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Some Hints Concerning Right and Wrong Methods of Plowing

Doubletrees, the Hitch and Adjustments

Many plowmen at the matches make the mistake of using the wagon doubletrees without any alterations. The ordinary wagon doubletrees is too long for good work, and if it must be used on the plow, fresh holes should be bored about 2 or 3 inches in from the old ones on each end. The long doubletree, as rule, gives the plow too much land and the draft is not straight.

The traces should be lengthened for plowing so there will be some play in the hitch, and the movement of the team will not be transmitted to the plow with sudden abruptness. The clevis, of course, should be adjusted according to the width and depth of the furrow, but in regard to the setting of the coulter a definite recommendation is given.

When making the scratches the coulter should be set well forward with the point of the coulter almost touching the point of the share. After the scratches are made raise the coulter so the point will be about three-quarters of an inch above the share-point (or so the fingers will pass through) and about one inch back. The point of the coulter should be further back on the share than where the wing starts. Many young plowmen make the mistake of setting the coulter too far back, with the result that the furrow is turned more abruptly and rougher work is done. By observing the location of the coulter on a high-cut plow in the hands of an expert, one can get some idea of the importance of having it well forward.

Facing the coulter is another operation that requires experience and skill to get the best results. When facing the coulter, have it set so that a straight-edge placed against the face on the land side will carry back about two inches from the heel of the plow. The coulter should have more lead in stubble than in sod.

Making Scratches and Crown

The first step in preparing for a strikeout is setting the stakes. These should be set to the left of the lot stake just half the distance between the two scratches. That is, if the scratches are to be 24 inches apart the stakes should be set 12 inches to the left of the lot or number stake, but if the scratches are 22 inches apart the stakes will be set 11 inches to the left. With this arrangement the centre of the crown will be exactly in line with the lot or number stake.

The width of the scratches must be determined by knowledge of the plow and the soil. In jointer work at most of the plowing matches nowadays the contestants use a plow that will turn the best crown when the scratches are made about 22 inches apart. A wide-bottom plow would make it necessary

to scratch further apart. It is advisable to make the two scratches as wide as possible so long as the first two crown furrows meet "lip to lip." Too many plowmen, afraid that their first two furrows will not meet, scratch narrow and then find that the first two furrows crowd and make a high crown, and one where the furrows do not "read" with the rest of the plowing.

The purpose of the scratches is two-fold. In the first place the material brought together provides a foundation on which to rest the first two crown furrows and bear them up. In the second place the scratch causes the first crown furrow to break clean along a straight line.

The first pair of crown furrows should be cut an inch or so narrower than one intends to plow the body of the land. When one strikes the proper width and depth the tips of the shoulders of the two crown furrows will measure with the rest of the plowing and be on the same level with the others.

The second round of crown furrows must be plowed about two inches wider than the other furrows in the land, and at sufficient depth to lay them up even with the first two. Then come back to normal size and depth in the third round. Six furrows constitute the crown.

The next three or four rounds should not lack for depth in order to give body to the land and keep it level. Observation of careless or even moderately good plowing will reveal a high crown, and then a depression in the body of the land. This is undesirable.

At a match, when the contestant has turned his six heavy rounds and begins to cast away to his neighbor he should measure the land at both ends, as well as at several intermediate points, to see if any adjustments are necessary. Any widening or narrowing should be done on the castaway side so all the furrows in the prize land will be exactly the same.

