

## ALL ABOUT MECHANICAL PULLS AT FRYEBURG FAIR

Matt Bryant of Redstone, NH, has recently become the Superintendent of one of the most popular areas of Fryeburg Fair – tractor & truck pulls – now referred to as “mechanical pulls.”

Mechanical pulls are big sport in Maine. Fryeburg Fair had their first show in 1976. Tractors pull on the first Sunday of Fryeburg Fair right after the horse racing for the day – around 4 p.m.. Trucks pull the second Sunday. Shows can last for 4-8 hours depending on the number of entries.

For those who don't know much about these highly competitive events, we resort to information from the National Tractor Pullers Association:

*Pulls are known as “the world's heaviest motorsports” with the goal being to determine the strongest machine and the best driver. Speed is not the goal but distance pulled. Modified farm tractors, modified tractors or trucks drag a metal sled along a prescribed course. The sled contains a box filled with weight that is mechanically winched forward as the sled progresses along the course. Pulling this ever-increasing load eventually causes the vehicle to lose forward momentum and torque, although*



Danny Ireland with The Blue Ox - his weight transfer pulling sled

burg Fair. It is owned and operated by Danny Ireland of Hampden, Maine. Danny participates in 41 pulling events per year, six of them in Canada. The Blue Ox weights about 60,000 lbs.

Matt Bryant, a diesel mechanic in real life, says humorously, “Pulls are for crazy people and we love it!” Matt got involved as a big fan, started helping behind the scenes and got hooked on the back end organizing of the sport. He is assisted at Fryeburg Fair by Everett Danforth, Keith Merchand, Todd Keenan & David Heald. Consultants are long-time founders of the truck & tractor pulls, Dana Webster & Tinker Kiesman. Webster, now age 86, retired last year after being part of the pulls since the beginning. Kiesman, age 73, retired as well and had partnered with Webster in running the pulls from 1982 to 2018. Mini Tractor organizers are Kyle Doody and Steve Andrews. All Fryeburg Fair pulls are ruled and regulated by the Maine State Truck and Tractor Pullers Association



Matt Bryant is the Superintendent of Mechanical Pulls at Fryeburg Fair

*a rare few might indeed reach the end of the course, known as a “full pull.” The distance from start to finish is measured in thousandths of an inch and the vehicle that pulls the sled the farthest distance is declared the winner. If more than one competitor reaches the full pull mark, a pull-off is held to determine a winner.*

*Competition-level tractors might look like standard-issue farm equipment, but the similarities stop at the basic body and tires. Pulling is a sport based on horsepower and torque, which means that the engine must be modified to generate as much power as possible. Various classes have been developed for tractors based on limitations in the rules. Modified limits are based mostly on weight. Engines include drag racing automotive type, jet turbines, aircraft and industrial engines in various configurations. Trucks come in two wheel drive, four wheel drive (naturally aspirated, blown, diesel) and semis.*

The Blue Ox is the weight transfer pulling sled used at Frye-



*Long-time tractor pullers Andy & Lisa Lynch of East Brookfield, MA, compete at five fairs a year around New England including Fryeburg Fair. Andy is an elevator mechanic and Lisa is a daycare provider. They have two children and son, Robert, is a puller as well.*



*Gardner Lebaron, Tractor Puller*



*The Truck Pulls at Fryeburg Fair - coming Sunday, October 6, 2019 at 4*

Besides the first Sunday tractor pull and the second Sunday truck pull, Fryeburg Fair offers its Tuesday stone boat six-foot pull for small & mini tractors.

The second Sunday pull for trucks is probably the most well attended annual event at Fryeburg Fair with two and four-wheel drive vehicles vying for bragging rights and modest prizes. Over 60 drivers participate. Bryant says, "Lots of our drivers come because of the crowds. It's a family event. And it's the event that wraps up the Fair. It's definitely one of the best in New England." For more information on Fryeburg Fair's Tractor, Mini-Modified Tractors & Truck Pulls, go to [www.fryeburgfair.org](http://www.fryeburgfair.org) or contact Matt Bryant, Superintendent, at [info@fryeburgfair.org](mailto:info@fryeburgfair.org).



*Matt Bryant hopes to have the big rigs at 2019 Fryeburg Fair*

Written by Rachel Andrews Damon  
 Photography by Rachel Andrews Damon,  
 Brian Merrill & Chris Fiore



*The crowd for Sunday Night Truck Pulls at Fryeburg Fair - this year Sunday, October 6, 2019*