

USAPO Contest Rules

General Rules

Competitor Information

1. Anyone interested in competing in one of the national contests must register for that contest in an appropriate manner.
 - a. In states with a director to the USAPO board, the director of that state should be contacted in a timely manner. It is up to each state to hold a proper elimination contest and determine its slate of contestants.
 - b. In states without a director to the USAPO, the President of the USAPO should be contacted at least 30 days before the contest to receive pertinent instructions.
2. Upon arrival to the contest site, competitors must check in to the plowmen's tent to receive information about practicing, the contest meeting, etc.
3. All competitors should attend the contest meeting. Plots will be drawn, judges will be selected, and contest details will be reviewed.

Eligibility for Participation

1. Competition is open to any qualified USA citizen interested in promoting good efficient soil tillage practices.
2. For any Junior contest the competitor must be 9 years of age or older and 18 years of age or younger on the day of the national contest and have adult supervision at all times.
3. All contestants must be a member of the USAPO and may plow in only one contest.
4. The top three competitors from the previous national contest may return to that contest to defend their title (world contest representatives may defer defending their title one year).
5. In a state that holds an elimination contest, three contestants may represent the state in that contest.
6. If no state contest is held, only one contestant may represent the state in that contest.
7. No state may have more than four contestants in any one contest; it is the responsibility of each state to determine its slate of contestants.

Management of the Contests

1. The following contests will be held: Small Plow, Vintage Small Plow, Reversible, Antique, Open, Junior Small Plow, Junior Reversible, Junior Open, and Junior Antique.
2. The USAPO reserves the right to cancel any contest if there are insufficient competitors.
3. The USAPO will be represented by its board of directors in managing the contests. The board of directors will appoint contest officials and will work with the local sponsoring organization to ensure that all necessary arrangements are made.
4. If a director plows in one of the contests, he must appoint another representative to the board of directors to fulfill his responsibilities while he competes.
5. Contest scoring will be monitored and verified by the USAPO Board of Directors.
6. The field stewards (two) and judges (two teams of three) should meet one hour before the start of the contest for briefing. The field stewards will be responsible for monitoring time, measuring depth, and assessing all penalties. Each team of judges will be responsible for

judging from one end only and may consult with the field stewards about penalties assessed (i.e. wheel marks, improper finish, etc.)

7. All contestants must meet following the annual meeting for contest briefing.
8. All questions pertaining to the contests will be resolved by the USAPO Board of Directors and their decision will be final and binding.
9. The USAPO may modify rules as needed to complete the national contests.

Rules Governing the Small Plow, Vintage Small Plow, and Reversible Contests

Small Plow and Reversible plows

1. Two or three furrow moldboard plows are eligible to compete. They should be either conventional or reversible models fitted with coulters, skimmers, and shares. Tailpieces are optional.
2. The size of any tailpiece must not exceed 26 cm in length and 22 cm in width. The total distance from the end of the moldboard to the end of the tailpiece, including brackets, must not exceed 32 cm. The concave or convex of the tailpiece must not be greater than a ratio of 1 cm to each 15 cm of width.
3. Skimmer tailpieces may be used on skimmers and can be adjustable or fixed.
4. The use of GPS, laser beams or other electronic or computerized measuring devices are not allowed.
5. Extraneous attachments that manipulate the furrows or scratches are not allowed.
6. Markers and attachments on the tractor are not allowed.

Vintage Small Plow plows

1. Any moldboard plow that does not have competition type bottoms is eligible.
2. Non-competition bottoms, coulters, and jointers may be used from Kverneland and other competition plow manufacturers.
3. The equipment may be of different manufacturers and vintages.
4. Plows must be two or three furrows.

Plot Size

1. Conventional plots will measure 100 meters (328 feet) long by 20 meters (~65.5 feet) wide.
2. Reversible plots will measure 100 meters (328 feet) long by 24 meters (78.5 feet) on one end and by 16 meters (52.5 feet) on the other end.
3. Two contest plots will be completed per competitor.
4. Plots may be made smaller at the discretion of the USAPO; all contestants will be informed of any necessary changes.

