



Outlaw Truck and Tractor Pulling Association

www.outlawpulling.com

DATE: 11/12/15

TO: Outlaw Competitors

FROM: Doug Roberts, OTTPA CEO

SUBJECT: Changes coming to OTTPA

Ownership & Future of OTTPA

Well I knew this day was coming someday as almost 40 years ago I bought my first tractor to both farm with and pull. It was at the late Harold Tingle farm auction in Shelbyville, KY that he had on New Year's Day. It was a 4020 John Deere that Jack Gowin owned and pulled that summer and he added it to Harold's sale. I made my first pull with that tractor on June 19 at Clay Village, KY and won the class and never in my wildest dreams did I think it would lead to this 40 years later. After that I built 2 different tractors, one with Bennie Nutter and another with David Perry as we pulled in Kentucky and surrounding states the next 10 years. When I moved to Missouri in the summer of 1986 to farm I stayed out of pulling for a couple of years. It was then in 1988 Allen Freelend and myself built a JD 4320 Pro Stock and named it "Barnyard Beast." I did some local brush pulling and went to the Louisville pull every winter with this tractor. In 1991 OTTPA started a Pro Stock Tractor class and I built a JD 4560 and won the points title in 1993. I was elected to be an OTTPA board member in 1991 and elected Vice-President in 1994. In 1995 I built the alcohol version JD 4560 and ran it on the OTTPA & NTPA circuit. My first hook was at Tomah, WI and took my first win at Lexington, AL that year. After lots of breakage and wild rides during the 1996 season I decided to build a new tractor for myself, a JD 8200 in the spring of 1997. Component rear ends were not allowed in tractor classes so with the help of Tim Engler I did the next best thing we could. It was not illegal in my mind but let's just say in the gray area. We put a truck differential, drop box and gear box in an OEM 4010 rear end. With not much cast left to support the tractor, I built my first 1 piece tube frame and I put the engine plus turbo system on rollers to be able split and get to the clutch with the OEM cast rear-end and clutch housings. Also after about flipping the tractor over twice the year before I built a roll cage on this new tractor. When I arrived at Tomah, WI the Randy Rose accident had happened the day before and the roll cage looked like a good idea after all. Less than two years later both components and roll cages were allowed in tractor classes. I sold this tractor after the pull in Bowling Green, OH later that year and retired from competitive pulling. After 22 years of pulling I have pulled in Canada, Mexico, New York to Colorado, the Pontiac Silverdome and Houston Astrodome. I have won at the Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, & Ohio State Fairs along with Tomah, WI, Chapel Hill, TN, Macon, MO, Ft.

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Recovery, OH, the World Championships at Bowling Green, OH, the ATPA World Finals at the Edwards Jones Dome in St. Louis, MO and the National Farm & Machinery Show Championship Pull Saturday night finals in Louisville. It had been a great ride, but it was time to move on.

In 1997 I built my new shop “Roberts Machine” and in 1998 I got elected as the President of OTTPA. We had just 10 events on the OTTPA circuit back then, so it was easy to do both. By 2000 we had doubled in size and then Dennis Goodwin and I put OTTPA and ITPA together and we doubled in size again and have grown every year since. I have learned a lot from Dennis and he was so instrumental in the growth of OTTPA in those early years. By 2007 OTTPA had grown so much it was a full time job and I started doing less and less in my shop. In 2009 when I took over ownership of OTTPA the good part about that was I could make the changes that I thought would make the association grow even more. The one change that I am most proud of is setting up an Executive Board to make financial decisions and an OTTPA Board with every class represented to make class rules. OTTPA President Whitey Zajicek and the OTTPA board have done a great job keeping OTTPA going in the right direction these last 6 years. I also started a 5 year plan to move OTTPA in the direction to be the best pulling association in the country. This is near fruition with the big screen, then network TV and now sponsorship. Things have never looked better for OTTPA and I am excited about its future, however the work load is tremendous. There is just not an off-season anymore like the pullers get to enjoy. Just this past month I have been to 5 fair board meetings in 4 different states, met with 3 sponsors, traveled to SEMA show in Las Vegas, and have the upcoming PRI show in Indianapolis, IN plus the Iowa Fair convention in Des Moines, IA coming up shortly.

