

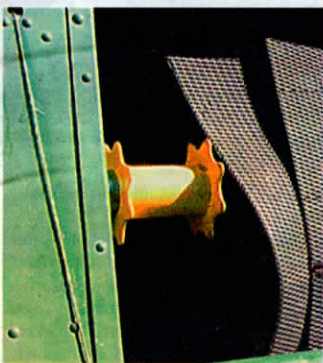
## "Star Wheels" Keep Hay From Plugging On Round Baler Belts

"Since I mounted 'star wheels' on my Deere 430 round baler last summer, I haven't had to get off the tractor to dig hay out of the belts," says John McAlester, Wilburton, Okla., who borrowed an idea from Hesston Mfg. to solve the problem he was having with hay plugging up on the baler.

"Hay tended to get caught between the outside belts and follow them up to the roller at the top of the baler where it wadded up," says McAlester. "I noticed that some of the older Hesston round balers were equipped with 'star wheels' to prevent the problem. I decided to copy the design."

McAlester cut "star-wheels" out of a steel plate, then cut the centers out and welded them onto each end of a 7 1/4-in. long, 3 1/8-in. inside diameter pipe. He then removed the bottom roller from the front of the baler and slid a wheel onto each end.

"The wheels turn with the belt to keep loose hay from coming out between the belts," says McAlester. "The old Hesston balers have a wheel between every belt."



However, we were having problems only on the outside belts so I only made two wheels. The wheels will also fit the Deere 530 baler."

McAlester sells the wheels for \$75 apiece.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, John McAlester, Rt. 1, Box 1520, Wilburton, Okla. 74578 ph 918 465-2515.



## Rubber-Tracked "4-WD" All-Terrain Vehicle

Mike Hrechka used a pair of old tractor tires to make tracks for a home-built, 4-WD go-anywhere ATV. The 18 1/2-in. wide tracks mount over pairs of pickup wheels, with a smaller car wheel in the middle.

"It's much more comfortable to ride in than a 4-wheeler and will go places no 4-WD pickup could ever go," says Hrechka.

He started with a 1,600 cc Volkswagen car engine and 4-speed transmission and transaxle, along with a pair of drive axles off two Chevrolet 1/2-ton pickups. He mounted the engine sideways and turned the front axle upside down so that both axles drive in the same direction. He made a driveshaft that connects the VW transaxle to both pickup axles and locked the differential in the transaxle to provide 4-WD. The driveshaft telescopes, allowing the rear axle to be moved forward or backward on the frame to keep the tracks snug on the wheels. He used 3-in. dia. oilfield pipe to build the frame and rollbar and sheet metal to make the hood.

Hrechka cut the beads out of the two 18.4 by 38 rear tractor tires using a chain saw. The front and back wheels on each side are 15 in. and the center wheels 13 in. The center wheels bolt to the frame about 1 in. lower than the 15-in. wheels to

provide a pivot point for turning.

"It sails over snow like a snowmobile and has so much traction that the tracks never spin," says Hrechka. "It runs at speeds from a crawl up to 45 mph and is as quiet as a car. I used it last year to hunt moose in northern Manitoba. I put it through quite a test, going through swamps from morning to night every day. I was able to push 2 1/2-in. dia. trees right over and even used it to pull out a Polaris 4-WD ATV that got stuck. The 97 hp engine has so much power it can pull a 3/4-ton 4-WD pickup with all four of its wheels locked. I can drive in second or third gear in soft ground and still keep my momentum going without ever getting bogged down."

"It took about 800 hours to build. I paid \$350 for each rear end and spent a total of about \$2,000. It has high and low beam headlights, gauges, two bucket seats, and toolboxes on both sides."

"By unbolting the mid wheels and removing the tracks I can run it on the four pickup wheels. It actually rides smoother on wheels than on tracks."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Mike Hrechka, Box 177, Pipestone, Manitoba, Canada R0M 1T0 (ph 204 854-2367 or 748-1754).

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