Time for Plowing

1. Twenty minutes will be allowed for the opening split (small plow contest) and opening furrow (reversible contest).
2. In the conventional contest, all plowing will stop while the split is judged. In the reversible contest, plowmen will make their scratch mark for the butts while opening furrow is judged. Plowmen should be ready to continue plowing when the judges have concluded their work.

3. Contestants will be allowed 2 hours and 40 minutes to complete the rest of their plot.

Furrow size

1. The furrow depth shall be 15 cm (6") to 20 cm (8") unless otherwise specified by the USAPO and host organization.
 - a. In the conventional contest, the specified depth should be reached by the sixth furrow and adhered to until the last six furrows. Up to nine measurements will be taken by contest officials during this time.
 - b. In the reversible contest, the specified depth should be reached by the sixth furrow and adhered to until the last furrows. Up to twelve measurements will be taken by contest officials during this time.
 - c. All depth measurements will be taken a minimum of two meters from the scratch marks in the above, described locations and will be averaged together. If the plowing is not at proper depth after the first measurement, the contestant will be notified.

Plowing a Small Plow Plot

Sighting and Setting Out

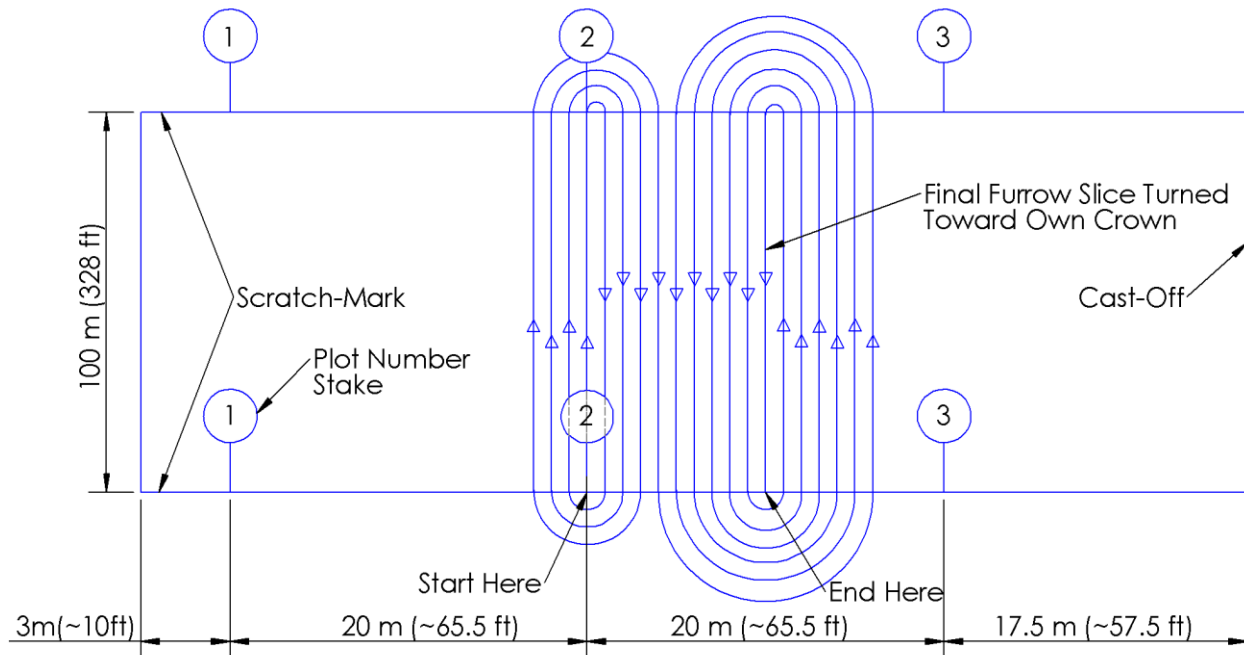
1. Three sighting poles only may be used and must be within your plot and turn strip (one sighting pole may be repositioned in the center of the plot); plot number markers, foot marks, stones or other guides are not allowed.
2. Competitor must place their sighting poles on the plot numbers.
3. Competitors can have assistance in placing and removing sighting poles only, no other assistance is allowed during the match.

Opening Split

1. To begin the contest, the contestant must create a split by turning scratch furrows out while leaving no land uncut in the middle of the split.
2. Twenty minutes will be allowed for completion of the opening split.

