

OUTLAW LIGHT SUPER STOCK CLASS

To: Outlaw Light Super Stock Competitors, Tech, Board members & Executive board

From: Doug Roberts, OTTPA CEO

As far as the Outlaw Light Super Stock (LSS) class goes it is in the best shape it has ever been in as far as numbers of vehicles and number of hooks. This class is doing great as only 8 years ago we had just 7 tractors at Rock Valley and 4 of them didn't run. That event was even thinking of pulling this class out for that reason. All three of our Super Stock classes are high maintenance and numbers can get low because of this but the LSS class seems to do the best with that problem. Our Diesel Super Stock (DSS) class has struggled with numbers this year for numerous reasons after improving 3 years in a row. Our Unlimited Super Stock (USS) class I almost gave up on after having only 3 tractors and down to just 4 events a few years ago. I stuck with it as it has made a complete turnaround the last few years and is in the best shape ever with lots of times having over 10 tractors show up. The last event before the "Pull-off for the Championship" had 13 tractors in it. Our USS class has the same rules as the NTPA & PPL Light Super Stock class with component rear-ends and 504 cubic inch pushrod engines. Our LSS class has the same engine rules as our USS class and NTPA & PPL Light Super classes but you still have to run the complete cast components such as rear end, axle housings, transmission case and axle housing. By having to have this extra weight in the back we have been able to keep the diesel and alcohol powered tractors competitive in the same class. Mainly because the alcohol tractors cannot utilize their horsepower if you keep the weight of the class light enough and they have to run a lower drawbar to keep the front end down. You have seen that now both NTPA and PPL along with our USS class has become an all alcohol powered tractor class because with component rules they can make more front end weight and keep the front end down and the diesel can't run with them competition wise. Our LSS class has been and will continue to be a work in progress as tractors make more horsepower and especially the alcohol powered vehicles as technology has advanced so much more than the diesel technology. In the old days of NTPA when I first started pulling the Light Super Stock class in 1978 with a 4010 John Deere the weight was 5,500 lbs. with 200 lbs. of moveable weight. All the serial numbers had to match on all the OEM housings. I had a 505 cubic inch, 3 turbo diesel and carried 240 lbs. on the front. I only weighed 150 lbs. back then. We didn't

make that kind of horsepower and tire speed as today so you could make that 240 lbs. work. Most vehicles were the small frame tractors and engines such as 460 & 560 IH, Oliver 88 & 1650's, 180 & 190 AC, 4 cylinder or 329 to 359 cubic inch John Deere's, etc. Outlaws didn't offer the LSS class until 1998 when both ITPA (Iowa Tractor Pulling Association) and TPM (Tractor Pullers of Missouri) dropped out of NTPA and joined up with Outlaws. By the year 2000 the weight was raised to 5800 lbs. and there shortly afterwards, diesels were allowed 100 more lbs. than the alcohol tractors and three years later 200 more lbs. Eventually the weight kept going up on both until now we are at 6100 lbs. for alcohol and 6400 lbs. for diesel. As the weight went up over the years this slowly made it harder for the small frame tractors with smaller engines to compete as the large frame tractors and larger engines could utilize their power by keeping the front end down and coming closer to running a 20 inch drawbar. The last small frame tractor to win an Outlaw championship was John Hoffmann in 2007. This LSS class started to really take off about 7 years ago, but then we started having trouble with some of the large frame tractors taking out lots of cast in big chunks in the rear end and clutch housings that were visible to everyone. It came to a head 5 years ago at our meeting. I told the class that it is a concern of mine mainly for safety as one thing that will kill this class if one of these tractors breaks in half and hurts someone. We already had one tractor, I think at the Onawa, IA event pull the hitch off the back as all the cast came with it. My statement was if we do not have guidelines people will keep taking out more and more cast till someday someone will show up with about a ½ inch thick by 6 inch square piece of cast with one bolt holding it to the tractor frame and claim to be a cast tractor. So that is when all the rules were made to have either a one piece frame or the tie bars had to be improved with the wheelie bars, roll cage, hitch all having to be fastened together and those rules were incorporated into the rule book. Also no visible modifications to the housings, you can do what you wanted to on the inside as far as lightning it up, change differential to steel or aluminum, install reverser box, pro fab transmission, drop box and only outside visible modification was you had to remove only what cast that was needed to install like a profab, drop box, etc. After that meeting we had 5 tractors that had to replace either rear end housings or clutch housing to be legal. Since that meeting everyone knew what the rules were and they were adopted by Xcaliber so we could co-sanction with them as we have the same insurance carrier. The class has steadily grow over these 5 years until it is now the 3th largest class in OTTPA out of 14 classes offered. This year the LSS class had 23 tractors taking points and over 42 different

