

NEWS LETTER OF THE IOWA PLOWING ASSOCIATION

9/11/21

Greetings and Salutations Members:

I hope this letter finds each of you well. We had a great Marshall County Ag Expo and I'd like to thank each and every one of you for helping make it a success. Attendance was a little lower than we had hoped but I'd say we had more spectators than a typical year. We were competing with the Iowa State Fair and many people attend it religiously.

We had 33 paying sponsors for the event and all those that I spoke with, thought it was fun and were proud to be a part of it. Most have also said they would like us to contact them again if we put together another show in the future. I can only speak to my own experience with the Iowa Plowing Association but I think this was a record number of sponsors/supporters for one of our plowing matches.

Like the sponsors, we had a great turn out of plowmen for both the state and national plow competitions. The IPA enrolled several new plowmen this year and we enjoyed having them compete with us. We hope

asm follows them home as they report back to their friends, family and tractor/plow groups. Our goal these last few years has been to not slip off silently into non-existence but to grow and thrive! I believe the Marshall County Ag Expo has provided a glimmer of hope

with getting our organization recognized and affirmed that we are still active. It's at least a step in the right direction.

It has been brought to our attention that a couple different shows are considering hosting one of our IPA plowing competitions. Currently, we are working with the Albert City Threshermen and Collectors Show for our 2022 state matches. It's not concrete yet but it sounds like they really want us to come and that is awesome! I'm sure the board will have more to report by our January board meeting or March IPA lunch. The Threshermen Show had 13,000 spectators this year. It would be great to plow in front of that many spectators! It would also help continue with our plan to be recognized and begin to pick up some new members.

The national plowmen's banquet was superb! The food was excellent, the tent was just the right size and the plowmen were happy and full. We received many compliments regarding the banquet from sponsors, plowmen and guests.

Now for a little national news. We need your input on the following items. During the August USAPO board meeting, it was discussed that there might be interest in adding another plowing class. The idea is

d Open class plowmen another choice or level of plowing. Currently both classes plow a 40 ft wide x 264 ft long plot and have 75 minutes to complete it. The plowmen create a crown,

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drop into their neighbors plot and finish the land between them. The USAPO is considering the creation of a second small plow class for non-Kverneland 3-point and trailer plows. The plot would be the same size as the

Small Plow class, 65.6 ft wide x 364 ft long, and have same time, 20 minutes for an opening split and 2:40 to finish. The thought is that it would give plowmen the opportunity to try the Small Plow class without having to compete with the Kverneland plows. Two choices are being considered. The IPA board is currently leaning toward choice #1, a new class.

Choice #1 Create a second (Small Plow) class for Non-Kverneland plows.
(Perhaps a Vintage Small Plow class)

1. Plowmen regulated by same rules as regular Small Plow class. 2. Plot size 65.6' wide x 364 ft long. 3. Twenty minutes to create the opening split. 4. 2:40 minutes to finish the plot. 5. 3-Pt and trailer plows allowed. 6. No competition bottoms or accessories allowed. 7. Plows may be trip or hydraulic lift and additional hydraulics and some customizing per WPO.

Choice #2 Change the current Open Class regulations to Small Plow regulations for everyone.

1. Open Class plot size increased to 65.6 ft wide x 324 ft long. 2. Opening split required. 3. Twenty minutes to create the opening split. 4. Finish the plot in 2:40 minutes. 5. 3-Pt and trailer plows allowed. 6. No competition bottoms or accessories allowed. 7. Plows may be trip or hydraulic lift and additional hydraulics and some customizing per WPO.

Better Than a Soap Opera Controversy

1. Antique Equipment

We have discussed this item previously but it is back on the table. A growing number of plowmen would like to see the Antique Class revert to the previous ruling of equipment manufactured in 1938 or earlier. They feel that the push to 1951 tractors and equipment is a bit unfair to those using the 1930s equipment. Equipment alterations in the Antique class are beginning to be a concern. Some substitutions of parts like blacksmith plowshares or

other hard to find parts are ok in most plowmen's eyes but alterations and performance enhancements are not. The Antique class is supposed to be as they came from the factory.

2. Coaching and helping contestants

We are not talking junior class plowmen here. I did not hear of any problems in the State matches but the national matches were fraught with controversy. Thank you Iowa Plowmen for keeping it real and honest. It sounds like people in both the National Open and Antique classes were coaching people in the senior classes using cell phones, driving tractors for others while riding on the draw bar and assisting with plow adjustments. This is not good for safety or for minding the rules. You know the old saying, "Fences make good neighbors", that's why we have

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rules. I believe that most of us are out trying to do the best we can and enjoy the art of plowing a nice plot. We call each other friend and hope each of us does the best we can on that certain day. Sometimes it does not go as planned. We've all had those days. If someone breaks down, needs help for age or health reasons, is plugged up or just plain flustered, I see no problem lending a friendly word of advice or physically helping them to make a change on their plow. Most of us live our lives in this manner and I see no difference out in the field. Here is where the line should be drawn in my opinion. If a plowman is actively plowing in a senior level contest and needs coaching on how to set their plow or drive the tractor, other than if it is borrowed, perhaps they need to practice more. The best way to maintain the enjoyment and the friendships is to follow the rules. Then everyone is on the same field, figuratively and literally. I am hearing bad things about people not welcome in other states after this year's matches and that bothers me greatly.

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3. Dead Furrows

Each year after a plowing match, we try our best to backfill the dead furrows so there are no adverse effects to the land or the farmer that graciously let us hold a plowing match on his field. It's been happening for years, dead furrows looking like the Suez Canal! Yikes! It's been noted that many plowmen, both state and national, try to cover up mistakes in their finish by plowing to China. I mean some of the dead furrows are almost knee deep and close to twice as wide as they should be. I'm just as guilty as anyone else. A little miscalculation during the finish and the only way to make it work is to go deep! I'm talking drilling for oil deep! I see the error in my ways and I hope you will do the same.

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We, your IPA board, see an opportunity to relearn the art of the finish for all of us. It's called earning more points. We don't want to start assessing penalties to plowmen for their dead furrows but in a good way, we are. We are going to discuss adding higher points to the finish scoring. Instead of 10 points possible for all three criteria, narrow, shallow and clean, we will be adding 10 points for each criteria, narrow, shallow and clean. That's 30 points just waiting for you and a 20 point increase over the current possible score for doing the finish furrow correctly. Dig to China and receive zero points or do it well and receive 30 points. It's worth practicing a little more, don't you think? So practice those finishes plowmen!

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Your input is important to us, your IPA board. Please let us know your thoughts and opinions regarding any or all the items above.

I enjoyed being your IPA President this year. I hope the organization has maintained or improved under my watch. I'll continue to do my best to proudly represent the IPA. Thank you for your support.

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Fall is upon us and I'm sure the plows will out for plow days. Please be safe and enjoy the season. We'll see you all in the spring, if not sooner. God bless America and the IPA.

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Your President, **Ray Elsberry** Iowa Plowing Association

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