Method of Plowing

1. The crown will be created by plowing four rounds with a two-bottom plow (15 or 16 furrow slices) or three rounds with a three-bottom plow (17 or 18 furrow slices).
2. The competitor will then throw out to plot with the next higher number. The first two passes will not be judged to allow for corrections of straightness and depth. However, all land must be plowed, and the neighbors plot must not be run on or damaged except in extreme cases.
3. The final 12 furrows plowed will be considered the finish.
4. The final furrow slice must be turned towards the competitor's own crown.
5. Only one tractor and one plow wheel tread will be allowed at the finish.
6. Idle runs to the opposite end are allowed but must be made on the headland and not across the plot.



Small Plow and Vintage Small Plow Contest Diagram

Small Plow Scoring

Opening Split

- a. Straightness-10 points
- b. Uniformity and Neatness- 5 points
- c. Completeness of cut- 5 points

Crown (first 8 or 9 furrows)

- a. Straightness- 10 points
- b. No stubble, grass or weeds- 10 points
- c. Level crown (all furrows uniform in height) with prominent depressions between furrow slices -10 points
- d. Uniform from end to end -10 points

General Work

- a. Straightness – 10 points
- b. No stubble, grass ,or weeds -10 points
- c. No holes, furrow slices laid together properly – 10 points
- d. Firmness, soil firmly packed – 10 points
- e. Soil available for seedbed (adequate furrow comb with prominent depressions)- 10 points
- f. Furrow uniformity, no pairing – 10 points
- g. Land ends (straight land ends with the front bottom entering and rear bottom exiting the scratch furrow)- 10 points

Finish (last 12 furrows)

- a. Straightness – 10 points
- b. No stubble, grass or weeds -10 points Straightness
- c. Uniform and parallel from end to end – 10 points
- d. Narrow, shallow, and clean (no loose dirt in furrow) – 10 points

Penalties and Deductions

1. Contestants will be penalized one point for every minute or part minute over on the opening split.
2. Contestants will be penalized five points for every minute or part minute over on the general plowing (2 hours and 40 minutes portion of the contest).
3. Ten points will be deducted if the finish is laid the wrong way.
4. Contestants will be penalized up to ten points for plowing at the improper depth.
5. Contestants will be penalized up to ten points for leaving extra wheel marks in the prospective seedbed.
6. Penalties of 1 to 20 points will be assessed by the USAPO for any of the following:
 - a. Manipulation of the furrows by hand, foot, or other instrument.
 - b. Rolling (packing plowed ground) the plot, opening scratch, butts, or ins and outs with the tractor wheels except in the normal course of plowing.
 - c. Manipulation of the plowed ground by unauthorized equipment on the plow.
 - d. Removing a plow body.
 - e. Use of unauthorized technologies such as GPS, laser beams, or other electronic or computerized devices.
 - f. Improper use of sighting poles or more than three sighting poles.
 - g. Competitors must dismount from the tractor on to unplowed land when possible.
 - h. Coaching or assistance from an individual other than the competitor by any means, including by “signal”, radio contact, or mobile phone. This penalty does not apply to the Junior classes.
7. Other penalties may be assessed by the USAPO as needed.