vehicles have hooked to the sled as we co sanction with Xcaliber, pick up one time hooks when we go into Missouri, Iowa and Nebraska. Only the LLP class with 32 and 2WD class with 24 have more vehicles taking points. With 42 different tractors hooking in the LSS class it is the most of any class followed by LLP with 36, P4x4 with 35 and 4WD with 34. This class has had such great color this year as John Deere, International, White, Ford, Case, Oliver, New Holland, Deutz and Cockshutt tractors have hooked to the sled. Promoters want this class as it had 26 hooks scheduled this year and I turned down 7 events wanting this class. For maintenance and other reasons it can't support more hooks.

The great thing about this class for the pullers and why it has good numbers is that they can keep the cost down through grunt work and sweat equity lightning up these cast components and building their own frames instead of \$30,000 to \$50,000 on component frame and parts. Having only the long bar/ short bar puller tires also helps keep the cost down and gives it a different look than the USS class. The LSS is a good class to bring in new pullers and also tractors that got left behind because of the component rule. With the same engine rules as the USS class some pullers moved on from this class to USS class like Glen Frese, John Hoffmann, Shawn Wiens, Junior and Colton Whitworth and Frank Bohaboj with the last three making the change this year. Even with 3 tractors leaving this LSS class this year it has had all time high numbers and averages per hook since we started keeping records in 1998.

The great thing about this class for the promoters is the entertainment value as you not only get color, but you get 3 classes in one. You get the multi charger 504 cubic inch super stock diesels, the single or multi charger 504 cubic inch alcohol and then the 640 cubic inch 4.1 charger tractors. Our rules for fair competition have kept these different vehicles together in one class and with the great variety of color and engine combinations this class doesn't get redundant. Usually someone is going to get too high on the front end or turn one sideways, etc. and that is more entertainment value. In the last 10 years with our rules for fair competition we have had 6 diesels and 4 alcohol powered vehicles win the points. 2 Fords with different owners, 4 John Deere's (2 different tractors), 4 Internationals (3 different tractors). In the first 13 hooks leading up to the event at Sweet Springs, MO the average number of vehicles in this class was at an all-time high of 13.4 per hook. We only had one event which we dropped below 10 vehicles and that was at Alta, IA which was a standalone event on a Thursday and we had 8. Even though the three tractors in question had won every event with a lot of times finishing in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd places

at the same event the other competitors in the class still turned out as there was 15 tractors at Sweet Springs. Pulling is a small world and when fellow competitors find out the three vehicles that have been kicking their butts and taking most of the purse money (over \$25,000 then) have not been playing by the rules, then that is a different deal. And when we as an association do not do anything about it, then this is what happens. The next 3 day sweep just 5 days later has 3 tractors at Springfield, 7 at Richland and 5 at Mound City which are all the lowest turnout all year. It is not fair to our promoters to have these kind of numbers. This is the reason I started thinking about cancelling the class the remainder of the year. Yes, it is not fair to the competitors that play by the rules to cancel the remaining 4 hooks, but one of the promoters on that sweep was not happy with the turnout and is not having the LSS class next year. I didn't want that to happen to anymore events the LSS class was scheduled at. That decision had nothing to do with what happened at Wisner. I knew with the first time at the Missouri State Fair in 9 years and being co-sanctioned with Xcaliber, going to Iowa State Fair and Wisner being filmed for TV most would come and we would pick up enough 1 – time hooks to have good numbers in the class.

When it comes to competition some pullers are going to run harder than others and pullers in that class know that and have that choice. Everyone knows these three tractors in question would have won a lot of those pulls anyway if playing by the rules, but probably not as many and in the profound dominance we saw with distance and smooth runs. For instance when a competitor wants to win and has a 4 charger diesel and runs 250 lbs. or more of manifold boost to beat the competition then splits the block and lifts the head off the block that vehicle is probably done for the year. Same with an Alcohol tractor that wants to win and runs over 100 lbs. of boost and kicks a rod out, it too is probably done for the year. When you want to win by having more front end weight than your fellow competitors by taking two to three hundred more lbs. of cast out of the cast components in your tractor you are legal, but when it breaks you are most likely done for the year. It is an extensive all winter job to lighten up these rear-ends that much. There is four options when this happens and only the first is a legal entry in the OTTPA LSS class. (Option 1- Legal) Replace it! Period! I have had two tractors out of Roberts Machine break rear end housings, had one tractor break the clutch housing and another tractor break an axle housing. We replaced them all before they hooked again. Some remember the Deutz breaking an axle housing at Ravenna that is still shown on our