Two years ago Dave Bennett and I made a 5 year pact that we were both going to retire from this rat race. We both travel over 20,000 miles each on the “OTTPA Summer Tour.” Dave has been so important to me with his years of experience and knowledge in this sport. He has seen and done it all from pulling, dealing with buildings, promoters, promoting pulls himself, etc. I can always call Dave and get advice and believe me that has been often over these years. Now with three little ones it is just getting tougher to do. Traveling in the motor coach has helped, but this year Carrie missed Iowa State Fair and part of Wisner for the first time as Hope is in school now. This is just going to get worst with 2 more starting school in the next 2 to 3 years and all the other activities they are and will be in. With that said I do not want to go through another year like this year, it just wore me out! When Spencer called about having Outlaws back in the Clay County Fair and I pulled up the hook schedule from the last year we were there which was in 2010, I realized we have basically doubled in size since then. Twice as many events, twice the number of classes that hooked, the addition of four more new classes, twice the purse and added the big screen. No wonder I cannot get it all done anymore, I’ve just created a monster. With 3 small children and all their activities that I want to be a part of it, now seems the right time for a change.

I told the OTTPA membership that if I decide to sell I would let you know. I thought I could somehow turn it back over to the membership, but after being able to make all the decisions on the direction the association needs to go, I realized that committee run associations just do not work as well in my experience dealing with board members and employees over the years. I have had 3 offers to buy OTTPA, one from another association and two from individuals. My concern with another association is that they would not keep the rules that our pullers had put in place and mess up a good thing. One of the individual offers came from Kurt Van Beek. I have been working with Kurt for a year now on our sponsorship program and like what I see. He also helped OTTPA financially to get us started with TV until sponsorship came in. I decided that rather than just an investor I would rather have a business partner. I looked at different percentages of ownership but in the end I decided on an equal partnership sharing in work load and business responsibility. Kurt and his son Taylor are highly invested in the sport of truck and tractor pulling with the wheel and tire cutting business, a VP Racing

Fuel distributor and also competing in a tractor class. Living in Rock Valley, Iowa he is located close to our marketing agency and is in the heart of OTTPA pulling. Kurt will be Chief Operating Officer and in charge of day to day operations that include sponsorship (Agency 212), TV (Masters Entertainment), finances and payroll (Susan Dunklau), big screen and film crew (Warren Bauer), entry & tech (Lori Bauer & Tom Kauffman), etc. Kurt and I will still make financial and business decisions together and I think we will make a good partnership in moving Outlaw forward in the future. It is always good to get new ideas and think outside the box. Kurt has already made a big difference in our approach to next year and if you think Outlaws has grown in the past you haven't seen nothing yet. We are wide open and hammer down as we approach 2 million in purse and payout for the competitors.

OTTPA has hired Susan Dunklau to be Office Manager in charge of book keeping among other things. We are glad to have her onboard as there is a lot to be done. Lori Bauer just like myself has had a lot of extra work these last few years with everything doubling in size and I even had her doing more this year of my work with me not being able to get everything done. Lori has done a great job for OTTPA and will continue to be in charge of entry and points along with writing checks to the pullers at events. I don't know what I would have done without her help all these years. Carrie will still do the Outlaw Merchandise and Souvenir Trailer. I am so blessed to have such a good support team around me with the Outlaw board, tech, Lori & Kevin, Dave & Linda, Warren & Debbie, my wife Carrie and now Kurt & Susan. They are all part of the Outlaw family and look for better things from OTTPA in the future. As for myself, I do not know if I will do this for 3 to 5 more years or longer as I just need to see how things get along with the work load.

I have been so blessed to be able to do what I love and make a living at it either through my shop building pulling tractors or running OTTPA. I have no regrets as this sport has been good to me. It is where I met my wife Carrie and have been blessed with 3 beautiful children. As I look at all the friends, pullers and their families I would not have known, the places I would not have been and seen. It has been worth the ride. Life is good, God is good. The main thing is I want to spend more time with my wife and kids and do other things. You know you have been doing this too much when your two year old child thinks that the Cracker Barrel sign, the John Deere sign and the Outlaw logo all are pronounced "Tractor Pull".

Thanks, Doug