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Flywheel Powers Bale Throwing, Hydraulic Pump

Kevin Bahe got a good deal on a Deere/New Holland hybrid baler. A New Holland kicker had been grafted to the Deere baler with a drive unit fabricated to run off the flywheel. Equally unusual were the onboard hydraulic pump and reservoir used to adjust the thrower angle.

"The owner had several older tractors without hydraulics," said Bahe. "I think the modifications were made so he could use them to bale with a thrower."

Bahe says the flywheel drive unit is mounted to a frame made from heavy-duty, 2 by 4-in. steel tubing and angle iron. Two rubber-tired wheels mounted to the frame ride on the flywheel. A chain connects sprockets on the outside hub of each wheel. A second sprocket on the rear-most wheel runs back to power the belt drive on the thrower.

The thrower itself is welded to the end of the bale chamber. The only change was removal of the chute and bale pans.

A rubber-covered steel wheel mounted to the under frame of the baler and just ahead of the baler's left wheel provides hydraulic power. It is positioned to ride against the flywheel. A small hydraulic motor mounted to the outside hub of the wheel provides hydraulic power to the thrower aiming mechanism. A length of angle iron mounted to the front of the baler carries hydraulic hoses and a control valve within easy reach of the operator. A hydraulics reservoir is



Bale thrower is chain and belt-driven off a pair of rubber-tired wheels that ride on the flywheel.

mounted just above the baler's right wheel. "The baler only cost \$425," says Bahe. "I bought it as much for its relic value as for baling. However, I do plan to use it some this summer. It works great. There is no shortage of power. It will toss a bale over the wagon."

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Saddle Repairman "Does It Right"

Lloyd McConnell restores saddles the right way to keep customers from making a mistake he once made.

"I had a George Lawrence saddle that was about 130 years old," recalls McConnell. "I had it repaired. The fellow didn't stitch it up right and replaced the fenders. The dealer I took it to said it would have been worth \$12,000 if done right and the fenders retained. As it was, I only got \$1,200."

After that experience, McConnell apprenticed himself to a saddle maker who was meticulous. "I learned to do things right," he says. "That can mean not repairing a saddle if it is too far gone or doing a near complete replacement of worn leather if the owner is really attached to the saddle and the tree is okay."

When McConnell recently took on a 1950's vintage western saddle, it needed a lot of work. The fleece was shot, as were the stirrup leathers and some of the strings.

"I usually begin with a good cleaning, and then if major repairs are needed, I take the

skirt off with the fleece on it, as well as the jockeys and strings," says McConnell.

"I remove all the stitching that holds the fleece to the skirt," explains McConnell. "That can take 6 to 8 hours."

McConnell only uses genuine fleeces. Attaching one requires laying the skirt out on a whole fleece. He marks the shape, glues the skirt in place with rubber cement and trims the fleece with half an inch extra past the outline.

"I sew the fleece to the skirt, putting new stitches in the old holes on the skirt," says McConnell.

McConnell often makes his own stirrup leathers, knocking out the rivets from the old stirrups and replacing them with new. Replacing the missing stirrup cover requires copying the original design.

Doing it right is a painstaking job, and most of the cost is the labor involved. On the 1950's vintage saddle, the most expensive replacement part was the fleece, which cost \$120. The total cost of labor, fleece and other



Donald Putteet converted his Exmark zero-turn riding mower to a handy hauler by adding a hinged plywood platform on front.

Zero Turn Mower Turned Into A Handy "Workhorse"

"I'm at the age where I can't carry things around like I used to, so I converted my 1999 Exmark Lazer zero turn riding mower into a true workhorse by adding a hinged plywood platform on front and ball hitches at both ends of the machine," says Donald Putteet, Middleburg, Fla.

He used 1/2-in. thick steel to build a support bar that clamps onto the mower's frame with 2 U-bolts just above the front caster wheels. The bar, which is fitted with a center-mounted ball hitch, supports a fold-up plywood platform that's 30 in. wide by 34 in. long. The back side of the platform hinges on 2 homemade H-clamps that fasten to the mower's frame. Both sides of the platform are bolted to 1 3/4-in. sq. wooden arms that pin onto the H-clamps. When not in use, the platform rests against a lever that's used to raise or lower the mower's 52-in. deck.

"It's super handy," says Putteet. "I came up with the idea because I got tired of having to carry stuff around by hand. I already had added the support bar and ball hitch so I could back trailers into tight areas more easily.

"I've used it to carry everything from a big, heavy old TV that a neighbor wanted hauled away to several 50-lb. bags of mulch, a washing machine, and several stacked-together sheets of plywood. When the platform is down, the ball hitch fits up through a hole in the platform and sets flush with it.

"I can remove the platform by pulling 2 pins. However, most of the time I leave it on



Platform is built strong enough to carry several 50-lb. bags of mulch. Putteet also installed ball hitches at both ends of machine.



while mowing because it doesn't interfere much with visibility."

Putteet says the mower's rear-mounted ball hitch comes in handy to move everything from boats to pull-type campers. To add it, he bolted 2 pieces of flat steel to the mower's rear bumper and then bolted on a wedge-shaped piece of steel that supports the ball.

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Restoring saddles the right way means that Lloyd McConnell uses only genuine fleeces. Attaching one requires laying the skirt out on a whole fleece. He marks the shape, glues the skirt in place, and trims the fleece.

leather pieces was \$600.

If you have a saddle that needs work, McConnell suggests sending detailed pictures of the saddle. Include descriptions of the problems and the condition of the leather.

"I need to know as much as possible up front to give a good ballpark estimate of the

restoration cost," says McConnell. "If it has been fairly well cared for, it can be repaired."

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