Robert Judice built this zero turn riding mower. It has an air conditioned cab and a 5-ft. deck that automatically raises or lowers according to mowing conditions.

He Mows Grass In Air-Conditioned Comfort

"I built this zero turn riding mower equipped with a 5-ft. deck two years ago. It has air conditioning and a deck that automatically raises or lowers according to mowing conditions," says Robert Judice, New Iberia, La.

The mower is powered by a 34 hp Kubota diesel engine and is all hydraulic-driven. It rides on 15-in. wheels on front and smaller golf cart wheels on back. Each of the front wheels is driven by a separate Charlin motor. The deck is offset about 10 in. to the left side, allowing Judice to get close to a ditch or building. The right side of the deck is even with the right front wheel.

He used 1/8-in. thick sheet metal to build the cab. The hood came off an old International Harvester 2 plus 2 tractor. The frame is built from 2 by 3-in. sq. tubing. A hydraulic reservoir is located under the left fender. The fuel tank is under the right. The cab is insulated with the same type of insulation material used in tractors. The seat is a boat seat that hinges backward. The diesel engine, which originally had been used to operate a water pump, powers three hydraulic pumps that are hooked together. Two of the pumps operate the hydraulic motors that drive the front wheels, and the third powers a motor that belt-drives the mower blades. All of the pumps are located under the cab's floorboard, which lifts up for easy access.

The machine is equipped with a unique "blade sensor". It works on the pressure side of the hydraulic motor that drives the deck and powers a cylinder that raises and lowers the deck. The sensor allows the deck to lower automatically, depending on the length of the grass being cut. When it reads that the pressure on the deck cylinder is too high, it backs oil up into the cylinder, which then raises the deck slightly to relieve the pressure.

"I really like the air conditioned cab. It gets so cold inside the cab that the windows fog up," says Judice. "The evaporator coil is off an old Ford car and is located in back, just above the rear window. The compressor and condenser came off a Subaru car. I was told that the engine runs a little hot, so instead of locating the condenser in front of the radiator, I mounted it on the side of the cab. I use an electric fan to cool the condenser."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Robert Judice, 5317 Daspit Road, New Iberia, La. 70563 (ph 337 229-6375 or 337 229-8180).

Richard Moore mounted the deck off a junked Deere 112 riding mower on a wheeled frame. He uses a Tecumseh 10 hp engine to power the trailing deck.

Deck Doubles Cutting Width

Mowing his 2 1/2-acre lawn takes half as long since Richard Moore, Colby, Kansas, added a second mower deck behind his 1970 John Deere 112 lawn tractor.

He was happy with the variable speed transmission on his 112 tractor and the way the 41-in. deck left his lawn looking manicured, but he felt he needed something bigger.

He found a junked 1968 112 at a local lawn mower shop. "The deck was in good shape, so I bought the tractor for $75," he says.

Rather than trying to fix the junker and run two tractors, Moore made a trailer to hold the second mower deck to pull behind his tractor. He stripped the front wheels and spindles off the junked 112 and used those on the back of his trailer, which he made from square steel tubing. He mounted a couple of new caster wheels on front of his trailer.

Then he devised a way to mount the deck from the junked tractor on the trailer, using the lever and mechanical lift mechanism from the old tractor. He used a 10 hp Tecumseh engine to power the trailing deck.

He says the most difficult part was adapting the deck lift linkage from the old tractor to the trailing unit. "I scratched my head a lot over that, but a friend was able to help me figure it out," he says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Richard Moore, 1886 County Road 15, Colby, Kan. 67701 (ph 785 462-3280; fax 785 462-8322).

"It lets me mow my lawn without leaving a thin strip of grass next to building foundations, etc.," says Marty Garrett about the trimmer he added to the left side of his mower.

Mower Has Built-In Grass Trimmer

Marty Garrett, Louisville, Ill., thought it would be neat to have a lawn mower equipped with a built-in grass trimmer. He couldn't buy one, so he built one.

"The trimmer extends about 2 in. beyond the left side of the mower. It lets me mow my lawn without leaving a thin strip of grass next to sidewalks, building foundations, and flowerbeds," says Garrett.

The trimmer consists of a vertical shaft and bearing that goes through the deck, and to which is attached a Teflon spool that holds the trimming line which is located underneath the deck. The rotating spool is belt-driven by the same engine that drives the blade. An idler pulley, connected by cable to a lever on the handlebars, is used to engage or disengage the spool.

Garrett used 1/8-in. thick sheet metal to build the 21-in. wide deck. The blade is powered by a 3 1/2 hp Briggs & Stratton gas engine.

"It does a nice, clean job and works great around trees and flowerbeds as well as sidewalks and building foundations," says Garrett. "We tested this in a cemetary that had been mowed but had growth around the stones that was 5 or 6 in. high. This whacked that off like no one's business. Whenever I need more line I just shut the engine off and pull more line out."

Garrett is looking for a manufacturer.

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Side-Mount Mower Built Out Of Cub Cadet Tractor

"It lets me cut a 9-ft. swath, saving a lot of mowing time," says Dwight Davis, Hope Hull, Alabama, who built a "wing" lawn mower out of a Cub Cadet tractor equipped with a home-built 5-ft. deck. He pulls it alongside his 1976 Power King garden tractor, which has a 4-ft. deck.

Davis removed the front axle, rear end, and operator's platform from the Cub, leaving only the tractor's frame and 12 1/2 hp engine. He mounted the tractor on a new frame made out of 2-in. sq. tubing.

He used 1 1/2-in. angle iron and 1/8-in. thick sheet metal to build the deck, which is equipped with three 20-in. blades. The deck is reinforced with 3/8-in. thick steel plate and 2-in. channel iron where the spindles mount. It's supported by four 10-in. caster wheels.

The frame that the Cub mounts on attaches to the Power King with three adjustable length, 1/2-in. dia. steel rods. The rods are threaded at one end, allowing Davis to easily adjust the distance between the two mowers. The rods attach to clevis pins that allow the attached mower to flex up and down.

The Cub's electric clutch is used to control the blades, which are belt-driven off the engine crankshaft.

"It works just as good as I had hoped it would and has reduced my mowing time by more than half," says Davis.

"I left the fuel tank, starting system, and charging system intact on the Cub frame. The only thing I added to the tractor was a frame to hold the battery.

"It handles real well. At first I was afraid the wing mower would pull the tractor to the side, but it hasn't been a problem. The wing mower is positioned right next to the tractor where it's easier to see than if it trailed behind.

"To operate the two mowers, I first start the Cub and use the electric clutch on it to engage the blades. Then I start the Power King and turn on the pto to engage the blades. The decks overlap 2 in. The four caster wheels allow the Cub mower to move in any direction with the Power King. When needed, I can quickly remove three clevis pins and use the Power King by itself."

"It has reduced my mowing time by more than half," says Dwight Davis, who built a "wing" lawn mower out of a Cub Cadet tractor equipped with a 5-ft. deck.

Davis pulls the wing mower alongside his Power King garden tractor, which has a 4-ft. deck. Four caster wheels allow the wing mower to move in any direction with the Power King.

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