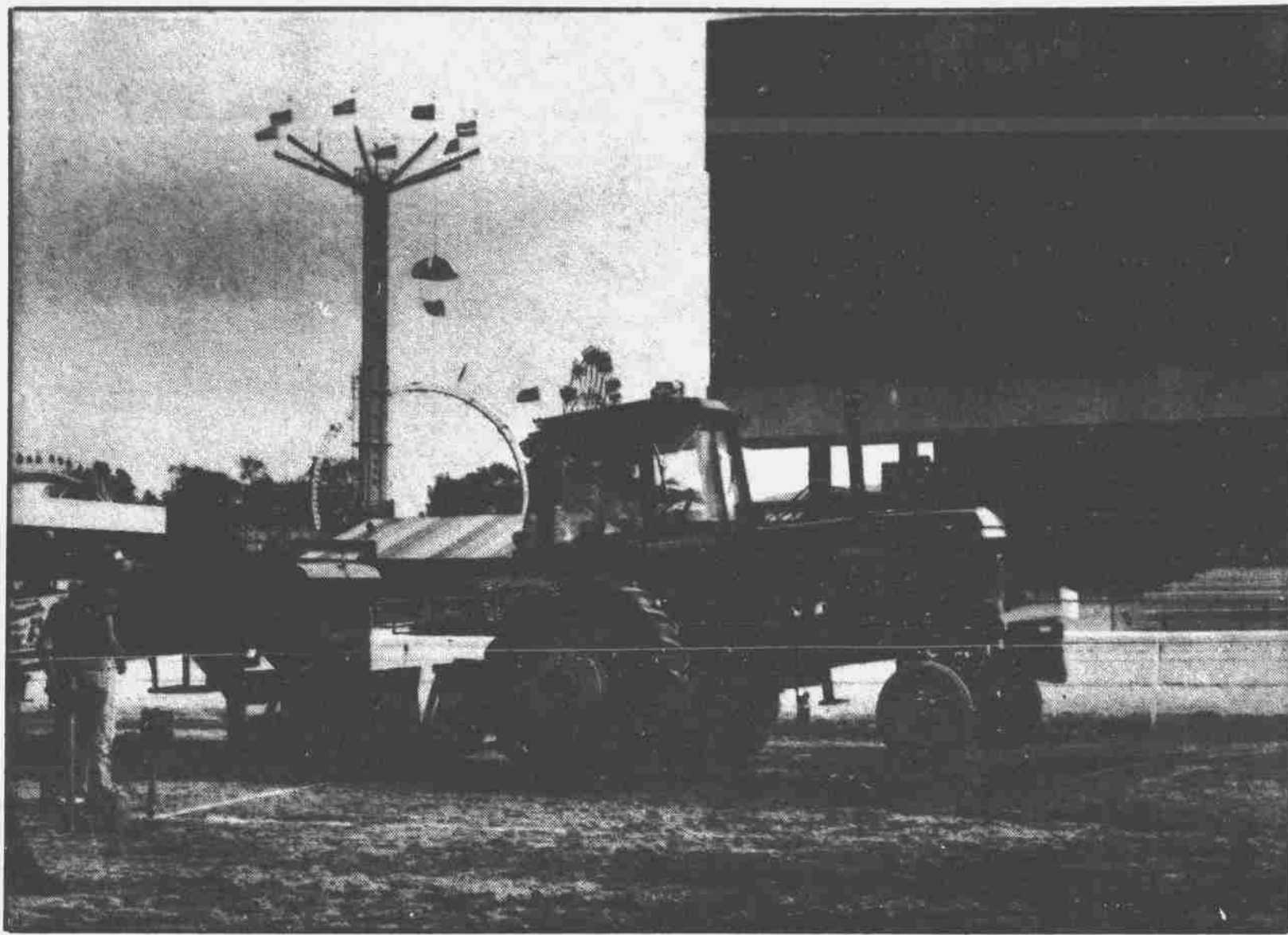


Arts & Entertainment



Tractor Pull

Staff photo by David Wood

Tractor sport pulls for more regard

By Chuck Jagoda

*The starter waves his green flag
diesel smoke shoots up black to the sky
a great green tractor rears like a stallion
and pulls against a greater weight*

Tractor pulling is the country and western cousin of drag racing. If it is not so widely known and popular as its urban cousin, tractor pulling is at least the heavier sport.

With tractors pulling in classifications from the 5,200-lb. modified to the 16,000-lb. pro stock, it lives up to its promotion as "the heaviest sport on wheels."

Although its results are typically reported in the features instead of the sports sections of newspapers, Carlin Synovec, president of the Nebraska Bush Pullers, points out that "tractor pulling has gained popularity. It's as well known now as baseball and football. It goes on year-round. In the cold months, there are pulls in the gulf states."

Synovec was at the race track of the Nebraska State Fairgrounds for Saturday's open class tractor pulling event. The same track saw action the previous weekend as the site of a pull sanctioned by The National Tractor Pulling Association.

Competitors use traditional farm tractors: John Deere, Allis-Chalmers, Massey-Ferguson and International Harvester, as well as funny cars which can be modified

as to engine type, wheel size and frame shape. They have names like "The Funny Farmer" and "The Big Green Machine," and are liable to line up three diesel or two helicopter engines on one chassis.

The funny cars were originally a separate organization known as the Midwest Modifieds. Two years ago, they joined the Nebraska Bush Pullers. The fact that some of the Modifieds are used strictly for competition gives rise to the view that tractor pulling is a luxury sport.

"Although some tractors are used only in competition," Synovec admitted, "the great majority of these people use their machines in the field."

Synovec finds tractor pulling different from other sports because "it's a real competitive sport, (but) the greater share of these people help each other in time of trouble."

