

Made-It-Myself Lawn Tractor Cab



Todd Schminke made this "clear view" cab for his snowblower-equipped Wheel Horse garden tractor.

Todd Schminke likes clearing snow for elderly and homebound neighbors, but he doesn't like getting hit in the face with snow. His total visibility Wheel Horse tractor cab keeps the snow out.

"I wanted to be able to see when doing driveways around town, but I couldn't find a cab I liked," says Schminke. "I decided to build one."

At first he planned to build a cab that could be easily removed. That changed when he found a second, 1976, C160 automatic Wheel Horse identical to the one he had. He decided to dedicate the machine to snowblowing.

Schminke used 1 by 1-in. steel tubing to frame in the 3-ft. wide, 4-ft. long and 5-ft. tall cab. He used 1/2-in. plexiglass for hinged components and 5/8-in. for the remainder. Aluminum angle brackets bolt everything

together and give added stability. He added LED lights on front and clearance and marker lights on back. He did not add a heater, as his main concern was wind and snow.

"One entire side is hinged for a door," says Schminke. "I wanted it to be easy to get in and out. The bottom third of the front side is also hinged so I can lift the hood to access the gas tank. With the plexiglass walls and door, I have unlimited visibility."

He fitted a 2-stage Craftsman blower to the tractor. He had to make a quick-tach bracket with a belt drive and a hydraulic lift to mount it on the Wheel Horse.

The bracket design was complicated by the fact that the Craftsman drive pulley was underneath the blower and the Wheel Horse drive was to the side.

"I used 1/2-in. steel plate for the mounting brackets," says Schminke. "I wanted them heavy enough that they wouldn't buckle if I hit an obstacle in the snow."

Schminke used a similar bracket to mount a dethatcher to the front of his remaining Wheel Horse. Initially a pull type, he modified it with the bracket and hydraulic lift. He also added caster wheels on 1 by 1-in. aluminum tubing brackets to the front of the dethatcher. "The caster wheels keep it level and stop it from digging in," says Schminke.

This past year Schminke upgraded his snowblower tractor. He picked up a combination gas tank/seat from a 1978 Wheel Horse. "I replaced the seat on my '76, and now I use both gas tanks," he says.

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Gravity-fed chicken feeder can be mounted on an optional single post mounting system that stakes into the ground.

"Silo" Chicken Feeder

Tom Carter and his daughter Kate of Wilmington, N.C., are co-inventors of The CoopWorx Feed Silo, a new kind of chicken feeder designed "to take the work out of carrying, cleaning up, and storing feed." They recently launched the feeder on Kickstarter (www.kickstarter.com), a funding platform for creative projects.

"The Feed Silo is an elevated, gravity-fed poly feeder designed to make tending to your flock a lot easier. It offers many benefits over conventional chicken feeders," says Tom. "It holds up to 80 lbs. of feed and comes with 8 custom silicon feed ports, a lockable hinged lid, and four height-adjustable legs to adjust to the size of your poultry."

The portable feeder measures 39 in. high, with a 27-in. high body mounted on 13-in. legs. A roost-resistant hinged lid provides easy access for loading feed, and integrated drip edges channel water away from the feed ports. An internal funnel system provides a continuous gravity flow of feed to the ports, eliminating hard-to-reach dead spots and

feed spoilage.

"The ports are elevated, which lets chickens reach in and eat without scratching out feed," says Tom. "The feeder has drip edges on the lid and body, and hooded drip guards over the ports to keep the feed dry. The internal funnel system keeps the feed only about one inch deep inside the ports, which helps reduce waste."

An optional single post mounting system that stakes into the ground is also available.

"The CoopWorx is made in the U.S.," says Tom. "We're just starting production and expect it to retail for \$195. However, we're offering a pre-order special price for a limited time of only \$145 plus S&H."

You can watch a video of the feeder at www.CoopWorxUSA.com.

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Repowered Cub Cadet Lo-Boy was lengthened by 22 in. to make room for a 500-hp., 7.3-liter Power Stroke diesel engine off a Ford F-350 pickup.

Cub Cadet Repowered With 7.3-Liter Diesel

Jim Rose, Chardon, Ohio, found a unique way to advertise his diesel repair business - he installed a 1,000-lb., 7.3-liter Ford Power Stroke diesel engine in a Cub Cadet Lo-Boy compact tractor. The 500-hp. engine is off a 1996 Ford F-350 pickup, with the tractor lengthened by 22 in. to make room for the engine.

His company, Rosewood Diesel Shop, specializes in rebuilding 7.3 Power Stroke injectors and servicing and repairing Ford diesel pickups.

"I repowered the Cub because I've been a die-hard fan of the 7.3-liter Power Stroke for years, and I wanted something that would draw attention at events we attend," says Rose. "Since the engine was originally manufactured by Navistar International,

which is the successor to International Harvester, I wanted to repower a tractor that was also built by International. With the big engine the tractor weighs 2,430 lbs., compared to 1,480 lbs. for the original Cub."

He bought the 1969 Cub Lo-Boy at an auction for \$225 and bolted it to a Ford C-6 automatic transmission. "The C-6 transmission allows me to manually shift gears without using a clutch, and has the option for a transmission brake - a device used in drag racing to hold the car dead still, while allowing the engine to build massive power at the starting line," says Rose. "The transmission brake allows me to load the engine, force the turbocharger to build up some boost, and then shoot tons of black smoke into the air."

He cut the tractor frame in front of the cowl, then used 2 by 6, 1/4-in. thick box tubing to build new frame rails. "I mounted the engine and transmission in such a way as to allow a positive connection with the Cub's factory rear end, using a chain coupler and several custom machined parts," says Rose. "I welded the front of the factory Cub frame section with the factory Cub front axle in place, which also serves as the mount for the factory radiator. An electric fan that's tucked inside the factory fan shroud provides extra cooling."

The tractor's rack and pinion steering system is off an early 1970's Ford Pinto. "I used multiple shafts and steering joints to connect the steering rack to the Cub's steering wheel, which was centered in the cowl," says Rose. "The computers and electronics that operate the engine fit under the fuel tank in the cowl, and a Ford truck throttle pedal was adapted to the tractor's hydraulic control lever to serve as a new throttle. New control levers were added to activate the transmission brake and the gear selector for the C-6 transmission."

Rose added aftermarket gauges on the tractor's dash to monitor the engine. "I still use the Cub's original lighting switch and its ignition key switch to start the tractor," he says.

The hood was built by welding 2 separate tractor hoods together.

"A lot of work went into adding new sheet metal on back of the tractor," says Rose. "I filled several unused holes, converted the tractor's original battery tray into a tool tray, and mounted a larger battery that was required for the Power Stroke engine. I also replaced the tires with used ones from 2 different parts tractors. Everything was then taken apart and painted to match the tractor's original yellow and cream colors."

The hood is fitted with a 3 1/2-in. exhaust pipe. "Not surprisingly, the tractor sounds like a 1996 Ford pickup equipped with a diesel engine," says Rose.

The project was completed in time for the company to attend a big diesel truck event last May, but unfortunately the event was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Overall, I'm pleased with how the tractor turned out," says Rose. "I achieved my goal of maintaining the look and feel of an old Cub compact tractor, while repowering it with a big 500 hp. diesel engine."

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