blooper video you see at events. When we replaced it we left more cast in it the second time around and gained 30 lbs. We would have rather have had that 30 lbs. on the nose but did not want it to break again. (Option 2- Illegal) Let it go and remain broke. This violates the rule on page 27 of the 2016 OTTPA Rule book. (1) All engines must be secured and held rigid to OEM chassis. Engine cannot move independent of the rear-end/transmission housing. When it is not replaced and left broken it becomes like a component tractor with the frame flexing from the rear engine motor mount to the rear axle. That is about 58 inches on an International tractor as that is the longest of all the ag tractors and why the component rule was set at 60 inches from center of rear axle to the back of engine block. (Option 3 - Illegal) Remove broken pieces or complete section of the cast case and replace with a sub frame (Exhibit A). Nowhere is this legal or allowed in the Outlaw rule book to do this. You couldn't find any association in the country that would allow this. They claim is it's stronger than the cast and that is why they did it and it should be allowed. To make the argument that you lightened the clutch housing up to much and make it unsafe and most likely to fail just to have an weight advantage over your fellow competitors, then when it fails you make up your own rule and put a sub frame in it, then try to sell that to tech as safer when you are the reason it is unsafe to begin with, is just ridiculous!

We have a provision in the rule book on page 31 if you want to make a change in the rules or make a new rule. Rule 6 – Any alternations to the chassis cast shell must have the written approval of the OTTPA Board before tractor in question will be considered a legal entry. (Option 4 – Illegal) Remove cast section and not put anything back and get the front end weight and full effect of a component frame.

When it comes to handicapping this class to keep it a somewhat a level playing field I figure most competitors to take out about the same amount of cast to keep it safe. Too explain how front end weight is everything in this class let's look at the history of the Ford tractor. Rob Polson had it first as "Blue Can Fever" and ran with Nebraska Bush Pullers and then Outlaws. Rob never could run a legal drawbar and most of the time was at 17 inches. Most remember some of the bad rides he took, especially at Bowling Green, MO. Rob won the OTTPA Championship with this tractor in 2006. Bryan Bowles buys it in 2007 or 2008. He finishes 3rd in points in 2008 the year Glen Frese wins the OTTPA Championship just like it came from Rob. Bryan has engine problems and has Gene's Machine build new engine, fuel and turbo setup. This new horsepower leads with more tire speed and wild rides. Most remember was the wild ride he took at Richland, MO and on good tracks he runs 17

inch drawbar and sometimes up to 18 inches on others. In winter of 2009 he brings it to Roberts Machine as we try to get more front end weight. In measuring the tractor we discover that the drawbar hitch is 19 inches from center of rear axle instead of minimum 18 inches allowed in rule book. The wheel base is 6 inches short and overall length of tractor is 8 inches short. All of these things are legal but not good to hold the front end down. So we build a new hitch, frame, rollcage, wheelie bars, etc. We also gain 250 lbs. from cast rear end & clutch housing, frame, fenders, shielding, sheet metal and rollcage. Now with these changes Bryan goes to winning as he can now run 19 inch drawbar on good tracks and 20 inch rest of time. This also leads to transmission failures twice and in 2011 he sends rear-end housing out to Humpco and has drop box installed doing away with transmission. With that problem solved he has a few engine problems the next couple of years, but after 6 years of trying, hard work, and money spent it all came together for Bryan and he won an OTTPA Championship in 2013. In 2014 he was again plagued by engine problems breaking the crankshaft and out for the rest of the year. In 2015 he was pre-entered to run for points in the new "Pull-off for the Championship" when it broke the case at the Arlington, NE event last year. Bryan took it to Wisconsin to fix rear-end housing and didn't get it done in time and missed to many hooks to stay in points race. He missed Rock Valley and made only three hooks close to home at Mound City, KS; Richland, MO and Warrensburg, MO finishing 2nd to The Weapon at all three events. The Hayley's Comet was and has always been a legal entry up to the Arlington event and here are pictures of the rear-end housing that broke and you can also see the clutch housing (Exhibit B). These pictures were sent to me on June 15th, 2015 from Wisconsin two days after Arlington. It also broke the coupler and took the splines off of top shaft of the drop box when the case broke and things got out of line. Mark bought the tractor and made the last two hooks of the season at Leonardsville and Kansas State Fair with Outlaws.

This is where I am ending this letter for Pull-off. I just wanted to show why this class is important to OTTPA and in the best shape ever and will continue to be a vital part of OTTPA pulling. The LSS class, OTTPA tech and the OTTPA board will work through this situation and become better because of it. Thanks, Doug

