

Podium Newsletter

September 2011



Welcome to the Podium Club!

The information found at www.antiquetractorpullguide.com is like no other information out there. The tips, tricks and secrets of successful tractor pulling are designed to improve your performance at the next tractor pull, while having more fun at the same time.

Moisture on the track – Helps & Hurts

It seems like 2011 is the year of rain. Many pulls in all areas of the country have been cancelled due to rain (well, maybe not too many in Texas with the drought). Sometimes conditions are good during a pull and then the weather suddenly turns and the rain begins. How does moisture affect a track though? What can be done to ensure good results even with changing conditions?

Some moisture in the track is a good idea. Very dry dirt tends to be loose and dusty, creating soft conditions where traction is tough to come by. By adding moisture during track prep and packing the soil, the track becomes harder and generates a good pulling surface. Going too far in the direction of moisture creates problems also. Too much moisture in the ground leaves the track soft, or even muddy. Traction again becomes difficult, and the funny thing is if good traction is achieved, the sled will likely pull hard. A hard pulling sled requires more gumption to keep moving, creating a sudden power track situation. And thus, this is why the art of track reading is so important!

Recently, there were two tractor pulls in the area – the Sublimity Harvest Festival, and a pull at Ridgefield, WA. These two venues have very different soil and overall tracks, but the one thing they had in common this year was moisture.

First, let's talk about Mother Nature. On the weekend of the Sublimity Harvest Festival, temperatures soared into the upper 90s. This is the second year in a row that the track prep at Sublimity was done poorly – imagine a track in near 100 degree weather that was....well...wet.

September 2011



Moisture on the track – Helps & Hurts (cont)

Sometimes folks just don't know any better, or think maybe they might help keep the dust down by putting more moisture into the ground. Prior to the pull, the Sublimity track was ripped with a shank ripper about 18" deep. The ground was then covered in sprinklers, to "fill it up" with water. Now, before I go any further, the Sublimity track has notoriously been a power track – the hardest track of the year. It was always said, "If you don't run out of power on the Sublimity track, you are in good shape." With the extra moisture in the ground, the clay/loam track turned in to a big spongy mess. Imagine driving a tractor over a mattress and that's what the consistency of the track was like.

So how did this affect the pull? The track became slick to the tire and sticky to the sled. If traction was gained, it suddenly became an extreme power track. The first two days of the Sublimity Harvest Festival are reserved for pickup pulls and modified trucks and tractors. With these conditions, there were many vehicle casualties – including the sled. There are three sleds used at this pull, and two of the three actually broke down during the pull due to vehicles bucking wildly.



The wet conditions at Sublimity

September 2011



Moisture on the track – Helps & Hurts (cont)

For the tractor pull on the Sunday afternoon of the weekend, the track was still in poor shape. To make matters worse, the watering truck took a trip up and down each track right before the pull. For the light class tractors, this was a disaster.

The Massey Harris Mustang was the 2nd tractor to pull. With a hard track setup and lots of weight up front, watering the track right before the pull destroyed the setup. Normally, if allowed, shifting weights would have solved this problems, sucking them back to side or rear weight brackets. At this pull, they wouldn't allow us to dismount inside the pulling arena, where the tractor when the water truck did its thing. The Mustang spun out quickly, without a fighting chance.

Conditions got a bit better for the other classes. Remember the motto about Sublimity and the power it takes. It tempted me to pull the Massey 101 in 2nd gear in the 4000lb class to overcome any traction problems. It pulled to a stall at 290ft, almost a full pull, and in 2nd place not far behind the winner. It's good to test the limits of a tractor every now and then. Both the Mustang and Massey 101 pulling videos from Sublimity can be seen in the video gallery on the website or on YouTube under the tractorpullguide channel.

Ridgefield

The Ridgefield pull had different kind of moisture that affected the track – from the sky. After a blistering hot summer, the day before the tractor pull was unseasonably cool with showers in the area. This put some good moisture in the track, but the Sunday weather conditions weren't warm enough to dry out the track. In fact, half way through the pull the skies opened up and things got sloppy.



The wet Ridgefield track

September 2011



Moisture on the track – Helps & Hurts (cont)

The trick on a soft or slippery track is to **end in a wheelie**. This is more difficult to do than it seems, since traction is so poor. Properly airing down tires and getting enough weight to the rear to lift the front end is key. Those who hook up instead of spin are greatly rewarded.

When the pull started, the track conditions were decent. The top couple of inches of ground were wet, but there was a bit of bite down below. Again, it took careful planning not to spin on the soft, wet soil on top. Those with cut or sharpened tires seemed to excel in these conditions – to a point. The interesting thing is that when the rain started and the track got a little more sloppy, the uncut tires with tall bars started to shine. This must be why a Cane & Rice tire has such deep lugs.

Again, the Mustang and Massey 101 were pulled at this event. There were very few tractors to pull against because of the iffy weather conditions, but it was still a good time.

The Mustang turned in a fine performance with enough weight rearward to lift the front wheels off the ground and get to the promise land on top of the podium. Success was found in both the 3000 and 3500lb 3mph classes.