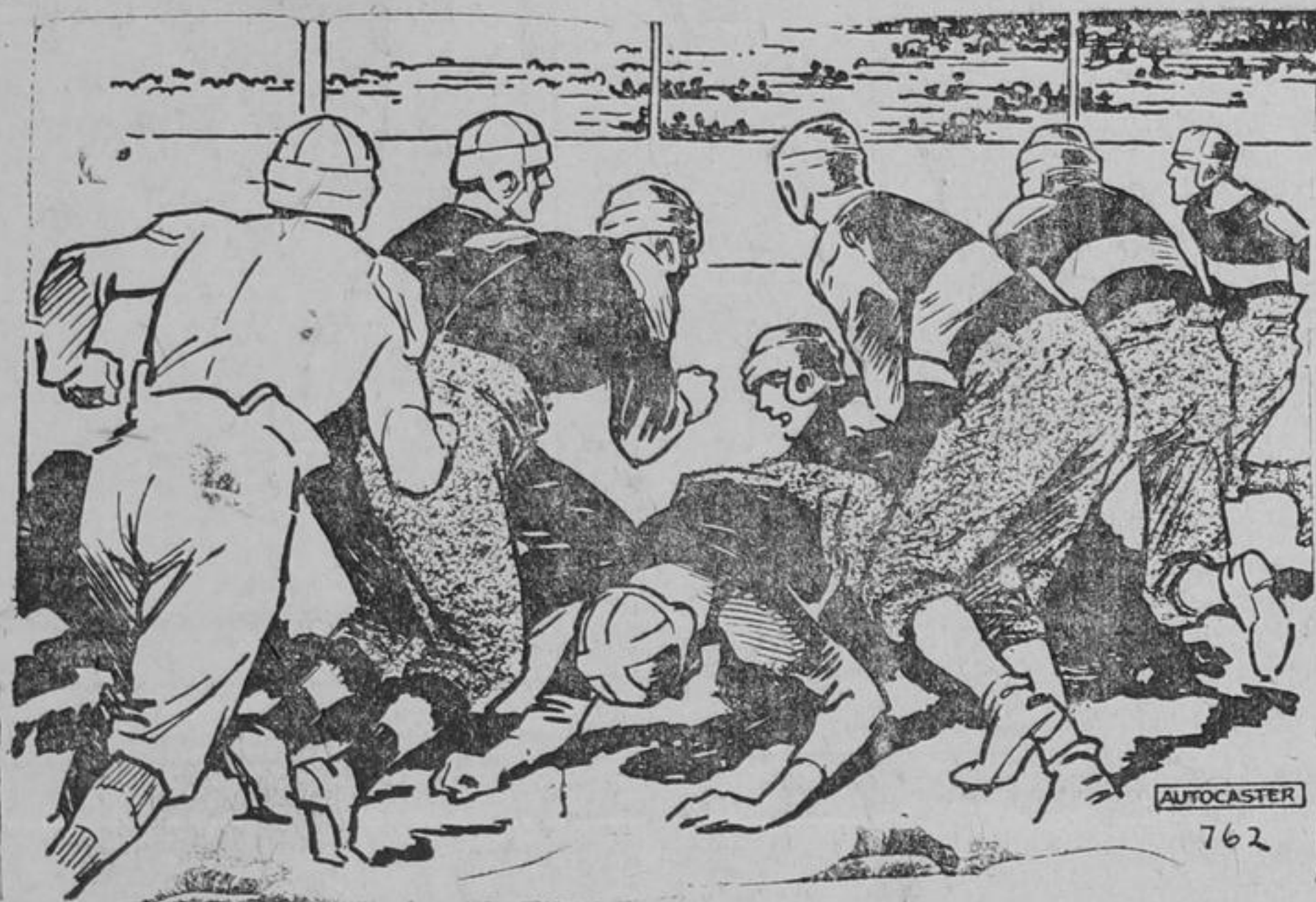
Approaching the Finish

The most common and most serious defect in the finish executed by contestants is coarseness and too much depth. Frequent measurements will help the competing plowman to end up with his last green furrow just a trifle narrower than its neighbors. In fact, the land should have a slight tendency to grade down to the finish, but the furrows cannot be too fine or they will not "read" with the remainder of the plowing. When one gets his last two furrows too wide and coarse, and the sole furrow too deep, he leaves a ditch rather than a dead furrow.

The last three rounds and the sole furrow constitute a finish.

The last green furrow and the sole furrow must always be turned toward the prize land.

TEAMWORK



ON the gridiron or in the less spectacular pursuit of workaday affairs TEAM-WORK contributes more toward victory than any other one factor. It is up to each and every individual to do his full share at the right time and in perfect accord with his team mates who are striving for the same goal.

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