

Podium Newsletter

December 2012



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.

Tunica Southern Nationals 2012

There is only one phrase that describes the excitement surrounding the Tunica Southern Nationals – “You’ve gotta go!”. This year’s event seemed to have more hype around it and the pull itself was the biggest it’s ever been. There were almost 1300 recorded hooks for the three day event and around 400 tractors that competed. I asked several folks what they liked best about the Tunica pull and the most frequent response was, “**The people**”. It’s just as fun to visit with pullers from other areas as it is to watch the live action. See, the Tunica Southern Nationals are what I like to call a “destination pull”. It’s not simply show up and pull, but a 3-4 day full on experience. There are the best of the best on the track and a beautiful casino-resort in the Gold Strike to stay at with night life. There’s a world class venue in the Paul Battle arena, more iron than you can imagine to look at, things for sale in the parking lot, and so many people to talk to that the event could be twice as long. In other words, there is a tractor pull that is surrounded by all of these other wonderful things that makes it so unique. **I would highly recommend those who haven’t yet been to this pull to make the trip next year.** It will be well worth it.

This year I went to Tunica with my father, Tom Peterson. He had been itching for another good pull since the end of our pulling season in October at the NW Fall Nationals hosted by the Columbia Basin Antique Power Club. Since Mississippi is a long way from Oregon, we flew from Portland to Memphis, TN and rented a car to drive down to Tunica. The Memphis airport is easy to get in and out of and there are really nice roads down to Tunica. It’s only a 35mi drive to the Gold Strike casino from the airport. The town of Tunica and Paul Battle arena are about 12mi south of the Gold Strike. With little time to spare this year, we arrived late on Wednesday the 28th of November. Ideally it’s nice to go to the arena the day before the pull to look at tractors and chat with folks, but there is ample time during the pull to do this also.

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Tunica 2012 (cont)

After a burger and a beer at the food court inside the Gold Strike, it was off to bed to rest for an early start.

Because of attendance this year, the Mean Green Pulling Team decided to move the start time of the pull up by an hour each day – meaning the driver's meeting was at 7:30am and the pull started at 8am. We arrived at the Paul Battle Arena that Thursday morning with just minutes to spare before the driver's meeting began. There were lots of people, tractors and rigs eagerly waiting for the day to get under way. With a nice welcome and commencement from John Bennett, plus a prayer, pledge of allegiance, and national anthem, the pull was under way.



Tom and Zack Peterson



Gold Strike Casino



The driver's meeting gathering



John Bennett during the welcome

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URGENT UPDATE!

NEW PRINT RUN FOR ATPG BOOKS! (Late Jan 2013 delivery)