Plowing a Reversible Plot

Sighting and Setting Out

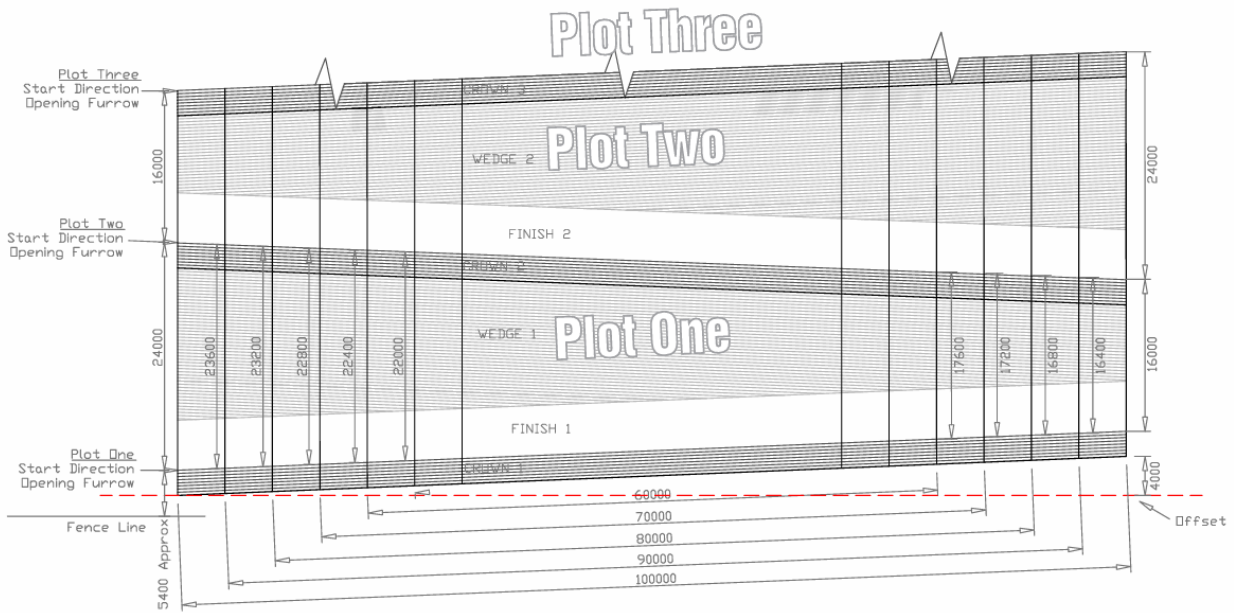
1. Three sighting poles only may be used and must be within your plot and turn strip (one sighting pole may be repositioned in the center of the plot); plot number markers, foot marks, stones, or other guides are not allowed.
2. Competitors can have assistance in placing and removing sighting poles only, no other assistance is allowed during the match.

Opening Furrow

1. To begin the contest, a single opening furrow should be plowed using the rear right body.
2. Twenty minutes will be allowed for completion of the opening furrow.

Method of Plowing

1. While the opening furrow is being judged, the scratch mark for the butts should be made parallel to the opening furrow to allow 19 or 20 furrow slices for two bottom plows, or 20 or 21 furrow slices for three bottom plows, from the opening furrow to the butts. Three sighting poles may be used and assistance in setting them is allowed. Either left or right hand bodies may be used.
2. When judging of the opening furrow is complete, plowing must commence using the left-hand bodies and 8 furrow slices (2 bottom plow) or 9 furrow slices (3 bottom plow) must be plowed to complete the crown. The first furrow slice of the crown is to be placed up to the coulter cut of the opening furrow.
3. The competitor then proceeds to plow against the neighbor with the next higher plow number and plows all the land up to his scratch mark, thus completing the butts.
4. The competitor completes the plow by plowing the finishing furrows which consist of 19 or 20 furrow slices for a two bottom plow or 20 or 21 furrow slices for a three-bottom plow.
 - a. The first pass made by the butts, the connecting furrow, may show one or two furrow slices for a two bottom plow or two or three furrow slices for a three-bottom plow. All plow bottoms must be in working position, attachments are not allowed, and sighting poles may not be used. The connecting furrow is the only pass where one furrow slice (two bottom plow) or two furrow slices (three bottom plow) may show with all bottoms in plowing position.
 - b. The finishing furrows are completed when the final furrow is plowed at the cut of the opening furrow. No land should be left unplowed and no part of the opening furrow slice may be replowed. The first and final furrow slices should be the same height.
5. Only one tractor and one plow wheel tread will be allowed at the finish.
6. Alternate bodies must be used at all times when plowing the plot.
7. Idle runs are not permitted.



If plots are shorter in length, plots must be shortened equal amounts at each end to maintain full width plots and correct angle.
Use table to determine plot widths in relation to length

COMPETITORS MUST START FROM CORRECT END
CAST OFFS Must Be On Competitors LEFT

WIDTH OF PLOTS & OFFSET	
100 Metre Plot Length	= 24.000 x 16.000 x 4.000 Offset
90 Metre Plot Length	= 23.600 x 16.400 x 3.600 Offset
80 Metre Plot Length	= 23.200 x 16.800 x 3.200 Offset
70 Metre Plot Length	= 22.800 x 17.200 x 2.800 Offset
60 Metre Plot Length	= 22.400 x 17.600 x 2.400 Offset

Reversible Contest Diagram

Reversible Plow Contest Scoring

Opening Furrow – 10 points

- The furrow slice should be completely cut off for the length and width of the split to provide for good weed control.
- The opening split should be straight, uniform, and clean.

