

Restored GK starts and runs well, operating with rear-wheel drive and a 3-speed transmission.



Restored Articulated Bolens Looks Like New

People who see Stan Krolkowski's bumblebee yellow Bolens Groundskeeper (GK) at shows often think it belongs on the cover of a Bolens company brochure. The flawless GK looks showroom-ready because of Kro-

likowski's meticulous frame-off restoration.

Krolkowski says the nearly 50-year-old GK had been worked hard and not well-maintained in recent years when he acquired it. It needed front-to-back and top-to-bottom

attention, so he stripped the machine down to its frame to clean and repair parts. Overhauling the THD Wisconsin 18-hp 2-cyl. engine brought it back to a smooth-running condition. A coat of blue paint gave it a factory-new look.

The center pivot point and steering assembly on the articulated GK were loose and well-worn, so Krolkowski rebuilt and tightened them. The mechanical shoe brakes and electrical system also received much-needed attention.

Krolkowski says his restored GK starts and runs well, operating with rear-wheel drive and a 3-speed transmission. He mounted a factory optional 45-in. snow blower, which his son says would be much more useful if the GK had a differential lock or 4-WD to handle slippery conditions. Other optional equipment for the GK model, which Bolens built from 1966 to 1975, included a front-mounted 54-in. dirt blade, a 72-in. flex-wing blade mower, a reel mower, and a cab with windows all around, lights and a mirror.

Krolkowski found a usable cab and installed it on his machine, learning during the process that it also had a heater, which pulled warm air from the engine to a small fan inside the cab. It came with a decal stating



Krolkowski located a usable cab and put it on his machine.

an important message: "Warning, Exhaust System Should Be Checked for Leaks Before Using Cab Heater."

Krolkowski says the heater isn't a very good design, and he doesn't use it. However, that doesn't stop him and his wife from taking it to shows where people always admire the machine. Like others who own the rare GK machines, he says it's fun to own, drive and take to shows.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Stan Krolkowski, Amsterdam, New York.

Waterloo Boy on display at Heartland Agribition Center.



Ag History On Display In Iowa

Heartland Acres Agribition Center puts the focus on agriculture and ag history. The combination museum and exhibition/event center attracts tourists to the community. It also brings in groups of up to 450 people looking for a place to meet and explore.

Located in northeastern Iowa, the Heartland

Acres Museum reflects the agricultural history of the area. Exhibits include modern and vintage tractors, implements, cars and much more. The 18,500-sq. ft. replica of an 1800s barn encloses displays representing the past, present and future of Iowa Agriculture.

"Our Hall of Time, with its two floors

of exhibits, goes from the 1840s through modern-day farming," says Leanne Harrison, Heartland Acres Agribition Center. "There are exhibits on the impact of electricity, a windmill display and a 1920s kitchen and parlor."

The large, wooden windmill is a reconstructed 1900 Monitor Vaneless (no rudder). Only 24 of its type are known to still exist in the U.S.

Visitors get up close to a John Deere Waterloo Boy, horse-drawn equipment and early horseless carriages. Displays include a 1920s gas station display, complete with pumps, a vintage car, and early firefighting equipment.

A doctor's buggy display includes the medical equipment a doctor would take with him on house calls.

Interactive exhibits include a series of stations where participants can shell ear corn, carry the kernels to a grindstone for milling and then to a sifting station. The results can be fed to livestock in an outside display.

Other outside exhibits include a threshing machine with explanatory murals, a smaller pull-type combine and a variety of



Heartland Agribition Center is located in Independence, Iowa.

implements. A path leads to a one-room schoolhouse and a machine shed with a large collection of antique tractors.

Modern equipment exhibits vary from time to time, with loans from collectors. One of the surviving Big Bud tractors proved very popular.

"The Big Bud was a star attraction and brought in around 5,000 visitors a year before it was returned to its owners in Wyoming," says Harrison.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Heartland Acres Agribition Center, 2600 Swan Lake Blvd., Independence, Iowa 50644 (ph 319-332-0123; info@heartlandacresusa.com; www.heartlandacresusa.com).

Kerosene and distillate-powered machines were built of heavy-grade metal. All wheels were steel, based on the steam engine models.



Aultman Taylor Tractors Powered The Prairies

In 1910, the first Aultman Taylor 30-60 tractor was built by the Aultman & Taylor Machinery Company of Ohio.

"The 30-60 was a well-built, powerful and reliable tractor for that time and could drive large threshing machines of 50 in. cylinder width or more," says Manitoba Agricultural

Museum historian Alex Campbell. "To operate that size of thresher economically meant a large number of sheaf wagons, men and horses were required."

The 30-60 was considered a "Prairie Style" tractor and quickly became a dominant fixture on the Western Canadian plowing and

harvest scene, running the province's plows and threshing machines seemingly without breakdowns or mechanical issues.

"They borrowed heavily from steam engine technology of the time," Campbell says. "They were extremely durable and widely thought to be one of the more reliable Prairie Style tractors."

The kerosene and distillate-powered machines were built of heavy-grade metal. All wheels were steel, based on the steam engine models. Winch-driven, chain-type steering directed solid axles that swiveled under the tractor. The gearing was simple, with some units only having a single forward and reverse gear.

"A few had a 2-speed forward transmission, but to change the gears, the operator had to stop, get off and manipulate them manually," Campbell laughs.

Due to the steering limitations, the tractors required a considerable amount of room to turn around at the end of a field. This was a significant reason many local municipalities purchased and used them for road work, where a single speed and turning issues weren't as critical to the job.

Kerosene was the fuel of choice because it was cheaper, but it was unsuitable for cars, as it would tend to pre-detonate in the

cylinders, causing engine damage. Operators who understood this issue would inject water through the carburetors to stop this from occurring before ignition.

"It was hard to get it set properly, and of course, carrying water in a car with gasoline and an inexperienced operator was a recipe for disaster," Campbell says.

By 1923, the Aultman Taylor tractors had ceased operations due in part to the rapid evolution of gasoline engines and metallurgical advances. These technological innovations, combined with the breakup of many large ranches throughout the Midwest and Western Provinces, demanded more efficient gas-powered tractors to increase plowing and harvesting production.

"Many 30-60s went from the grain fields to finishing their lives building roads, but most were worn out by the 1940s and scrapped to take advantage of all the heavy metal they contained. People just couldn't afford to be sentimental in the 1930s due to the economy," Campbell says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Manitoba Agricultural Museum, Box 10, Austin, Manitoba, Canada R0H 0C0 (ph 204-637-2354; info@mbagmuseum.ca; www.mbagmuseum.ca).