

## Stickler Wood Splitter Mounts On Skid Steer

John Hathaway, Rossville, Illinois, put a screw-type wood splitter and a post hole digger together to make a skid-steer mounted wood splitting and handling tool that he says has become nearly indispensable to him.

Hathaway says he and a wood-cutting buddy, Neil Paulson, were about "to take sledge and wedge" to some 3-ft. dia. chunks of oak to get pieces small enough to lift onto their horizontal hydraulic splitter. Paulson started asking one day if there wasn't something they could mount on Hathaway's Bobcat to mechanize the task.

Hathaway was in the process of rebuilding an old Danuser posthole digger he'd found in a junk pile. At that point, he remembered that his brother-in-law had a Stickler wood splitter he was no longer using. He figured if he could mount the Stickler to the driveshaft on the digger, he might be able to come up with a handy new wood splitter.

"The Stickler was originally designed to fit on a drive wheel of a car or pickup," Hathaway explains. "It does a great job of splitting wood, but you have to jack up the car, take off the wheel and put the Stickler on in its place before you can split anything."

He reasoned that putting the Stickler onto the posthole digger would make it easier to use and more portable.

Hathaway modified the 3-pt. post hole digger to fit the loader arms. He also removed

the pto shaft and added a hydraulic motor. He added control valves to the skidsteer that give him forward, reverse, and speed control of the motor.

He had a friend machine an adapter that allows him to mount the Stickler on the posthole digger's driveshaft. He also put in adjustable stops to limit lateral movement of the unit so it won't flop from side to side.

"It works even better than I anticipated. Mostly, we use it to break big chunks into smaller pieces we can then finish splitting with our hydraulic splitter," he says. "One of the neat things I hadn't anticipated is that you can use it to move the really big chunks around. You just screw the Stickler into them until it's tight. Then you can pick it up with the skid steer and move it anywhere. All you have to do then is put it down and reverse the hydraulic motor to back the screw out."

Hathaway found that sometimes the wood pieces will spin when he screws in the Stickler. To prevent this, he just tilts the forks - which he leaves in place on his loader - to catch the chunks firmly while the Stickler works.

If Hathaway needs to dig a posthole, all he has to do is remove the Stickler and put the auger back in its place.

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John Hathaway hooked up a Stickler screw-type wood splitter to an old 3-pt. posthole digger, which he modified to fit the loader arms on his Bobcat skid steer loader.



He also removed post hole digger's pto shaft and added a hydraulic motor (left). No wood is too big or too hard to split, says Hathaway.

## Wild Grass Seed Harvester

"Heavy duty" and "thorough" are words that might be used to describe a new native grass seed harvester designed and built by Steve Ratliff of The Hitch Shop in Munfordville, Kentucky.

The 8-ft. wide pull-type machine makes use of four hydraulic variable speed motors and boasts a 90 to 95 percent seed recovery, even in rougher, rolling terrain.

Header height adjusts to grasses from ground level up to as high as 8 ft. A pair of rotary brushes behind the reel adjust "in and out," each controlled by a variable speed hydraulic motor.

"Because wind causes tall grass to lean over, the reel on this machine stands the grass back so the rotary brushes can strip off the

seed," Ratliff explains. "Our machine has been used on over 2,000 acres with no mechanical failures."

The Hitch Shop, a welding fabrication and design business, has built five of the units so far.

The machine comes with 20-in. truck tires and has an independent pto-driven pump to power the hydraulic motors.

The basic machine is priced at \$22,000, plus shipping. The cost includes one day of technical assistance and in-field service on start-up, if desired.

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Wild grass seed harvester boasts a 90 to 95 percent seed recovery, even in rougher, rolling terrain, says the manufacturer.

## Combine Hauls Both Grain And Hay To Cattle

For only \$350 and a couple days of work, Dwight Shiels put together a machine that hauls bales and grain to livestock.

The Stoughton, Sask., inventor modified a 1963 430 Cockshutt combine by replacing the header with a 3-pt. hitch bale fork.

"A pipe inside a pipe mounts in place of the header. Support arms extend up to the top of the bale lifter," he explains. "The combine's hydraulic cylinders attach to ears that are welded in the middle of the fork frame and there are arms on the bottom of the carrier that also mount to the combine."

Both the top and bottom arms and the hydraulic cylinders are pinned so they swivel. Shiels moved the combine ladder from the

side to the front of the unit to make it narrower for passing through gates.

The rig will lift 1,800-lb. bales 18 to 24 in. off the ground with no problem.

"It's great for moving bales in the field," he says. "It's got good visibility and with all the weight on the big wheels, you can go faster without worrying about breaking your axles."

When feeding livestock, Shiels hauls grain in the combine hopper and unloads it directly into his feedbunks.

"I've used the unit in 8 inches to a foot of mud with no problem," he says.

When he started the project, it took him about a day to get the combine running, since



Converted combine hauls grain in hopper and bales on 3-pt. hitch bale forks that mount in place of header.

it had been sitting unused in a shed for 10 to 15 years. Shiels says it took another day to make the modifications.

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