Three Cyclos Merged Into "Hybrid" Drill-Planter

"It combines the narrow row spacing of a drill with the metering accuracy of a planter," says Phil Deal, Taylorville, Ill., of the "hybrid" planter he created by merging three International Cyclo planters.

The first-of-its-kind machine plants conventional or no-till in 24 rows spaced 10 in. apart, and, by using the center planter, will plant corn in 8 30-in. rows. "I designed it for double cropping soybeans directly in wheat stubble. Since it's used like a drill, it doesn't have any row markers," Deal points out

Deal hasn't weighed the planter but acknowledges that "it's heavy." He had a problem with wheel bearings initially but discovered he could replace original IH bearings with Deere field cultivator bearings, which he says are heavy enough to do the job.

Deal mounted the planter units, row openers and Yetter moldboard plow coulters on a reversed and shortened Cyclo frame. He reinforced the original tongue to handle the added weight and equipped the pto shaft with an overriding clutch so the blowers can coast to a stop.

"Oversize" Skid Steer Loader

"It looks like a small payloader except that it's got articulated steering and an automatic transmission with four speed ranges," says Bruce Schmit about the "oversize" skid steer loader he built from scratch on his Fairmount, N. Dak. dairy farm.

The articulated loader is fitted with 24-in. combine drive tires and powered by a 350 Chevrolet engine. Power from the engine is directed to the driveline through a gear reduction transfer case. The loader is fitted with both an automatic Chevrolet transmission and a manual 4-speed transmission off an old Massey Harris combine. The combination of the two transmissions, which are coupled together with a driveshaft, gives four different automatic drive ranges. For most work Schmit stays in low which gears down as low as about 1 mph.

One hydraulic cylinder provides articulation for the loader, which is equipped with a regular steering wheel. "The wheels kink around so far they almost touch," says Schmit, who built the frame for the loader from the ground up. The entire project took 2 to 3 months. The loader has a heated cab and an assortment of buckets, including a 7-ft. wide conventional bucket and a straw chopping bucket, made from a combine straw chopper, that chops straw bales and blows them into freestalls as bedding. All buck-ets are self-leveling and can be mounted and dismounted hydrauli-cally without leaving the cab.

"We've used it every day for the past 3 years without a problem," says Schmit, who recently built a second, similar loader using an Oldmobile car engine.

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Portable Pto Power Unit

Bennett Osmonson, Gully, Minn., built a portable pto power unit out of an old truck to power silage blowers and grain augers.

"It's built from the front chassis of a 1961 IHC truck. The engine, transmission and front axle are all intact. I welded a second axle to the other end of the cut-off frame and fitted it with small castor wheels for easy positioning of the unit. A transfer case from an old feed grinder with 3.4 to 1 reduction reverses rotation of the truck pto to power farm equipment.

"I modified the hand brake, which can be locked in the disengaged position, to work as a clutch to control the engine and routed the exhaust up and forward to a front-mounted muffler. Added lights help see for night running. The truck instruments were remounted near the clutch for ease of observation. To service the engine, the entire front hood hinges rearward. Also, we mounted a 32-gal. fuel tank on the frame and added a combine governor to hold speed constant."

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Gooseneck "Truck" Trailers

Junked 2-ton trucks make great gooseneck trailers, according to Clyde Lowe, Chanute, Kan., who's built four "truck" trailers.

"We cut the truck frame just behind the front springs and weld a gooseneck, which we build from scratch, directly to the truck frame. Then we mount a 200-bu. hopper box directly on the frame. I can easily pull the trailers with a 3/4-ton Chevy pickup with a 350 engine and automatic transmission. They're equipped with tail, brake and turn lights for highway use. I've built two trailers with hopper boxes on them and two with flatbeds. They make the most stable bale hauling wagons I've ever used.

"I also built a trailer dolly from a truck front axle to pull the trailers with a tractor in the field, or with a pickup that's not fitted with a ball hitch. It's just a 2-wheel cart that hitches directly to the gooseneck and trails behind the tractor. Works great in muddy fields. I've never gotten stuck with a load of grain," says Lowe.

He notes that he's able to pick up junked trucks for anywhere from $50 to $200. He's interested in building the trailers for sale.

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