



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

Journal of the Department of Agriculture, Western Australia, Series 3

Volume 1
Number 3 May-June 1952

Article 31

5-1952

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I Thomas
Department of Agriculture

H G. Cariss
Department of Agriculture

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Recommended Citation

Thomas, I and Cariss, H G. (1952) "Wheat crop competitions," *Journal of the Department of Agriculture, Western Australia, Series 3*: Vol. 1: No. 3, Article 31.

Available at: https://library.dpird.wa.gov.au/journal_agriculture3/vol1/iss3/31

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WHEAT CROP COMPETITIONS

Details of W.A. Flour Millowners' Asscn. Series

By I. THOMAS, Superintendent of Wheat Farming

and

H. G. CARISS, B.Sc. Agric., Agricultural Adviser

FOR many years prior to the last war, 50-acre crop competitions were sponsored and conducted by the Royal Agricultural Society and judged by officers of the Department of Agriculture. These competitions always proved successful and without doubt contributed in no small way to the development of the cereal-growing areas, particularly as far as wheat farming is concerned.

The conducting of these crop competitions lapsed during the war but, in 1946 a new series, sponsored by the W.A. Flour Millowners' Association, was inaugurated and conducted under the auspices of the Royal Agricultural Society with the field judging again being carried out by departmental officers. The whole of the prize money amounting to £495 annually is being donated by the W.A. Millowners' Association.

In the new series of competitions, points are allotted for the flour strength (baking quality) of the flour produced from the wheat obtained from the competing crop. The strength figure is determined on the farinograph and in this feature, this crop competition is unique in Australia and possibly elsewhere. The object of the Association, in sponsoring the competition, was to encourage the production of wheats which were not only high-yielding but were also capable of producing good quality flour.

The conditions regarding the awarding of points for baking quality included the provision that no prize was to be awarded to any crop which returned a strength figure of less than five minutes as measured on the farinograph, an instrument used in the laboratory for the determination of the baking quality of flour. It was further decided that maximum points for strength would be awarded to all crops which returned a strength figure of ten or more minutes. This condition was made so that the

points awarded for baking quality would not outweigh those for yields. Because of this, no advantage could be gained by a competitor entering a crop of a variety having a specially high baking quality.

As stated above, crop competitions have been conducted under the auspices of the Royal Agricultural Society for many years and were a feature of pre-war wheatbelt farming. For the purpose of judging, the wheatbelt has since 1940, been divided into seven zones having regard to climatic and other seasonal conditions. These zones are as set out in the accompanying map.

The conditions and details of the competition, as they existed for the 1951/52 season, are as follows:—

CONDITIONS

1. The area of each competing crop must be not less than 50 acres of any one of the following registered varieties:—Bencubbin, Bungulla, Charter, Eureka, Koorda, Kondut, Merredin, Gabo, Kendee, Wongoondy, Yalta.
2. Each competitor will be limited to one entry in each zone.

3. The competition will be judged on the following scale of points:—

(a) Yield per acre	50 points
(b) Freedom from admixture	10 points
(c) Freedom from disease	10 points
(d) Baking quality of flour	30 points

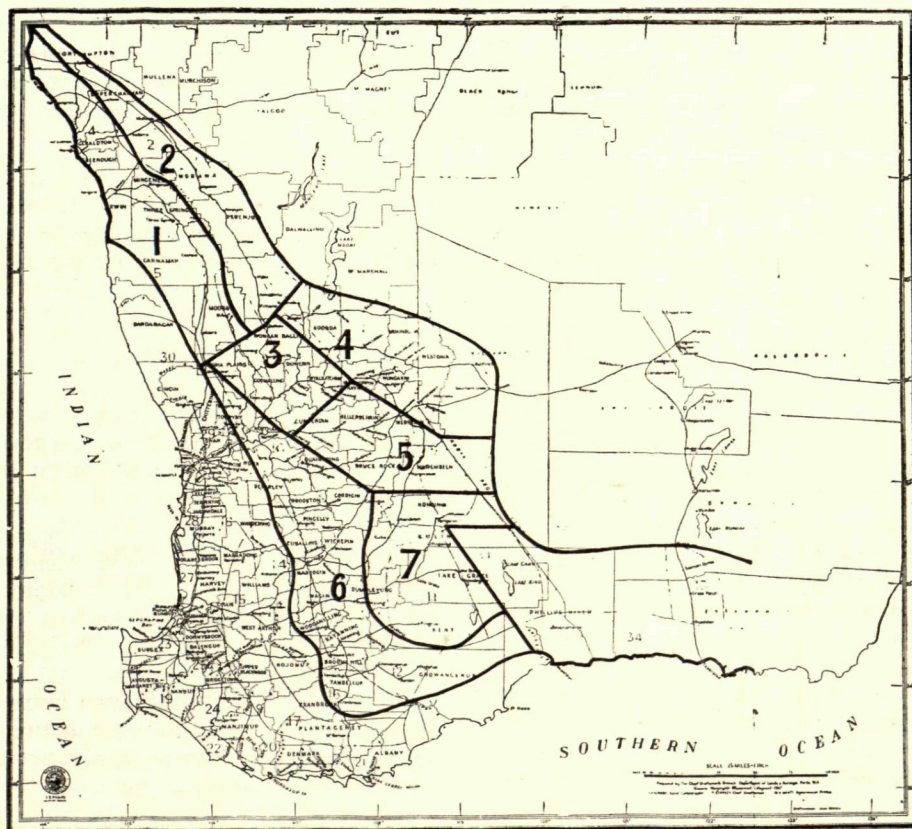
Total 100 points

4. The competition crop must be a compact and unbroken block of not less than 50 acres with straight sides, except on natural boundaries and must be clearly defined be-