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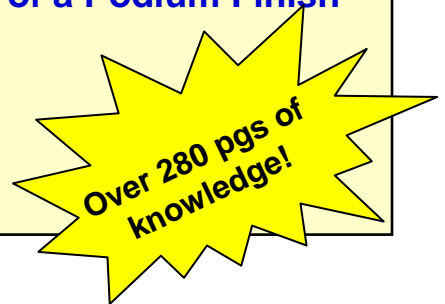
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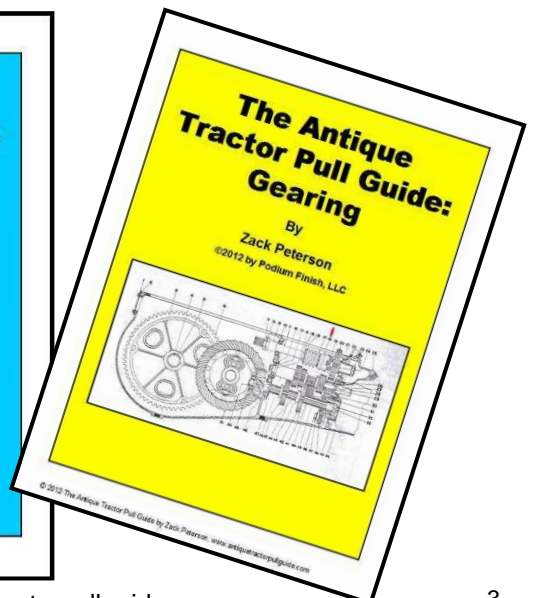
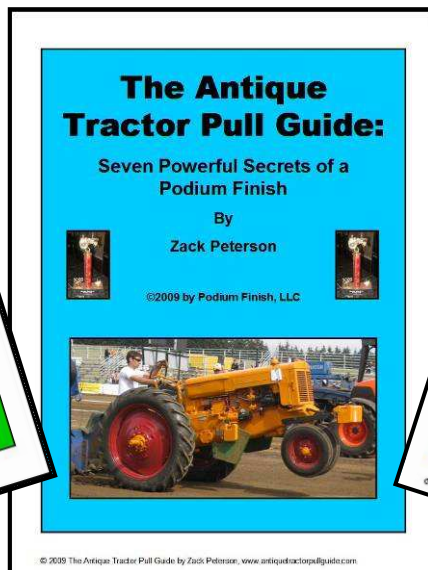
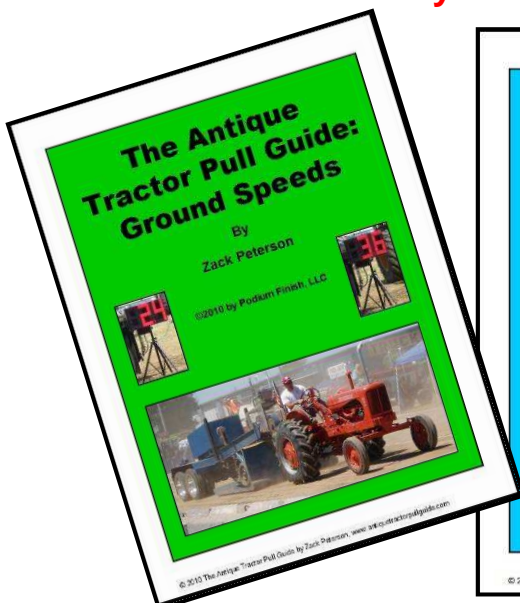
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Tunica 2012 (cont)

So what's it *really* like being at Tunica? Busy. From the moment the first hook of the day drops, the action is non-stop to finish in a timely manner. In doing the math, they must complete an average of over 400 hooks each day.



The above picture illustrates the action quite well. There are two sleds running all of the time, a single track crew smoothing both tracks, and a scale on either side of the arena for tractors to check in at. Each tractor is assigned a number at registration and then also assigned an order number for each class. There is a person posted outside the doors at the end of the arena queuing tractors as they approach, but it's also up to the puller to know when their class and position is up.



This year featured live speed and distance displays at the end of both tracks (see above). The horns were also used for speed limit warning. They also had no flagger, but red and green lights to follow for starting and stopping. It worked well.

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Tunica 2012 (cont)

The Paul Battle Arena. It's one of the best venues a tractor pull could ever take place at. The facility is HUGE and features lots of covered staging area and parking in the back paddock. On a side note, the weather this year was PERFECT in that it was sunny and warmed up into the 60s most days. Many chose to park their tractors outside near their rigs instead of in the paddock. Still, there were LOTS of tractors out back.



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Tunica 2012 (cont)

The action. Thursday was full of Modified classes for the lighter tractors, plus the 4250# KOH class. Friday had Farm Stock I and II plus the special 4875# 7mph class benefiting Stacey "Hollywood" Hamilton. This was a class that the Mean Green Pulling Team decided to create as a bonus hook to benefit the club. R.A Denney and Aldridge Trailer Sales sponsored the \$500 cash prize. When news broke that Stacey "Hollywood" Hamilton was injured in an accident involving one of the ramps on his trailer, the Mean Green Pulling Team stepped up with many other pullers out there to donate the proceeds to Hollywood. New this year was a live internet stream of the action from the arena, which Hollywood watched from his hospital room along with many other pullers out there. Finally, the Saturday featured the heavy class tractors, both Farm Stock and Modified plus the 7250# KOH and Kids Pull. One note – the action on Friday seemed every bit as good as the modified action the day before. There was fierce competition in both FS I and FS II that was fun to watch.