Crown – 10 points

- All soil should be completely cut loose.
- The crown should be uniform and contain furrow slices of even height with no wheel marks.

Connecting Furrow at Butts – 20 points

- All soil must be completely cut free with no dips or mounds (10 points)
- All furrow slices should be visible the total length of the plow and should be uniform and of even height with no wheel marks (10 points)

General Work – Weed Control – 20 points

- All stubble and weeds should be properly buried (10 points)
- Furrow slices should be cut or torn free and rolled over properly to seal off weeds from growing through the prospective seed bed (10 points)

General Work – Seed Bed – 20 points

- a. Furrow slices should be rolled over properly to prevent a lumpy seedbed with holes in it. (10 pts)
- b. Furrow slices should be uniform and closely packed to create a firm seedbed with no pairing. (10 pts)

Two Last Furrows- 10 points

- a. The last furrow slices should be equal in height to the crown.
- b. All stubble and weeds should be properly covered.

Final Furrow - 10 points

- a. The final furrow must be close to the opening furrow slice with no unplowed or replowed soil.
- b. All stubble and weeds should be properly covered.

Ins and Outs – 10 points

- a. Land ends should be in a straight line with the front bottom entering and the rear bottom exiting at the scratch furrow.
- b. No wheel marks should be present.

Straightness – 40 points

- a. Opening furrows (10 pts)
- b. Crown (10 pts)
- c. General Work (10 pts)
- d. Finish (10 pts)

General Appearance – 10 points

- a. The plot should appear straight and free of mistakes.
- b. Furrow slices should be clearly defined and uniform with no pairing.

Penalties and Deductions

1. Contestants will be penalized one point for every minute or part minute over on the opening split.
2. Contestants will be penalized five points for every minute or part minute over on the general plowing (2 hour and 40 minute portion of the contest).
3. Ten points will be deducted per offense if there are an incorrect number of furrow slides in the crown or finish.
4. Contestants will be penalized 10 points per offense for not using alternating plow bodies and/or making idle runs.
5. Contestants will be penalized up to ten points for plowing at the improper depth.
6. Contestants will be penalized up to ten points for leaving extra wheel marks in the perspective seedbed.
7. Penalties of 1 to 20 points will be assessed by the USAPO for any of the following:

- a. Manipulation of the furrows by hand, foot or other instrument.
 - b. Rolling (packing plowed ground) the plot, opening scratch, butts, and ins and outs with the tractor wheels except in the normal course of plowing.
 - c. Manipulation of the plowed ground by unauthorized equipment on the plow.
 - d. Removing a plow body.
 - e. Use of unauthorized technologies such as GPS, laser beams, or other electronic or computerized devices.
 - f. Improper use of sighting poles or more than three sighting poles.
 - g. Competitors must dismount from the tractor on to unplowed land when possible.
 - h. Coaching or assistance from an individual other than the competitor by any means, including by "signal", radio contact, or mobile phone. This penalty does not apply to the Junior classes.
8. Other penalties may be assessed by the USAPO as needed.

Rules for Antique and Open Plowing Contests

Equipment

1. Antique Contest Equipment
 - a. The tractor model must be manufactured in or before 1951 and no hydraulic equipment may be used.
 - b. The plow must be:
 - i. Clutch or mechanical lift, not hydraulic
 - ii. North American made with all components of similar characteristic
 - iii. Equipped with blacksmith type shares
 - iv. Equipped with regular straight coulters (not disk type)
 - v. Jointers are allowed, coverboards are not
 - vi. Replacement rubber tires are allowed on equipment
 - c. There are no limitations to the number of bottoms on the plow.
 - d. Any appliance not original or factory equipment for the plow or tractor is not allowed (maintain antique vintage) except for weights and manual landing lever.
 - e. Contestants must be able to prove the age and authenticity of their equipment.
2. Open Class Equipment
 - a. Any tractor or moldboard plow that does not have competition type bottoms is eligible.
 - b. Non-competition bottoms, coulters and jointers may be used from Kverneland and other competition plow manufacturers.
 - c. The equipment may be of different manufacturers and vintages.
 - d. There are no limitations to the number of bottoms of the plow.
3. All plows consisting of four bottoms or more will be considered large plows.
4. All plows must have a 12 inch or larger frame.