fore the arrival of the judge and easily discernible to him by either binder tracks cut or corner pegs showing prominently above the crop. Only the standing crop, the grain of which is recoverable by recognised harvesting practice is to be taken into consideration.

5. The competitor must arrange for the judge to be met on arrival, conveyed to the plot of wheat, and following inspection, the competitor must convey the judge to the next nearest competitor in his district if required.

6. The judge's report will be available for publication.



7. One bag of wheat from each prize winning crop must be exhibited at the succeeding Royal Show with a card attached showing the points allotted to it.

8. The entry for each crop shall be 5s. Where district competitions are held under similar conditions to this competition, only the first and second prize winners in such competitions will be eligible to compete. Secretaries of Agricultural Societies conducting such District Competitions must, on or

before the 14th September, 1951, forward to the secretary of the Royal Agricultural Society, the entry fee of 10s. to cover the entries in their district competition and later, when the names of the place getters are known, forward the names and addresses of these competitors to the Royal Agricultural Society.

9. All entries must be lodged with the Royal Agricultural Society not later than 14th September, 1951.

10. Prizes are offered as under:—

In each zone—First, £40; Second, £15. Zone winners will be eligible for State Championship prizes of—First, £60 (including trophy to be selected by winner); Second, £30; Third, £20.

11. No prize will be awarded to any variety should the strength figure of its flour be below five minutes as determined on the farinograph, or to any crop awarded less than a total of 60 points.

It will be noted that as with similar previous competitions, provision is made for State Championship awards as well as for Zone Championships.

As stated earlier, the first competition in this series was conducted during 1946

and the results for that season and 1947/48 were published in the Departmental Journal, Volume 25, March, 1948.

It is proposed, therefore, in this present report on the competition, to include the details of the Championship awards for 1948/49, 1949/50, 1950/51, the complete details for the 1951/52 seasons competition just concluded and brief comments on the general results obtained over the six years the competition has now been operating.

The winners of the State Championship award for each year since the inception of this competition in 1946, are as follows:—

Year.	Competitor.	Address.	Zone.	Variety.	Points.
1946	J. L. Hughes	Wongoondy	2	Bungulla	87
1947	G. R. Moir	Borden	6	Kondut	88
1948	H. L. Kelsall	Moora	1	do.	93
1949	G. R. Moir	Borden	6	do.	88
1950	H. L. Kelsall	Moora	1	do.	94
1951	C. J. Halligan	Waddington	3	do.	90

It will be noted from the above table that the late midseason variety Kondut has won the Championship five times in succession and also that Messrs. G. R. Moir, of Borden (Zone 6), and H. L. Kelsall, of Moora (Zone 1), have both been awarded the Championship on two occasions.

In connection with the Championship awards, Mr. E. F. Smart, of Mingenew, in 1950 donated a shield to be awarded to the winner of the competition in the 1950 and succeeding years. The shield must be won three times in all before becoming the property of any competitor. Each year a replica is presented to the winner. The shield has now been won once each by Messrs. H. L. Kelsall and C. J. Halligan.

1948-49 SEASON

During this season a total of 91 entries were received and of these 70 were actually submitted to the judges and were inclusive of local competitions, the prize winners of whom were eligible to

participate in the main competition. The average yield per acre for the entries judged covered a rather wide range of from 11-45 bushels per acre. However, 23 of the crops recorded 30 bushels or more per acre and of these, two recorded 40 bushels or more, the average yield for all crops being 27 bushels per acre.

The season generally over the cereal growing areas was rather a difficult one and the yields obtained must be considered good having due regard to the rainfall and other climatic conditions.

The winner of the Championship was Mr. H. L. Kelsall, of Moora (Zone 1), with a crop of Kondut which was calculated to yield 45 bushels per acre and obtained the maximum (30 points) for baking strength, and a grand total of 93 points.

Second place was awarded to S. B. Doust, also of Moora, whose crop of Bencubbin was calculated to yield 40 bushels per acre and gained a total of

85 points. In third place was Mr. E. F. Smart, of Wongan Hills (Zone 3), with a crop of Kondut calculated to yield 36 bushels per acre with a grand total of 84 points.

