NTPA Light Super Stock Grand National Champions

These Champions are from 1970 to 1994 (25 years). 1994 was the last year they offered the Light Super Stock class on the Grand National circuit and it was 11 years later before they offered it again as a Component class in 2005. From 1970 to 1975 it was a 5,000 lb. class and small frame tractors were starting to have trouble holding their front ends down so in 1976 it was moved up to 5200 lbs. The very next year in 1977 it was raised to 5,500 lbs. That is when Bill Williams from Walsh, Colorado with the help of Doug Drussel from Garden City, KS put the first large frame tractor in the Light Super Stock class. A 4010 John Deere called Bill's Will and back then Drussel was first to make aluminum rear wheels that year, you also had Firestone 2 ply puller tires that came out that year and no roll cage rule. Most pullers goal back then was to run road gear which was 22 to 1 ratio on a John Deere and have 200 lbs. of moveable weight which was the rule then. Bill soon found out on a John Deere you could make weight but that was not enough front end weight to keep it under control with a 20 inch drawbar. After seeing Bill's John Deere 4010 tractor in the "The Puller" magazine take the win in the 5,500 lb. class on its very first hook that is what I wanted. He carried the front end 3 foot off the ground the full distance for the only full pull.

My grandad pulled a John Deere 4010 dead weight pulling in the early 60's. He won the Kentucky State Fair tractor pull in 1962 where Broadbent Arena sits now. I started pulling in 1976 in local classes with a John Deere 4020. In 1977 the 5,500, 7,500 and 9,500 Super Stock class was offered in Kentucky and my goal was to run all 3 classes. So in fall of 1977 I went out to Drussel's and stayed 2 months total on two different trips and built a 3 turbo diesel John Deere 4010 Super Stock. I actually bought the front end, hood and 3 turbo system from Bill's original tractor as the turbos were on top the engine along with stock radiator in stock location. After he had ran his tractor the previous year he didn't have enough front end weight so Doug Drussel was going to mount the three turbos in front of engine along with putting the radiator with an electric fan further out front. When I left there my John Deere 4010 weighed 4950 lbs. bare and with me plus full fuel & water I carried 300 lbs. on the front. My first hook with this tractor was at Louisville in February of 1978 in the 9,500 lb. class. Back then on the application you put your 1st, 2nd & 3rd choice and with lots of entries in the lighter classes that is where they put me. I had 43 – 100 lb. weights hanging on that tractor and broke the transmission at 75 feet. At this same time that the John Deere 4010 was getting into the 5,500 lb. class, Allis Chalmers D21 were getting into the 7,500 lb. Super Stock class followed by International. When it comes to cast tractor

classes John Deere has always been at a disadvantage because of the cast rear end and clutch housing length. This is from the fact that it is the shortest of all brands from rear axle to back of engine at 40.25 inches. This short length in cast enabled it to be the lightest and thus first to make weight in the 7,500 lb. Super Stock class and then the only large frame tractor in the 5,500 Super Stock class. On the other end of this is the International which is the longest at 58.25 inches from center of rear axle to back of engine. This longest length in cast made it the heaviest and the last to get in the 7500 lb. class. When International did make weight in the 7,500 lb. class with this almost 1/3 longer in length on engine location it have a 285 lb. advantage on the front axle. Add that to the driver sitting this distance in front of rear axle (86, 88 series) and you can add another 32 lbs. for a total of 317 lbs. more weight on front axle for an International than a John Deere.

When I look at the cast tractors I break them down into 3 categories. The small frame & bore center engines like IH 460 & 560, AC 180 & 190, Oliver 88 & 1650, IH 666 & 686, etc., the intermediate frame & bore center engines like Ford 8210 & Duetz 8006 and then the large frame & bore center engines like the JD 4010, IH 706, AC D21, etc.