The biggest lesson of the day was the Massey 101. Its tires would not hook up with the ground in the slick conditions. In fact, both 4000 and 4500lb hooks ended in spin outs, leaving black marks on damp clay underneath the slick mud on top. Balance was a little off, and the tires need work too.

Massey Harris
Mustang and 101
Twin Power sit
poised at Ridgefield



September 2011



Moisture on the track – Helps & Hurts (cont)



Farmall 200 and Massey Harris Mustang



Oliver 1950, International 300 Utility, Cockshutt 570 Gas, Co-op E-2

Allis Chalmers WD-45,
Ford 901 Powermaster
on 38in tires



September 2011



Moisture on the track – Helps & Hurts (cont)

This is why pictures and video are so important at any tractor pull. It's so important to review every hook.



Wet track, but making it work! Impressing the hundreds of fans in the stands.



Massey Harris Mustang 3500lb hook. Seriously, SMILE ZACK. YOU'RE HAVING FUN.

September 2011



Moisture on the track – Helps & Hurts (cont)



Track getting sloppy in the heavier classes. Notice mud on the tires.
All pictures courtesy of the OPA.

September 2011



Updated on Light Wheel Centers

The August issue of the Podium Newsletter featured new rim centers fabricated by Pete Petznick. As mentioned in the article, these wheel centers are available in different hole patterns, eliminating the need for adapter plates. Below is an example of an Allis Chalmers WC showing a 6 bolt pattern for these wheel centers. The tires are 14.9-38.



A 9 bolt center
(for comparison)

September 2011



The lightest weight wheel centers, ever? (cont)

Interested in a set of these centers? Contact Pete directly (see below) for more information.

CAP Bros.

MotorSports, LLC

Light-weight rim center—23 lbs.

(on 9 bolt 38in)

Available in 6, 8 & 9 hole bolt pattern



Pete Petznick

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September 2011

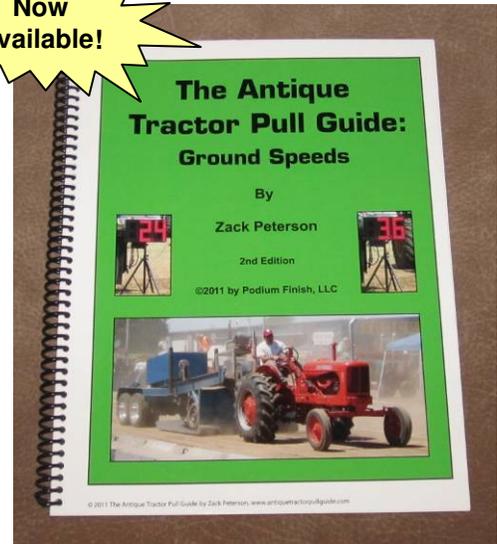


It's HERE!!! The All New 142 page 2nd Edition!

The All New 2nd Edition of
The Antique Tractor Pull Guide: Ground Speeds

Now
Available!

- New ground speed charts added – expanding to 142 pages! Now includes speeds for Allis WC with Sherman Transmission, Deere 430/435, Slow speed letter models, and more!
- Ground speeds for most makes and models featured in The Antique Tractor Pull Guide.
- Ground speeds shown with respect to different RPM and different tire sizes.
- Ground speeds shown in every gear from near idle to full RPM, including USAP/NATPA allowed RPM's.
- Figure ground speeds for any tractor at any RPM, allowing for cut tires & lower tire pressures.
- Ground speeds for gearing variations including creeper gears, ring & pinion changes, M&W 9 Speed transmissions, Sherman transmissions and more!



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August 2011



Fiberglass pulling parts

MM & Farmall Fiberglass Parts

They are finally here! Fiberglass MM Late R clamshell fenders. These fenders weigh 7lbs a piece! Will also fit other MM models – U, Z, etc.

Ethan D. Berry
The Mopower Ranch
Vermontville, MI
517-243-0617

Ethan is a good friend, fellow puller and very knowledgeable about tractors. He has used his skills as an engineer to create some amazing pulling parts that are high enough quality for restorations too.



Fiberglass MM 5 Star Grille Cross



Fiberglass Farmall Fenders

Farmall M gas tanks also available. Stay tuned for more parts coming soon!

September 2011



Minneapolis Moline 335 Profile



Minneapolis Moline 335

Year Manufactured: 1956, as a utility tractor (original tire size 24" or 28")

Engine: Minneapolis Moline

Bore & Stroke: 4" x 5.5" or close to this

Displacement: 276??? Cubic Inches (unsure of exact engine size)

Horsepower: 70-80hp (very strong)

Weight: 3300lbs without weights or driver

Rear Tires: 15.5-38 Firestone Field & Road 151

Front Tires: 6.00-14

Transmission Speeds: 5 with Ampli-torq low range

Podium Newsletter



Coming next month...

- How to finance pulling
- Weight slinging – how to avoid soreness.
- Puller Spotlight
- And more...

October issue will be available 10/19/11

I want to hear from you! If you have feedback, requests or information you would like featured, please send an email to:
zack@antiquetractorpullguide.com.

Why visibility is important

At a recent car show the Massey Harris Mustang won a best in class trophy in the trucks category. With hard work comes great reward, but hard work is most recognized when it's most visible!

**True
outside of
hobbies
too!**