Plot Size

1. Plows with three bottoms or less will compete on a plot 264 feet long and 40 feet wide.
2. Large plows will compete on a plot 264 feet long and 80 feet wide.

Time for Plowing- Contestants will be allowed 75 minutes to complete their plot.

Furrow Size

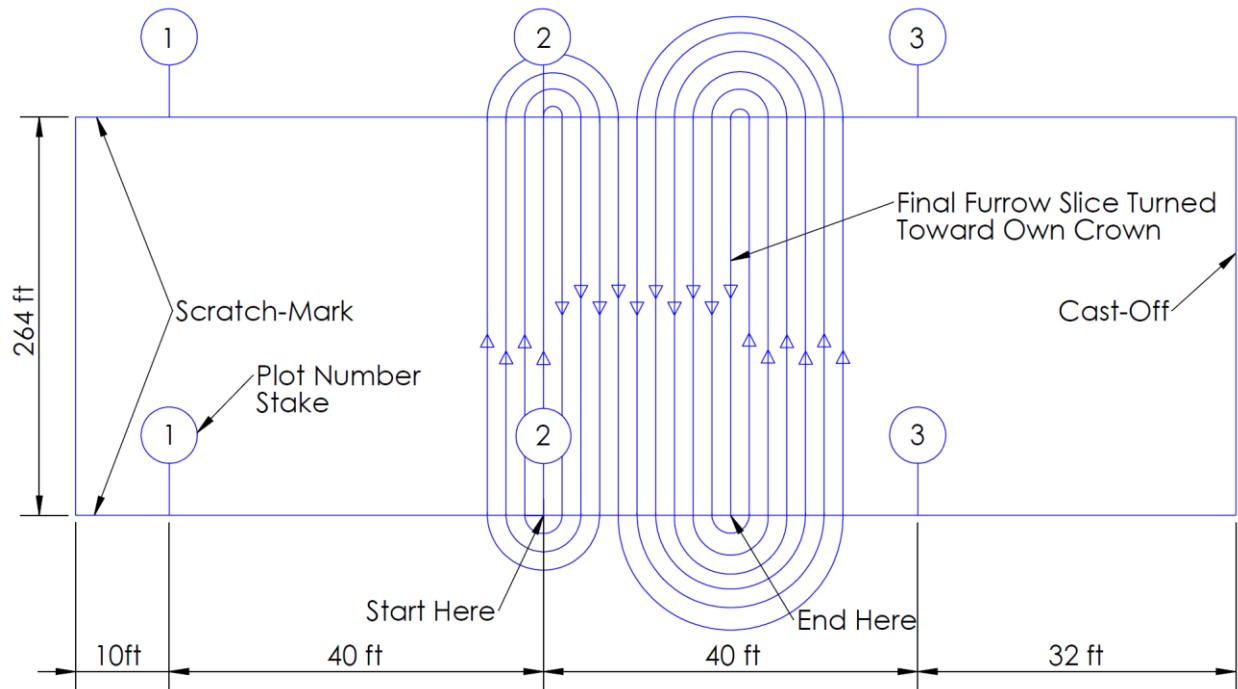
1. The minimum furrow width shall be 12 inches.
2. The furrow depth shall be 6 to 8 inches unless otherwise specified by the USAPO and host organization.
 - a. The specified depth should be reached by the fifth furrow and adhered to until the last six furrows. Up to nine measurements will be taken by contest officials during this time.
 - b. All depth measurements will be taken a minimum of two yards from the scratch marks in the above, described locations and will be averaged together. If the plowing is not at proper depth after the first measurement, the contestant will be notified.

Sighting and Setting Out

1. Three sighting poles only may be used and must be within your plot and turn strip (one sighting pole may be repositioned in the center of the plot); plot number markers, foot marks, stones or other guides are not allowed.
2. Competitor must place their sighting poles on the plot numbers.
3. Competitors can have assistance in placing and removing sighting poles only, no other assistance is allowed during the match.