1949-50 SEASON

For this season a total of 93 entries was received but only 64 were actually judged. In spite of the fact that seasonal conditions, like those for the previous season, were somewhat against high yields being obtained, many excellent crops were judged and the results from this season must be considered satisfactory. The range of yield per acre for all crops was 14-45 bushels per acre, for an average of 27.3 bushels per acre. Of the crops judged, 20 recorded yields of 30 or more bushels per acre and of these, two yielded 40 bushels or more and seven yielded 35 bushels or more per acre.

The Championship was won for the second time by Mr. G. R. Moir, of Borden (Zone 6), with a crop of Kondut which was calculated to yield 45 bushels per acre and gained a total of 88 points.

Mr. W. B. Stewart, of Borden, gained second place with another crop of Kondut estimated to yield 42 bushels. His total of points was 86, just three points ahead of the third place-getter, Mr. G. B. Hebiton, of Mendel, whose 36-bushel crop of Gabo gained full marks (30 points) for baking strength.

1950-51 SEASON

Inclusive of those entries made with local agricultural societies a total of 114 entries were received and of these 87 were judged.

Though the actual rainfall recorded during the season approached a record low, the incidence was excellent enabling the crops to produce high yields and resulting in the average yield per acre for the State as a whole, at 15.9 bushels per acre, being a record. The high yields were reflected in this competition where the average yield was 30.3 bushels per acre and the range 17-45 bushels per acre.

Of the crops judged, over half, viz., 47, recorded yields of 30 bushels or more per acre and of these 10 yielded 40 bushels or more; and 25, 35 bushels or more per acre.

The Championship was won, for the second occasion by Mr. H. L. Kelsall, of Moora (Zone 1), whose crop of Kondut was calculated to yield 46 bushels per acre and obtained the highest number of aggregate points (94) since the inauguration of the present competition. Mr. Kelsall also won the right to hold (for the first time) the E. F. Smart Shield for one year and receive a replica.

Mr. E. F. Smart, of Mingenew, had a 47-bushel crop of Bungulla which gained second place with a total of 89 points, and he was closely followed by Mr. W. B. Stewart, of Borden, who scored 88 points with a crop of Kendee estimated to yield 44 bushels to the acre.

1951-52 SEASON

The current season was rather difficult with extended dry periods in many districts coupled with unsatisfactory finishing conditions followed by damaging storms in some districts. Possibly through the result of the seasonal conditions, the total number of entries received (89) was somewhat less than for the previous three seasons; as with the other years, entries included those in local district agricultural societies' competitions. To determine those eligible for inclusion in the final judging, 67 crops were inspected of which only 51 were actually eligible. This season the baking strength of the wheat from the crops judged was of major importance in determining those eligible for consideration in the final judging as 21 of all the crops judged (including 13 in the main competition) failed to obtain the minimum strength of five minutes. A contributing factor to the low strength figures was, in all probability, the excessively wet conditions experienced during the early part of the winter.

This year the State Championship was awarded to the crop of Kondut entered by Mr. C. J. Halligan of Waddington for the calculated yield of 43 bushels per acre and total points of 90, Mr. Halligan now holds the shield for

one year and receives a replica. As will be noticed from the discussion later on the individual zone results, this crop had been planted on clover ley land.

Details of the complete Championship awards are as follows:—

Name.	Address.	Variety.	Yield.	Freedom from Admixture.	Freedom from Disease.	Baking Strength.	Total.
Halligan, C. J. Zone 3	Waddington	Kondut	43	9	9	29	90
Carter, L. Zone 2	Morowa	Bungulla	45	9	8	25	87
Hyde, N. F. & Sons Zone 1	Waddi Forest	Wongoondy	39	9	9	29	86
Kelsall, H. L. Zone 1	Moora	Kondut	40	8	7	29	84
Dunwell, F. Zone 5	Naremben	do.	40	9	8	26	83
Wright, E. H. Zone 6	Gnowangerup	Kendee	39	9	9	26	83
Davies Bros. Zone 3	Benjaberring	Bencubbin	39	9	9	25	82
Stewart, W. B. Zone 6	Borden	Wongoondy	38	9	9	26	82
Hyde, N. F. & Sons Zone 2	Latham	do.	36	9	9	26	80
Dunwell, D. Zone 5	Naremben	Bencubbin	36	9	8	25	78
Bahr, E. O. & Son Zone 7	Kukerin	Gabo	29	9	8	30	76
Creagh, H. & Sons Zone 4	Nungarin	Wongoondy	29	9	9	27	74
Hull, W. Zone 4	Yelbeni	Bencubbin	31	8	8	26	73
Kent, R. S. Zone 7	Kukerin	do.	27	7	9	26	69

Though the early opening seasonal conditions were quite satisfactory, the comparatively dry conditions experienced during July and August and the lack of reasonable finishing conditions affected crop yields over the State as a whole. The calculated yields for this competition ranging as they did from 17-45 bushels per acre for an average of 31.1 bushels per acre, must be consid-

ered very good. Thirty-seven or over half of the crops judged, recorded yields of 30 bushels or more per acre and of these, six yielded 40 bushels or more.

Full details of the awards from the different zones and the judge's reports covering the 1951-52 season's competition will be published in the next issue of this journal.

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