Tracked Fencing Machine Works Fast In Rugged Terrain

By Janis Schol, Contributing Editor

Thanks to the fencing machine he rigged up this spring, Scott Miller now gets more work done working alone than he used to with a helper.

The Athabasca, Alta. man has operated a custom fencing business for about 5 yrs., pulling a rubber-tired post pounder behind a tractor. A big disadvantage of that method was that it got stuck in soft ground easily. His new system consists of a Morooka MST 800 Crawler Carrier, which has rubber tracks. Miller modified the unit for fencing purposes, investing a total of $45,000, including the $30,000 cost of the used crawler.

“Till this machine won’t get stuck, even in places where an ATV would have trouble. It’s also much easier to operate,” Miller says. “I’ve found I can put in at least a third more posts by myself with this machine than 2 people can with a normal pull-behind pounder.”

He removed the Morooka crawler’s standard cargo box and mounted a homemade post carrying rack on the frame behind the cab. This allows him to carry an 80-post bundle.

“I had a welder do some fabrication on the back of the Morooka so I could mount a 3-pt. pto-driven pounder using two pin boxes in the back of the Morooka so I could mount a home-built post pounder. To include a wire roller/unroller feature on his rig, Miller welded a receiver hitch onto the pounder, and then mounted a Level-Wind Wire Spooler manufactured in Red Deer, Alta. He plumbed the unit’s hydraulic power into the pounder’s system. Miller also mounted a 3 arms to the back of the pounder so he can simultaneously lay down 3 wires.

“The unroller’s hitch makes it easy to move the post pounder to the tractor, if need be. I modified the Morooka’s steering linkage so I can run the machine while walking beside it.”

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“The unroller and the post pounder need to be operated from the back of the crawler, where the levers are located,” Miller says. “I usually pound along a pre-tensioned bar of fence per day or alternately, he can remove about a mile per day.

“After 2 months of use, I haven’t found anything I’d like to change about it yet,” he says.

Miller generally takes on custom fencing jobs within a 150-mi. radius of home and on average, charges about $3,000 (Can.) per mile for labor and equipment; materials are extra.

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Firewood Processor Built From Salvaged Farm Equipment

“My father, brother and I all heat our homes entirely with wood. Commercial firewood processors can cost $30,000 or more, which I found hard to justify. So, I built my own using pieces of salvaged farm equipment. It allows one person to easily cut, split, and load firewood,” says Jay Merriner, Winchester, Va.

He used a hydraulically-controlled firewood processor mounted 3 arms to the back of the pounder and a motor into the pounder’s system. Miller also mounted 3 arms to the back of the pounder so he can simultaneously lay down 3 wires.

“In the past, an upright support for the haybin’s pto shaft was always in the way when I cranked the jack. Now there’s nothing in the way when cranking the jack so it’s not a problem.”

McNamara says there are thousands of similar New Holland haybines on the market that have the same problem. “I don’t know why the company doesn’t move the jack farther back, because there’s plenty of room,” he notes.

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“Get Back” Haybine Jack

“I like my 1999 New Holland 488 10-ft. haybine but the hand-cranked lift jack on the tong extended too far forward. One time I made a left hand turn with the machine, and the jack’s sharp edges cut into the tractor’s rear tire which cost $400 to replace. I solved the problem by cutting off the jack assembly and moving it back 16 in.,” says Bruce McNamara, Solway, Minn.

He used a grinding wheel to cut the jack off the tong. “The grinding wheel did a nice, neat job. I repainted the tong, and now you can hardly tell where the jack was before,” says McNamara.

“His hydraulically controlled firewood processor loads split wood onto a truck or wagon. Hydraulically-controlled firewood processor loads split wood onto a truck or wagon.

The relocated jack provides another benefit, says McNamara. “In the past, I can remove the pounder and put the crawler’s box back on by taking out 4 pins and unhooking 2 hydraulic hoses.

“Till this machine won’t get stuck, even in places where an ATV would have trouble,” says Scott Miller about his rubber-tracked fencing rig.

Since the crawler is hydrostatic driven, Miller added a second hydraulic pump when he converted it to run the pounder. This enables him to lift the pounder up while driving to the next post and then let it down for pounding.

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