With that said a John Deere 4010 with the superior horsepower of a larger bore center engine never won a Grand National Championship because they never had enough front end weight. The JD 4010 had 17 years from 1977 to 1994 running against small frame tractors like IH 460 & 560, AC 180 & 190, Oliver 88 & 1650, IH 666 & 686, plus intermediate frame tractors like Duetz 8006, Ford 8210, but never got it done. No other large frame tractors made it into the class before NTPA dropped it from Grand National circuit in 1994. NTPA also dropped the 5,500 lb. LSS class from the Grand National circuit for 3 years from 1989 to 1991 and then all together in 1994. When you look at the intermediate tractors like Ford and Duetz they made weight easier and had front end weight. The Ford was just 1 inch behind the International on engine location at 57.25 inches, yet a 1/3 lighter on the cast housings. The Duetz was shorter than that at 50 inches, but had the lightest of all housings. That 50 inches was still 10 inches ahead of the John Deere engine location. With the bigger bore center engines of the intermediate tractors than that of the small frame tractors Duetz and Ford won 4 NTPA Championships out of the last 9 years it was offered. This is why the Light Super Stock class has always been Ford's best class.

When you look at the NTPA 7,000, 9,000 and 12,000 lb. classes from 1970 to 1998 (28 years) as component tractors came out in 1999, you can see the gradual changes in championships that favored the International and other tractors that had

the engine the most distance in front of rear axle in these cast housing classes. The first 5 years at 7,000 lbs. John Deere 4010's won 3 championships as the other big frame tractors couldn't make weight yet. The other two championships were small frame tractors. They were 1970 Fred Nichols (JD 4010/Spark-aholic), 1971 Don McKinnon (AC 180), 1972 Harold McQueen (JD 4010/No Dogs Allowed, 1973 Tom Streiker (JD 4010 Mr. Clutch). In 1974 the last small frame tractor won the 7,000 lb. class and that was Danny Bobb with an AC 190 XT. In 1975 when the weight in the LSS class was raised to 5,500 lbs. the weight in these three classes were raised to 7,200, 9,200 and 12,200 and large frame tractors started to take over. Two years later in 1977 it was raised even more to 7,500, 9,500 and the big class was left at 12,200. These next 8 years was the golden era of the 7,500 Super Stock class even though John Deere with the 300 lb. disadvantage on front end weight was starting to show. In 1975 it was Gene Kieck with a Ford 8000, then in 1976 it was the AC D21 of Al Koch (Allis Cowboy) and 1977 the AC D21 of Ken Brabec (Big Thunder). In 1979 it was Danny Filligame (MM G705/Scrap Iron), 1980 Dave Schreier (JD 4320/Green Power Special), 1981 & 1982 Max Simpson (D21 Mean Ole Allis). Then in 1983 Esdon Lehn (IH 1486/Red Line Fever) made weight in the 7,500 lb. class and with this 300 lb. plus front end weight advantage won the next 3 years. Also in 1983 International for the first time won all 3 Super Stock Championships and repeated this every year but one in 1986. In 1986 Warren Ropp (JD 4430/Iron Elk) won and then International won everyone after that till 1990. In 1987 Bill Berg (IH 3688/Never A Nuff), 1988 & 1989 Rob Russell (IH 3688/Work Horse). In 1990 the points from the 7,500 & 9,500 classes were combined and Randy Hinton & Darrell Vaske (IH 7140/Red Rascal) were the Super Stock Champions. On all these IH tractors from 1983 till 1990 all the drivers set in front of the rear end and had about 320 lb. advantage on front axle weight than a John Deere.

At this same time from 1970 to 1989 (19 years) in the 9,000, 9,200 to 9,500 lb. class you also saw the gradual change and mainly from the horsepower of Allis Chalmers 4 turbos and International with Hypermax. The first 5 years at 9,000 lbs. it was 1970 Jack Bartlett (AC D21), 1971 Ron Perry (MM G1000), 1972 Jack Walters (IH 1466), 1973 Gord Oughtreg (AC 220), 1974 Andy Main (Case 1370). Then the weight was raised to 9,200 lbs. and you had 1975 Danny Dean (IH 1066/Rooster) & 1976 John Lancaster (AC 210). In 1977 the weight was raised to 9,500 and International won every championship after that till 1998. That was 13 years in a row from numerous competitors like Danny Dean, John Thompson, Dickie Sullivan, John Klug, and Esdon Lehn.