Method of Plowing

1. The crown will be created by plowing eight rounds with a one bottom plow, four rounds with a two-bottom plow (15 or 16 furrow slices), three rounds with a three-bottom plow (17 or 18 furrow slices) or two rounds with a large plow.
2. The competitor will then throw out to the plot with the next higher number. The first pass will not be judged to allow for corrections of straightness and depth. However, all land must be plowed, and the neighbors plot must not be run on or damaged except in extreme cases.
3. The final 12 furrows plowed will be considered the finish.
4. The final furrow slice must be turned towards the competitor's own crown.
5. Only one tractor and one plow wheel tread will be allowed at the finish.
6. Idle runs to the opposite end are allowed but must be made on the headland and not across the plot.



Antique and Open Contest Diagram

Antique/Open Class Scoring

Crown (first 8 or 9 furrows)

- Straightness- 10 points
- No stubble, grass or weeds – 10 points
- Level crown (all furrows uniform in height) with prominent depressions between furrow slides – 10 points
- Uniform from end to end – 10 points

General Work

- Straightness- 10 points
- No stubble, grass or weeds – 10 points
- No holes, furrow slides laid together properly – 10 points
- Firmness, soil firmly packed – 10 points
- Soil available for seedbed (adequate furrow comb with prominent depressions) – 10 points
- Furrow uniformity, no pairing – 10 points
- Land ends (straight land ends with front bottom entering and rear bottom exiting the scratch furrow) – 10 points

Finish (last 12 furrows)

- Straightness – 10 points
- No stubble, grass or weeds – 10 points
- Uniform and parallel from end to end- 10 points

- d. Narrow, shallow and clean (no loose dirt in furrow) – 10 points

Penalties and Deductions

1. Contestants will be penalized five points for every minute or part minute over on the general plowing.
2. Ten points will be deducted if the finish is laid the wrong way.
3. Contestants will be penalized up to ten points for plowing at the improper depth.
4. Contestants will be penalized up to ten points for leaving extra wheel marks in the prospective seedbed.
5. Penalties of 1 to 20 points will be assessed by the USAPO for any of the following:
 - a. Manipulation of the furrows by hand, foot or other instrument.
 - b. Rolling (packing plowed ground) the plot, opening scratch, butts, and ins and outs with the tractor wheels except in the normal course of plowing.
 - c. Manipulation of the plowed ground by unauthorized equipment on the plow,
 - d. Removing a plow body.
 - e. Use of unauthorized technologies such as GPS, laser beams, or other electronic or computerized devices.
 - f. Improper use of sighting poles or more than three sighting poles.
 - g. Competitors must dismount from the tractor on to unplowed land when possible.
 - a. Coaching or assistance from an individual other than the competitor by any means, including by “signal”, radio contact, or mobile phone. This penalty does not apply to the Junior classes.
6. Other penalties may be assessed by the USAPO as needed.

Ties

In the event of two or more competitors having equal points (tie) to decide a top three placing, a countback system will be used to resolve the tie. If the first countback aspect does not resolve the tie, the following aspect will be reviewed and so on:

1. The summation of the straightness categories.
2. The summation of the following categories:
 - a. General Work: No stubble, grass, or weed
 - b. General Work: No holes, furrow slices laid together properly
 - c. General Work: Firmness, soil firmly packed
 - d. General Work: Soil available for seedbed
 - e. General Work: Furrow uniformity, no pairing
3. The summation of the following categories:
 - a. Finish: No stubble, grass, or weeds
 - b. Finish: Uniform and parallel from end to end
 - c. Finish: Narrow, shallow, and clean (no loose dirt in furrow)
4. The summation of the following categories:
 - a. Crown: No stubble, grass, or weeds
 - b. Crown: Level Crown (all furrows uniform in height) with prominent depressions between furrow slices
 - c. Crown: Uniform from end to end

Revision History:

Date of adoption	Notes
Sept 1, 2006	Significant Re-write
Nov 20, 2010	Edits to Management of the Contest and Antique Class tractor and plow eligibility
April 23, 2014	New score sheets adopted
Aug 31, 2017	Removed 16-year-old age limit
March 12, 2022	Added Vintage Small Plow and Junior Classes
July 10, 2024	Added tie-breaker criteria
January 25, 2025	Added deduction clarifications and other minor revisions