The announcer bears him out, requesting spare pulley belts or spark plugs for ailing tractors.

The announcer passes the time between events with comments on the sport and appropriate jokes:

- Why are John Deeres green?
- So they can hide easier in the tall grass.

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Play's 'promises' aren't fulfilled

By Kris Saalfeld

"Promises, Promises," playing at the Lincoln Community Playhouse, 2500 S. 56th St., has difficulty fulfilling its promise of being a great performance.

The clever satire on American business life was written by Neil Simon. He adapted the story line for the stage from the Oscar-winning movie, "The Apartment." That promises a well-developed, humorous, smoothly flowing play.

Its modern pop music, which received rave reviews on Broadway, and includes the favorite "I'll Never Fall In

The rotating set squeaks loudly as scenes change between acts - sometimes drowning out the actor who continues to talk or sing. Offstage noises of props being dropped also could be heard.

The story develops around an aspiring young Consolidated Life Insurance Company accountant, Chuck Baxter, played by David Claus. As the story unfolds, company executives discover that Baxter lives alone in an apartment, and promise him promotions and high recommendations in exchange for the use of his apartment for their "company affairs."

Baxter's romantic interest is co-employee Fran Kubelik, played by Julie Chadwick. However, he discovers that scheming personnel manager, J.D. Sheldrake, played by Dick Terhune, is carrying on his own affair with Kubelik. Tragedy, conflict and humor follow, leading to a surprising, romantic conclusion.

Claus and Chadwick are exceptionally talented singers. Claus's naivete, boyish charm and delightful character representation keeps the audience from being totally disappointed. The choreography is also well staged throughout the play.

Certain scenes are very enjoyable, but the lack of overall polish and professionalism makes these scenes appear only occasionally in the production.

"Promises, Promises" will continue at the Playhouse Sept. 16-18 and 23-25 at 8 p.m. and Sept. 19 at 2:30 p.m. Tickets may be reserved by calling the box office at 489-9608, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

"Promises, Promises" has scenes you wouldn't want to miss. Just don't go to the performance expecting too much. It's a promise the play won't be able to keep.

Theater Review

Love Again." written by Burt Bacharach, with lyrics by Hal David. That promises refreshing, upbeat music.

When "Promises, Promises" finished on Broadway in 1981, it had played a total of 1,281 performances and had won three Tony awards. That promises a pleasing play adaptable to the many personalities of its viewers.

However, "Promises, Promises" would be more accurately labeled "Problems, Problems." Aside from the three main characters, the actors have difficulty expressing their roles. Witty lines from Simon are recited without the emphasis he intended. There are places in the play where the action is supposed to stop as the lead character addresses the audience. Some actors miss their cue and keep moving.

Ugly word keeps spending in check

CheckRite . . . an ugly word, like academic probation, liver, herpes. The blemish on my checkbook, the wart on my family's reputation, the unlight of my life.

I understand I should keep my checkbook balanced, but I happen to be a person who is suffering from dyslexia.

Once a year, a \$2 check arrives at the bank in the morning and I deposit my paycheck in the afternoon. Between the ugly hours of morning and afternoon, the



T. Marni Vos

bank charges me \$7.00 for insufficient funds, sends my check to CheckRite, which in turn charges me \$8 and calls me on the phone.

"Miss Vos, this is CheckRite."
"Hi, can I just call you Check?"
"I'm afraid you owe us \$15."

"I was afraid of that, too. Do you realize \$15 would pay for half of a polo shirt? I can pay you in three weeks."

Two and a half weeks later . . .

I had just finished spilling coffee on my beige blouse. Nothing serious . . . it was 9:30 in the morning, I was shifting into third, and I spilled my coffee. I wouldn't be home for eight hours. People would point and laugh at me. I mean, if I was interviewing someone for a job and they had coffee spilled on their blouse, I would think that it was kind of a nice human touch . . . a nice, clumsy human touch. I would offer them some cream and tell them, "We'll call you."

I was driving east on 'O' Street. As I approached Gateway, I decided to stop at Sears and pickup an expensive blouse. . . maybe a cup of coffee . . . and continue on my way.

After losing my left front tire on a speed bump, I parked my car under the enclosed mall and headed inside. A girl in a polo shirt got out of the car next to mine. I thought that perhaps I should hurt her in some way, take her shirt or at least tear it.

Once inside Gateway and past the CheckRite sticker on the door, I saw a small group of people with Oxford polo shirts on, pointing and laughing at me. I thought maybe it was the coffee stain. I wondered to myself, if their oxford polo shirts could stop bullets.

My hand covered the CheckRite emblem as I entered Sears and headed for the blouses.

"Excuse me Miss, can I help you?"
"Yes, I'm looking for a shirt that might go with this coffee stain."

"Oh my, look at you. How did you manage to get the whole cup on your blouse? My little 5-year-old is just like you . . . macaroni, burritos, ice cream . . . I'm going to tell you just what I tell her, 'Things always taste better if you wear them first.'

"Is that small group of people in Oxford polo shirts, pointing in this direction and laughing. . . are they with you?"

"Kind of . . . do you have any water polo blouses?"
"Water polo?"

"Do you have any beige blouses?"
"We sure do. Do you take a large or extra-large?"
"A medium."

"How's this? Do you like this?"
"Sure, could I just slip it on here?"

"Will this be cash or charge?"
"I'm going to write a check."

A red notebook comes out from under the counter.
"T. Marni Vos?"
"Right."

"I'm sorry, we can't accept your check."
"I'd like to charge this . . . what do you mean? Why not?"

"Your name is in the CheckRite notebook."

I pulled my coffee blouse over my head. I walked past the small group of Oxford polo people, lost my right front tire on a speed bump and headed for my job interview.

CheckRite . . . an ugly word, like academic probation, liver, herpes. . .