At this same time from 1970 to 1989 (19 years) in the 12,000 lb. class that was raised to 12,200 in 1975 and later lowered to 11,200 lbs. in 1986 then dropped in 1989. International won every championship, except 1974 & 1975 when Dave Stangle (MM G1000/Solid Junk) won two championships. Pullers like Phil Aylward, John Klug, Bill Myre, Marshall Myre, Danny Dean, Dickie Sullivan and Jerry Hart.

There is no doubt the power that the early Allis Chalmers had with the 4 turbos setups and International's with Hypermax Engineering was a big factor in their success, but the 285 to 315 pound advantage International had on front end weight compared to a John Deere didn't hurt either. Especially in the 7,500 lb. class as horsepower and tire speed increased and tractors were lightened up to drop down to the next class.

Now to 1991 with the 11,200 lb. class cancelled the year before and the 7,500 and 9,500 class points combined to have one Super Stock Champion. These next 8 years were the last of the cast housing tractor era. This was also the start of alcohol tractors starting to take over the Super Stock class and certain brands not having enough front end weight starting to really show. In 1991 & 1992 the Conner Brothers (White 2-180/Bad Medicine), 1993 Rob Russell (IH 3688/Work Horse), 1994 Tom Dickerson (IH 3688/20 Mule Team), 1995 Richard Lustik (White 6195/Silver Bullet), 1996 Esdon Lehn (IH 1486/Red Line Fever) and this would be the last year for a diesel to win a championship until they split the diesel and alcohol tractors into different classes. In 1997 Jordan Lustik (White 6195/Silver Bullet), and in 1998 Arnie Kwiatkowski (IH 7250/Wild Thing).

I built my 4560 John Deere/Barnyard Beast in 1995 and used a 4010 rear end as that was the lightest, but not in my wildest dreams did I think front end weight would be an issue. This is the same 4010 rear end I used 17 years earlier to get into the 5,500 lb. class. I didn't go to great pains cutting weight as I wanted it to look like a tractor. But with this kind of horsepower and tire speed, I could not run a 20 inch drawbar in the 7,800 lb. class. Even though it was advertised as 7,500 lb. class, my first year in pulling NTPA Grand National in 1995 everyone weighed 7,800. Even at that weight I had to redo the front hole supporting my drawbar to get the hitch down to 17 inches. I do not think I ever ran over 18 inches in that class. I did win some 7,800 lb. classes, but if you look most of my wins in 1995 & 1996 it was the 9,500 lb. classes at Bowling Green, OH; Lexington, AL; Chapel Hill, TN; Iowa State Fair and the Saturday night finals at Louisville as I could run a 20 inch drawbar. In 1996 they basically set the sled to stop the diesels tractors of Russell, Lehn and Dickerson in the 290 ft. range and the alcohol powered tractors of Lustik, Blackburn and myself would put the back of the sled past

300 ft. In 1997 they did away with the 9,500 Lb. class even though some pulls may have advertised it that way, but everyone just weighed the same 7,800 lbs. for both classes. My biggest complaint was Blackburn had the 300 lb. plus front axle weight advantage because it was an International and Lustik had even more as they had the White rear end that did not come with a clutch housing and they were allowed to remove the tub frame. Both tractors also had aftermarket transmissions that helped cut weight and breakage. In February of 1997 after I didn't get a variance from NTPA to run some of what they had I built it anyway and worked around the 4010 cast rear end. I also made the new tractor lighter, but wanted a one piece frame and roll cage for safety. I still didn't have enough front end weight and asked Larry Richwine & Dave Schreier at an event if they could raise the weight of the class up to 8000 lbs. or I was going to cut the roll cage off. Two weeks later they raised the weight to 8000 lbs. for the rest of the season as most thought roll cages and component frames where coming in the near future. With all these changes I thought were coming I sold my tractor after pulling at Bowling Green, OH that year.

