for points for the season in 2004. Don Nelson and Wayne Purser ended the season just 1½ points apart in 2005.

In 2006, Terry Pinkley went to every hook and won the points championship. Wayne came in 3<sup>rd</sup>, less than 200 points behind, after missing 10 hooks that counted points. If he would have hooked at just 5 of them he would have won the points and if he

had hooked at all 10 hooks he would have had the largest winning margin of any modified tractor champion since keeping records in 1998. Out of the 42 hooks, Wayne missed 10 hooks, boycotted 7 hooks, and of the 25 hooks left he won 10 times along with 6- 2<sup>nd</sup> place finishes. That is a 40% winning percentage.

In 2007 Wayne and Vern Huser went to every hook and Wayne won the championship with a 41% winning percentage, despite 10 breakdowns.

As dominant as Wayne's tractor is, he could have easily won 3 (50%) of the 6 championships if he had just showed up.

When I was looking for resources on the internet about the Allison engines, it showed that they would sometimes 2 stage them and run the turbochargers into the supercharger and the stock horsepower would go up over 2000 horsepower. After researching this I found out this was apparently what Wayne did with his old Allison power River Rat tractor. In 1999, 2000, and 2001 while all the other Allisons and Packards were running single stage, twin turbos, Wayne was running two staged, twin turbos into the supercharger. The results showed it too. This was before OTTPA allowed 3 engines and before the international of Don Nelson.

In 1999, because of the open class, there were 54 hooks for the modified tractors. Wayne won 28 times, finished in 2<sup>nd</sup> place 11 times along with 7 - 3<sup>rd</sup> place finishes. That is 46 top 3 finishes out of 54 hooks. It also is a 52% winning percentage and he won the points championship.

In 2000, Wayne missed the first event in Lufkin, TX and still almost won the points. He ended up with 11 wins, 5 - 2<sup>nd</sup> place, and 3 - 3<sup>rd</sup> place finishes for 20 top 3 finishes out of 24 hooks and a 46% winning percentage. He also won all 3 State Fair hooks and the bonus money that goes with sweeping the competition.

In 2001, Wayne ended up with 21 top 3 finishes out of 23 hooks. 9 wins, 7 - 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 5- 3<sup>rd</sup> place finishes. that is a 39% winning percentage. He also won the Western Sweep and the points championship.

The OTTPA has been good to Wayne Longnecker. Because the 1 industrial rule in the OTTPA rule book has no other limits, Wayne has had a unfair advantage over his fellow competitors for 10 years. When you look at the 2007 NTPA rule book it shows on Regional pulling that if you run a single staged turbocharged or supercharged Allison you can add a blown V-8 engine with a 8- 71 blower (about 1800 horsepower). If you run a twin turbos and aux staged with the supercharger you can add a natural aspirated V-8 engine (about 800 horsepower). That is about a 1000 horsepower advantage Wayne had when he pulled his old tractor and it showed, just like it does now with his new tractor.

This will not help the Allisons now, as better Holset turbos we use now will put out more boost than the connecting rods can take to be competitive. As the competition got better with the 3- chevys and the international along with some tough twin-hemis

even Vern Huser kicked out 2 rods in less than a month with the old 2 staged River Rat trying to keep up.

It comes down to whether we are going to have a limited mod class or unlimited mod class. You cannot limit some and then not have limits on others, especially the most powerful engine we have pulling with OTTPA. For fair competition we could go and make changes to lots of vehicles and let the 3 chevys have a larger blower or more overdrive, the twin hemis a larger blower, allow a larger turbine, let the international add a chevy, but the best solution is to slow the one Rolls Royce Griffon down some. Wayne told the board he is running the supercharger at the full speed ratio of 7.70 to 1. For the 2008 OTTPA season the Rolls Royce Griffon will be limited to a maximum overdrive limit on the supercharger to the medium speed ratio of 6.615 to 1. After shifting to the medium speed the 2 speed must then be removed along with the centrifugal clutch so that there is no question on shifting to the full speed and also for teching purposes. I do not know for sure if this is enough or not, but it is a starting point. It equals 14% less overdrive and that is the same as when we dropped the 3-chevys down from 50% to 43% overdrive to bring them more in line with fair competition. The Griffon has 44% more horsepower than the other industrial engines, it has 50% more torque than the other industrial engines. The Griffon winning percentage is 12% higher than the international and 16% higher than the 3-chevys. The Griffon average winning distance on the track is 10 feet by Wayne's figures, and 15 feet by my figures. By reducing the overdrive on the supercharger, this should also help on Wayne's breakage. It is not fair to the promoters or fans that come to see this tractor run and then it breaks down ¼ th of the time. One year at Diamond, MO the announcer kept building up about the one of the kind tractor and the Griffon would not run and even make it to the sled. I did not have to, but I went ahead and paid Wayne last place money for his effort. On the other hand I have had some promoters asked me if they have to pay for a truck or tractor that did not move the sled or did not go very far. Especially at events where the vehicle count is not very good.

This is such a popular class for both the promoters and fans, that I challenge the competitors to get together, have meetings, look at this class during the summer and come up with some rules that are fair competition for everyone. The 2 hour meeting we have in the fall at the banquet is not enough time to solve our problems and not all members are present. When someone comes up with a rule change or something else you need more time to think about it and research the ideas. OTTPA has one of the best modified tractor classes in pulling with such a good variety of vehicles and great people. We need each and every competitor we have, including Wayne Longnecker, but more importantly we also need a level playing field. As president of the OTTPA, I stress fair competition and safety as my number one goal.

Thanks, Doug