



### “Never Miss” Twine Monitor Made From Bicycle Generators

Tom Cathey, Covington, Texas, wasn't satisfied with the bale monitor on his Deere 430 round baler so he made his own monitor using a pair of small electric bike generators - normally used to power a small flashing light.

“It takes the guesswork out of knowing when to stop the tractor to tie the bale,” says Cathey. “I’ve made more than 6,000 bales with it with no problems. The light on the original monitor turns solid as soon as the baler’s tie arm is activated. The problem is that I don’t know when to stop the tractor unless I happen to see the light the moment it turns solid. If I don’t see it turn solid, hay keeps pouring into the bale which fouls up the tying process.”

“My monitor delivers both a beeping noise and a flashing orange light to let me know when to stop the tractor. It lets me make bales that are more uniform in shape because it lets me know exactly when I should stop the tractor without having to worry that I won’t see the warning light come on. The monitor has virtually eliminated missed ties which speeds up my baling operation.”

Cathey made two other modifications that speed up baling - he added a second twine tie arm to the baler (off a Deere 435) and he mounted a 4-spool twine box on front of the baler.

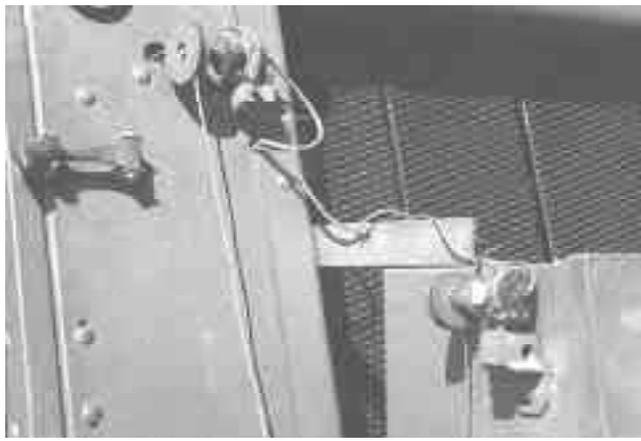
The bike generators originally had a small steel wheel that ran against the bike tire to generate power. Cathey mounted a pair of large washers about 1/4 in. apart on each wheel and mounted the generators on front of the baler. Twine to each twine tie arm is threaded through the washers on each generator unit. The generators



are wired to a 3-light Radio Shack monitor in the tractor cab. The monitor has a pair of yellow lights - one for each twine - on either side of an orange light. The orange light and buzzer are wired to a microswitch on one of the twine-tie arms.

As soon as the tie arms start to swing out they trigger the microswitch which causes the buzzer to sound and the orange light to flash on and off. The yellow lights go on as soon as the arms start tying. “By the time I stop the tractor the arms have started tying the bale. If one or both of the lights don’t come on I know that the bale has failed to tie and that I have to get off the tractor to see what’s wrong,” says Cathey. “After the arms are done tying the bale they swing back and just before they reach the twine cut-off position the switch is tripped again and the buzzer sounds, letting me know that I should look at the yellow lights again to make sure they’re still on so I know the bale has been tied. The lights go off as soon as the twine has been cut.”

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Some of the best new ideas we hear about are “made it myself” inventions born in farmer’s workshops. If you’ve got a new idea or favorite gadget you’re proud of, we’d like to hear about it. Send along a photo or two, and a description of what it is and how it works. Is it being manufactured commercially? If so, where can interested farmers buy it? Are you looking for manufacturers, dealers or distributors? Send to FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044 or call toll-free 1-800-834-9665.

*Mark Newhall, Editor*



### ATV Cattle Guard

“It saves a lot of time when checking cows,” says Ronny D. Parham who built a cattle guard/fence crossing for his ATV out of scrap lumber.

The cattle guard allows him to get through fences between his dry cow and milk cow pastures without having to get off his Honda 300 4-WD ATV.

It’s 10 ft. long by 4 ft. wide and is 2 ft.

high. The middle section is made of 2 by 6’s and 2 by 8’s set on edge. They’re spaced 4 in. apart. Runners are made of 2 by 10’s. It’s anchored to two 4-in. dia. posts driven 2 1/2 ft. into the ground on each end.

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### String Trimmer Mounts On Riding Mower

Trimming grass around trees, telephone poles, and buildings is a lot easier for Rollan Schnitker, Hoyleton, Ill., since he mounted a 12-volt Ryobi string trimmer on his Cub Cadet riding mower. He modified the rechargeable trimmer by wiring it direct to the tractor battery.

“It saves a lot of walking because I never have to get off the mower,” says Schnitker. “I make a second pass with the mower after I’m done mowing and do all my trimming right from the seat. I drive very slowly and trim at the same time.”

The original rechargeable battery pack on the 10-in. string trimmer made it too big to handle while riding the mower. He cut off the battery and handle and attached a newer, shorter handle. He screwed a clip-type broom holder onto the left side of the



mower hood to hold the trimmer.

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