Now the big changes for the 1999 season with component tractors and the diesel and alcohol tractors split into two different classes. This made for fair competition for the different brands as all engines in same location and all had same front end weight. With this said the John Deere of Joe Kwiatkowski/Taking Care of Business won a championship in 2002 in the Open Super Stock class. The first championship for a John Deere in 16 years. Then In 2005 the John Deere 4960 of Neil Gettinger/Up N Atom won a championship in the Diesel Super Stock class. The first championship for a John Deere diesel since Warren Ropp 19 years earlier in 1986. Then in 2008 the AGCO DT225 of Brian Shramek/Young Blood won the championship. The first in 26 years for an Allis Chalmers since Max Simpson in 1982. In 2009 Kevin Lynn with the New Holland 8260/504 Rocket won the LSS class, Jordan Lustik (White 6195/Silver Bullet) won the SSO class and Brian Schramek (AGCO DT225 won the SSD class. This was only the second time since 1970 that an International did not win at least one of the Super Stock championships. That was in 1974 when it was Danny Bobb/AC, Andy Main/Case and Dave Stangle/MM won the championships.

In retrospect when looking at all these different brands with cast housings it is hard to have fair competition. The different widths, lengths, weights, ability to remove cast, have aftermarket transmissions, etc. made for big advantages for some brands and bad for others. In the 16 years before component tractors when International first made weight and won the 7,500 lb. championship in 1983 they have won 83% of all

the Super Stock Championships (IH – 24, JD – 1, White – 4). This cast housing advantage led to less and less of other brands and more Internationals in all the classes. Even with International having a 2 to 1 ratio over all other brands number wise participating at events in the first 13 years after components tractor International won 47% of all the Super Stock Championships (IH – 15, JD – 3, AC – 5, White – 4, Ford – 4). That is a 36% decrease and the only change was component tractors for fair competition.

Now fast forward to now and all brands have made it to the LSS class. I never thought even less than 20 years ago you would see International 706 and Allis Chalmers D21 in the Light Super Stock cast rear end class. With the raised weight now to somewhere between 6,000 to 6,500 lbs. and all the better machining and technology we are there. Now we have reverse boxes or light weight self-contained transmissions, lightweight aluminum parts, differential carriers, lighten bull gears, etc. Only a hand full of associations still offer a Light Super Stock cast class. This has been a good class for Outlaws with 27 different tractors taking points and 7 different brands represented this year. All other associations that went to component rules has ended up an all alcohol class including Outlaws.

Without changes this class will not survive must longer unless we have rules for fair competition to even up the differences in all these different cast housings. Right now on each end of this is International and John Deere. The way an International is made you can take out enough cast that the weight of the cast is close to the same as a John Deere. Then the 340 lb. weight advantage it has on the front axle with location of engine, roll cage and driver makes for unfair competition. All the other brands fall somewhere between these two brands. Right now we have lost 3 alcohol John Deere tractors from this class in the last 2 years and soon to be 2 more diesels if changes are not made. There is only 2 of the big frame John Deere's left and none are on alcohol at 6100 lbs. Only one of them is a multi-charger Super Stock. It is a diesel that couldn't hardly make weight last year at 6,400 lbs. and had over 150 lbs. missing from clutch housing that has to be replaced for 2017. So when the most popular brand of tractor in this country is gone and only Internationals remain or one Ford or White this class will suffer.

About 7 years ago Shawn Wiens called me about building some lighter 4010 rear ends as he didn't have enough front end weight. About 2 years before that I started to build a tractor for myself and was shooting for 3,200 lbs. on the front axle as I thought that is what it would take to be competitive. Then the weight of the LSS class was

alcohol 6,000 and diesel 6,200 lbs. He sent a deposit and wanted two tractors so I started making about 5 of everything as Schlueter's were also needing to cut weight. After shortening the axle housings, chromoly axles, lighter frame and 2 bar roll cage, all parts inside aluminum, lightening the cast everywhere I could and weighing everything the best I could do is about 3,000 lbs. on front axle. I had to call him back and tell him I couldn't get enough weight on the front axle and send his money back. He decided to go into the USS class with two tractors and the front axle weighs 3,700 lbs. now. I was building one myself and put that on hold. Some of the reasons were from not having the money to spend, starting a new family, Outlaws just keeping me busy, but the main reason was why! You can't make enough front end weight and be competitive and just to blow your tires off with a 17 to 18 inch drawbar. That was 7 years ago and as technology increases and you make more horsepower and tire speed that would be a bigger problem now than then.

