

Isle of Wight Ploughing Association Annual Ploughing Match

Rules and Class Details

Class	Description
Class 1	Open to competitors between 13 and 21 years of age on the day of the Match. Any type of plough permitted. Minimum working depth 6 inches.
Class 2	General Purpose Ploughs operated by any type of tractor. Minimum working depth 6 inches. Plot reduced to 50' width.
Class 3	Vintage tractor with pre.1965 general purpose mounted plough Minimum working depth 6 inches. Plot reduced to 50' width.
Class 4	Match Ploughs with any number of furrows Operated by any type of tractor Minimum working depth 8 inches.
Class 5	Semi-digger Ploughs with any number of furrows Operated by any type of tractor. Minimum working depth 8 inches. If there are more than three entries with four or more furrow ploughs, a separate Class 5a may be made for competitors with four or more furrow semi-digger ploughs
Class 6	Reversible Ploughs only. Minimum working depth 8 inches
Class 7	Veteran and Vintage Tractor Class with Trailing Plough. Minimum working depth 6 inches. Plot reduced to 50' width.
Class 8	Single furrow plough – tractor not exceeding 20-horse power. Minimum working depth 5 inches
Class 9	Pedestrian controlled machines

Rules & Conditions

1. Competitors may commence veers when ready but must be completed by 9.30 am and wait for them to be judged. When all openings have been judged a rocket-flare or audible horn will be let off to inform competitors when they may commence ploughing the remainder of their plot.
2. All ploughing is to be finished within three hours of the starting signal unless permission to continue is given by the Stewards. When time for finishing is signalled by the rocket-flare or audible horn all competitors must cease ploughing and leave their plots immediately. Penalty points will be awarded for exceeding these time scales except when Rule 8 applies.
3. From the moment the Competitor starts ploughing their plot no person other than the Competitor may set or adjust the Competitor's plough or give any form of assistance. This is subject to Rule 9 (breakdown) and to Rule 10 (reversible ploughs) only
4. In the Reversible Plough Class only and for the purpose of veering out Competitors may be assisted to remove and refit the top link. Such assistance may only be given on the headland and with the Class Steward or other Committee Official present.
5. Each Competitor shall be required to plough the whole of the area allotted to him within the time limit allowed but is not required to plough out the headlands
6. Each Competitor shall be required to plough with one ridge to split and one complete finish. All Competitors to veer from their numbered plug and gather up three turns with the remainder of the plot to be thrown abroad and only one wheel mark to be shown at the finish. Competitors shall throw abroad to the next highest plot number and the last furrow should be thrown to the Competitor's own middle.
7. An entrant shall be deemed a Novice if he has not won a first prize in any Class in any Ploughing Match, whether organised by the Association or not. Any person who has won the Novice Cup at the I.W. Ploughing Match will be ineligible for this Trophy.
8. All plots are of nominal width 60', except where stated.

Judging

The judges will be marking the ploughing against the following criteria. There are 20-points available for each section, 140-points in total.

Criteria	What it means
Opening	<p>All competition plots on stubble (as opposed to grassland) are required to perform an 'opening' (also called veer or split). The methods vary from competitor to competitor, but essentially the requirement is to create a shallow furrow into which the subsequent ploughing will be laid. Consider for a moment that one furrow creates a gap for the next furrow; the opening is the very first of these furrows.</p> <p>The judges will be looking for straightness, uniformity, cleanliness in the furrow bottom, and to ensure that all the ground has been ploughed. As the opening will be hidden by subsequent ploughing, all competitors will stop after completing their opening, while they are judged.</p>
Start (first 11- or 12-furrows)	<p>Once the openings have been judged, the competitors will commence the next stage, known as the 'start' (also known as the 'Middle'). This comprises the first 11- or 12-furrows around the opening (depending on the method of start being used). The competitors begin by laying furrows into the opening, first from one side, and then the other, and continue this process round and round; this is called gathering, and is generally clockwise.</p> <p>The depth of ploughing will typically be very shallow with the first furrows laid into the opening, but will gradually increase in depth until the minimum required depth is reached by the 11th or 12th furrow. Once the start is complete, the competitors will then change direction, and begin ploughing against their neighbour's plot (into their neighbour's last furrow around his middle). This is called casting, and is generally anti-clockwise. The result of the casting is a continual reduction in the width of unploughed land between the competitor's own middle and that of the neighbour's middle.</p> <p>Despite the requirement to gradually increase the ploughing depth from the middle, and that at the centre of the start the furrows are very shallow, the competitors must make their starts as level as possible. There is a tendency for the middles to be high as each side meets in the middle, however!</p>
Seed Bed	<p>The whole point of ploughing is for an effective start of a process to prepare the land for subsequent planting of new crops. Therefore, the ploughing should reflect this, in terms of having buried all of the previous crop (and weeds) in order to reduce the need to apply sprays. Additionally, there should be sufficient soil made available for subsequent operations, and the ploughing should be even from one furrow to the next.</p>
Firmness	<p>It is conceivable that hollows are created as the furrow slices curl from the plough, or if large nubs of soil are created from the plough, leaving gaps. These hollows and gaps are poor from a weed-control perspective, and should be avoided. Hollows and gaps can also result in the ploughed land becoming very bumpy, which makes all subsequent field operations uncomfortable for the rest of the year!</p>
Uniformity	<p>Each and every furrow should look the same as its neighbour. For example, considering a 2-furrow plough, and the ploughing created from the front and rear furrows: not only should it be impossible to tell between the front and rear furrows on the current pass along the plot, but also from the rear furrow on the current pass against the front furrow on the next pass. This is called 'matching' and is also an essential requirement for a smooth field and uniform seed distribution when the field is planted. The furrows should also be clearly defined, straight and parallel.</p>
Finish (last 8-furrows)	<p>As the competitors cast away to their middle and to their neighbour's middle, the width of unploughed land will inevitably reduce. When this width has reduced to 8-furrows remaining, the competitor will commence the 'finish'. It is imperative that the competitor has kept both sides of the ploughing parallel, in order that the width of unploughed land is the same throughout its length. Additionally, the competitor will have been measuring this width to ensure this it is a correct multiple for the width of the plough, in order that all land is ploughed, but no land is ploughed twice!</p> <p>The finish should be uniform throughout its length, be straight, and not too deep.</p>
Ins and Outs	<p>These are the parts where the plough enters and leaves the ground. The 'ins' should be as 'short' as possible, in order that the wheel mark left by the tractor wheel in the furrow, is covered as soon as possible. All ins and outs should look as uniform as possible.</p>