Tech check at the scale. Notice the weights left on the ground by folks who were a little heavy.



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Tunica 2012 (cont)

The tractors. There were so many tractors to look at that it's hard to see everything. If you are interested in seeing world class, well built pulling tractors, Tunica is the place to see it. Always look close for things that you could do to your own tractor to become more competitive.

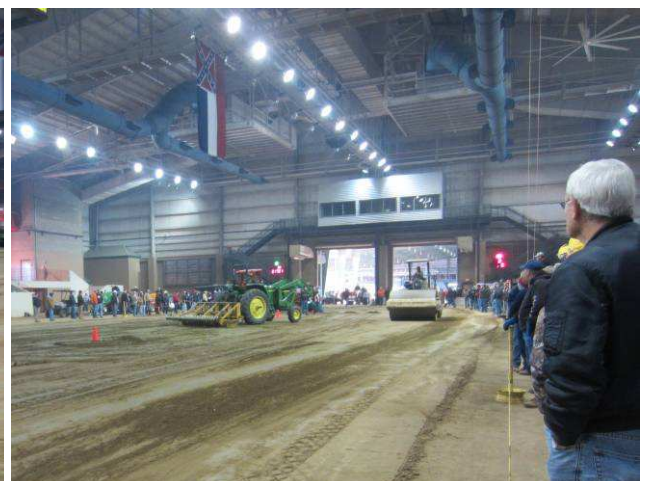


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Tunica 2012 (cont)

The track crew. These guys deserve honorable mention for their extremely hard work. Ray Denney is in charge of the track prep and maintenance at this pull. His crew of dedicated personnel work harder than just about anyone at the pull making sure each puller gets the best track possible for their hook. They specialize in keeping the soil consistent and keeping the dirt in place. The surface is smoothed and roller packed after every hook. With little time to spare working on both tracks, these guys don't get much of a break all weekend.



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Tunica 2012 (cont)

Virtual Swap Meet. The parking lot at Tunica is really interesting. There are tractors, parts, tires, weights, and so on for sale all over the place. Also featured is an onsite tire cutter in case your skins need a touch up between hooks. It really is neat to see and most folks will tell you that you can literally find whatever you're looking for in the parking lot.



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Tunica 2012 (cont)

One extra special part to this year's Southern Nationals was the chance to get behind the wheel of a tractor and make a trip down the Tunica track. This year Pete Petznick of Belton, MO was gracious enough to hand over the reins of his Massey Harris 101 to me in the 4875# special class. While I may have not finished near the leaders of the pack, I had the biggest smile ever! Special thanks to Pete Petznick of CAP Bros. Motorsports!

Zack
pulling at
Tunica!



Photo by Michelle McPherson

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Tunica 2012 (cont)

The night life and other things to see. Once pulling was finished for the day, everyone went back to the Gold Strike casino for meals, evening entertainment and the chance to visit with other pullers. That in itself was one of the best parts of the trip. The Gold Strike features a fantastic buffet and array of restaurants, plus a decent bar off the casino and other lounge areas where many pullers hung out.

Also while in the area, a must is to visit the Blue & White café in Tunica. This famous old style café has great food at all hours of the day and is heavily favored by pullers from far and wide.

And finally, my dad and I had a chance to go south to Clarksdale, MS which is known as the “Crossroads of the Blues”. The Mississippi River Delta produced many famous Blues artist through the years and there is a world class Delta Blues Museum in Clarksdale.