Two years ago the Whitworth's had 3 alcohol tractors in the LSS class. Two John Deere tractors and one White. After many wide rides with the John Deere tractors and running a low drawbar he put them in the USS class. He left the White in the LSS class. When I called Scott he said the most front end weight he could get with the John Deere tractors was around 3,000 lbs. on front axle at 6,100 lbs. As a component with the same engines they now weigh 3,650 lbs. on front axle. The White's front axle weighed 3,200 lbs. so he left it in the LSS class. Frank Bohaboj also took wide rides and couldn't run legal drawbar so he went to the USS class last year. The best he could do was about 3000 lbs. on the front axle and he said if he could move the engine up 18 inches like the International he would stay in the class. Well, we couldn't do that with the cast rules we have! When I called most competitors in the LSS class they didn't know what the front axle of their tractor weighed. For years they have put everything on the front and adjusted the drawbar height as to how good they thought the track was. So after some calls I went and weighed some tractors and one was the Dohrman's D21 and the front end weighed 2,790 lbs. as a diesel at 6,400 lbs. They also could go to 2 bar roll cage and lose some cast in rear end and maybe at best get to 3,000 lbs. I then went on up to Schlueter's and weighed both of their tractors. When we built Chuck Schlueter's tractor we went with two turbos so we could put more weight up front. Chuck's tractor with two turbos weighed 2,905 lbs. on the front axle. Cory's tractor with 3 turbos weighed 2,750 lbs. on the front axle and both are diesels at 6,400 lbs. Cory with 3 turbo's made more power but did worst as he could only run 17 inch drawbar all year and made lots of wild rides. So on a John Deere without enough front end weight you do better if you do not make more power. Both could probably get to

3,000 lbs. at the most with a two bar roll cage and try to find some cast somewhere to take out. They did have a spare engine complete on the stand with OEM cast head and one turbo and it weighed 1,750 lbs. When I got back home I also weighed the Deutz and it weighed 3,160 lbs. on front axle as an alcohol it weighs 6,100 lbs. The Duetz engine weighs 1,700 lbs. The Hayley's Comet/Ford of Bryan Bowles front axle weighed 3,150 when he sold it to the Ulmer's as an alcohol at 6,100 lbs. and it could get to 3,200 lbs. on front end. As far as International tractors I didn't have any to weigh that were together, so I called Josh Harrington and he didn't know what his weighed. He has a 4 turbo diesel at 6,400 lbs. and was going to weigh his but never did. He said he had reworked his tractor for more weight gain and also added a 200 lb. transmission, instead of the reverser box. It weighed 3,220 lbs. on front end with just the reverser in it when we got it from Jay Fuqua before it was sold to Josh. I did talk to others in different associations that run cast Internationals and they had between 3,100 to 3,200 lbs. on front axle as a diesel and alcohol if they ran our class weight. I talked to .John Hoffman and the front axle on his USS tractor weighs 3,680 lbs. and rarely does he runs a 20 inch drawbar. The LSS class and USS class in Outlaws has the same engine rules except for a Mag for USS and MSD box for LSS. Some do not believe it makes a difference as Brice Terry still runs a MSD box on the Hy Strung Too Allis Chalmers.

What has made Outlaws grow in vehicles all these years, events and purse is our rules for fair competition and keeping the cost down that have made for good numbers in our classes. When you have more multiple winners or vehicles with a chance to win or finish high in the class, that class stays healthy with more participation. This is why Outlaws has had over 30 new rookies the last 4 years with a record 52 last year. This is while a lot of other associations are seeing a decline in vehicles.

This is why we need to have cast tractors weigh different amounts to make for fair competition or this class will not survive if everyone has to have a certain brand to win. If we fix it now some may stay in the class and others may build for this class. If we let the numbers go down than it gets to be a harder sell to the promoters and the hooks go down. We saw that in the USS class a few years ago as we got down to 4 tractors and then that led to just 4 or 5 hooks. Then no one would build or join Outlaws for just that many hooks and it took 4 or 5 years to turn it around. Now it is doing great with over 13 tractors and lots of different brands with about 25 hooks. If we can't fix this front axle weight problem with the different brands then we will have to drop this LSS class and some will go into the USS class and the few small frame tractors that run in the LSS class can go to the LLSS class we are starting in 2018. Thanks, Doug