



Teeter-totter allows drivers of all skills to drive their tractors onto a platform set on a center beam that runs from side to side. The goal is to balance the tractor as quickly as possible.

## Big Teeter-Totter Tests Tractor Driver Skills

Besides showing off their antique tractors at shows, many collectors like to test their driving skills.

Retired mechanical engineer Bruce Babcock and members of the Fairfield County (Ohio) Antique Tractor Club built a teeter-totter that allows drivers of all skills to drive their tractors on a platform set on a center beam that runs from side to side. They attempt to balance the tractor as quickly as possible. For some with worn-out clutches and limited experience, finding that balance can be almost impossible.

Babcock's teeter-totter has an adjustable pivot that can be changed to suit the skill of the competitors. "When the adjustable pivot is close to the fixed support it's more difficult to balance. When we move it out, it's a lot easier," he says.

The Fairfield teeter-totter also has air

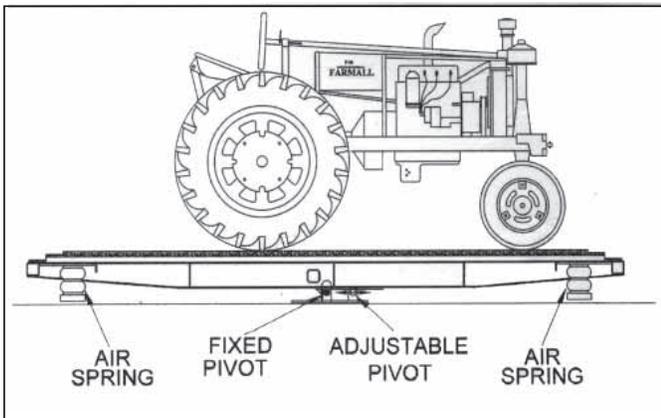
shocks at each end to prevent hard landings when either end hits the ground. The shocks connect to valves that bleed air slowly to set the teeter-totter down gently. A check valve opens to reinflate the shocks quickly.

"It's important that we don't subject equipment to stress greater than what it was designed for," Babcock says. "We want to treat these antiques as gently as we can."

The unit is easily transported by slipping pneumatic tires mounted on stub axles into sleeves on the steel frame. A hitch is attached the same way.

Babcock will share plans with others interested in making a similar teeter-totter.

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## He Restores Old Gauges

Dick Kunkle of Stuart, Iowa loves repairing and restoring old pressure gauges. They were originally used to monitor air, water or steam pressure.

The unusual hobby grew naturally from Kunkle's career. He worked in water treatment plants where he often had to fix or replace the many gauges.

"They're the most important part of a plant because of the information they provide. They tell you what's going on everywhere," he explains.

When you retire, you don't really retire, according to Kunkle, "you just kind of phase it out." Now, he's interested in selling antique gauges or doing custom gauge restoring for others.

He's found that often, the old gauges just need routine maintenance, like anything else.

"Sometimes I get gauges that have the glass broke out of them or the faces are almost

completely worn off. They can have missing needles or many coats of paint on their base," he says. "I fix or replace all of these things, and re-calibrate them, too, using a master gauge."

Kunkle has come across some really old and unusual gauges, and has bought them for the enjoyment he gets from restoring them.

The most common size is 4 to 4 1/2-in., but he says they range from 2-in. to 10-in. diameters.

"The brass stuff is especially old but sometimes they've been painted over, so I really like returning them to their original brass base. The oldest one I have has a 6-in. face and was made in 1910," he says. "The rewarding part of it is to take something that looks like an absolute bunch of junk, and make it look brand new again. It's painstaking, but it gets in your blood. They just need tender love and care."

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"It gets noticed right away wherever it goes," says Mike Korzan about his home-built mini semi. He and friend Dallas Denison built it around a Chevrolet 1-ton extended cab pickup.



## Mini Semi Has A Sleeper Cab

"I built it to look like a 1988 Peterbilt and call it my Mini-Pete camper special. It gets noticed right away wherever it goes," says Mike Korzan of Prior Lake, Minn., about the home-built mini semi that he built around a Chevrolet 1-ton extended cab pickup. His friend Dallas Denison helped him build it.

The doors are off a Freightliner cab-over semi truck. Features include air horns, air ride seats, dual CB radio antennae, chrome alloy wheels, a pair of stainless steel exhaust pipes, a chrome bumper, and a TV inside the custom upholstered sleeper cab. Power is supplied by the pickup's 6.5-liter diesel engine and 5-speed transmission.

The cab still has the pickup's original dash, firewall, air conditioner, and pedals. Both the cab and hood were built out of 1-in. sq. tubing with 18-ga. sheet metal riveted on. The sleeper measures 4 ft. long by 80 in. wide and has a 2-ft. wide bunk.

He built the grille out of 10-ga. steel, with vertical tubing with 1/4-in. dia. rods set horizontally through the tubes.

"I drive it to a lot of bluegrass festivals and car shows and pull a fifth wheel camper be-

hind it. It's a super camper puller," says Korzan. "I can bunk down in the sleeper cab whenever I need rest. I came up with the idea because I drove a truck for 25 years over the road and always liked Peterbilts."

"I had built four other mini sleepers, which were much smaller, before I built this model. Two of them were built on Datsun pickup frames, and the other two on Chevy pickup frames."

The mini sleeper has air bag suspension on the tandem axles, controlled by an onboard compressor. Only the middle axle drives. "If I'm on uneven ground I can let air out of the bags on the tag axle right from the cab. That way the drive axle has all the traction so I won't get hung up," says Korzan.

He outfitted the stainless steel exhaust pipes with homemade heat shields that have little holes in them to keep anyone from getting burned. The windshield is made out of safety glass and was custom cut by a window shop.

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Old pressure gauges have a beauty all their own, says Dick Kunkle, who restores them. Gauges shown have brass cases and rings.

Antique gauges are of much better quality than today's gauges, according to Kunkle, and they're also more interesting and ornate. Some have delicate "sun and moon-tipped needles" on them or other decorative designs, whereas modern gauges are generally plain.

"In some of them, the works inside are like a clock and the manufacture date is stamped on them somewhere," Kunkle says. "Some

provide both altitude and pressure (psi) readings, while others give just one or the other type of reading."

In addition to antique gauges for sale, Kunkle also has 50 new 4 1/2-in. gauges in stock.

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