With Tunica’s close proximity to Memphis, one other attraction is downtown Memphis, specifically Beale Street. Every Friday and Saturday night they close off Beale Street to foot traffic only, allowing all of the restaurants and bars to cater to the evening crowd. The atmosphere is a unique Blues experience with fantastic food, drink and music.

After staying the Saturday night in Memphis, we woke up early to fly out. Folks, this year I was able to gauge the experience having been to Tunica once before and I can say that it was significantly better this year. There were more people, more tractors, more faces I recognized, and more great times. This event continues to grow and stay on top as the biggest event of the year. I cannot reiterate the importance that folks go and check it out at least once! As they say in the south, “See y’all next year!”

Stay tuned for more...watch my YouTube Channel for pulling videos posted plus the official Tunica 2012 Experience recap video.



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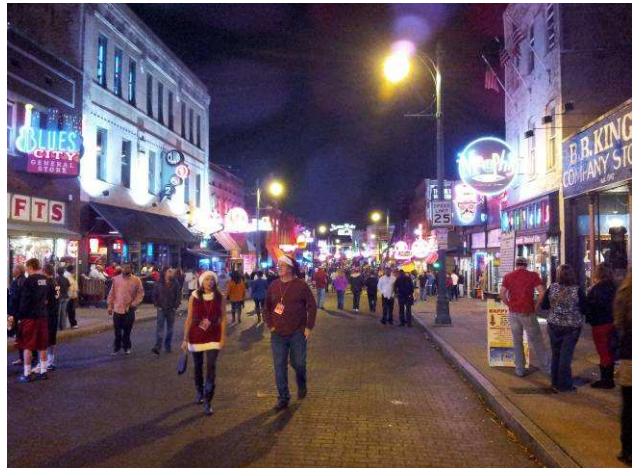
Tunica 2012 (cont)



Zack with Ray Rott (center)



The Crossroads of the Blues



Beal Street in Memphis



Food of the South! BBQ Ribs!

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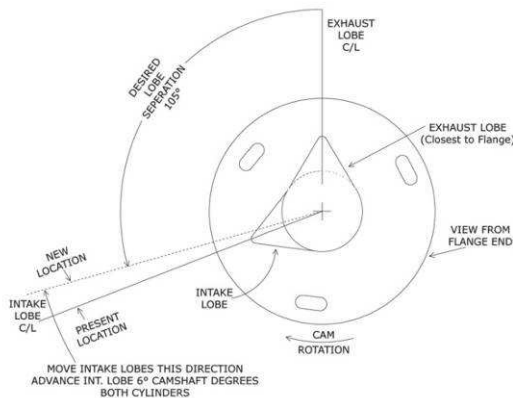


Podium Members

Want to be a part of the Podium Newsletter? If you're interested in sharing your pride and joy, send an email to zack@antiquetractorpullguide.com. Answer the following questions:

- Your Name and where you're from
- How you got into pulling
- What clubs you like to pull with
- Tractor Make/Model/Year
- Picture or two of your tractor
- Classes you pull in
- One or two things you've learned in pulling that has helped (I'm not asking you to spill the beans or give away your best secrets, but simply share a tip or story)

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Jack,

I just wanted to let you know that I have finally completed my 1948 John Deere G tractor that you modified my camshaft for. We put it on the dyno tonight and my buddies were impressed with its performance and I certainly attribute this to your cam grind. It produced 68 hp off the pto and it held it good. For a stock stroke tractor running stock rpms I am certainly impressed. This Friday & Saturday I plan on taking it pulling so I am anxious to see how it does. Thank you again for your services.

Greg

Podium Newsletter



Coming next month...

- Project Updates
- Gearing opportunities
- “The Bolt-in Solution” – for real
- And more...

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.

January issue will be available 1/23/13

Mean Green Pulling Team 2012 Southern Nationals Children's Pull Tunica, MS “Where Every Kid is a Winner”



Jim McMinimee

Mark Valentine

Guys from the Northwest who help sponsor the kids pull.

Photo courtesy of www.meangreenpullingteam.net.