



A pair of large flighted pontoons pulled this modified Fordson through snow.

3-FT. DIA. AND 7-FT. LONG

Antique “Auger Tracks” Pulled Tractor Through Snow

When we first saw photos of this late 1930's Fordson tractor, we thought it was some kind of joke.

After talking to an expert, we learned that the big flighted pontoons mounted on either side of the tractor were actually designed to pull it through snow. It was salvaged from a Cook City, Mont., mining camp and is on display at The World Museum of Mining in Butte, Mont.

“The system was first built in 1923 and was called the ‘Fordson Snow Motor Conversion,’” says Lloyd Harkin, a Silver Star, Mont., collector of mining equipment. “The tanks were about 3-ft. in dia. and 7-ft. long. They were attached in front with a yoke instead of the regular axle and were chain driven from a gearbox that bolted on behind the ring and pinion gear. One screw turned clockwise and the other turned counter clockwise to propel it forward. If they'd both turned the same way, the tractor would simply have turned circles.”

The kit was built and sold by Snow Mo-



Tracks were chain-driven from a gear box that bolted behind rack and pinion.

tors Inc. of Detroit, Mich. “It's my understanding they worked reasonably well in moderate snow, but were impractical in heavy powder because the vehicle sank in,” he says. “Top speed wasn't near as fast as a tractor, either.”

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, World Museum of Mining, Box 33, Butte, Mont. 59703 (ph 406 723-7211).

NEARLY HALF A MILLION STRONG His Gum Wrapper Chain Is Almost Two Miles Long

Seven years ago Leo Franzen started making a gum wrapper chain, folding and weaving wrappers together one at a time. Ever since then he's been patiently at work, and his wrapper chain now measures nearly two miles long at 10,000 ft.

“It's not a world record but I'm closing in on it,” says Franzen, a barber from West Union, Iowa. “The record is held by a Canadian man who has a chain that's 12,105 ft. long. I expect to beat his record within two years.”

Franzen has been interviewed by more than 35 different radio stations and has also appeared on national TV. His chain is stored on two wooden spools.

Each new gum wrapper adds a quarter inch of length to the chain. He cuts the wrapper in half and folds it down as he weaves it onto the chain. It takes about 2 1/2 hours to make one foot.

He estimates he has cut and folded almost a half million wrappers. “I chewed a lot of the gum but not all of it,” says Franzen. “Friends, relatives, and customers of my barbershop chewed a lot of it, too. People from all over send wrappers to me, and our local Super Value grocery store even has a



Franzen's son Nicholas with his Dad's gum wrapper chain.

gum wrapper drop box for its customers.”

He got started when he saw a 182-ft. chain made by another West Union man, Tom Sullivan.

Franzen says he currently only has a very small supply of wrappers and is looking for more.

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FARM SHOW



One of the holes on the mini golf course inside Schneider's barn contains a mini barn.

7-HOLE COURSE IS UP IN THE LOFT

He Made A Miniature Golf Course In His Barn

You won't find another miniature golf course like the one set up by Jake Schneider, Elgin, Iowa, who constructed a 7-hole miniature golf course in the loft of his 36 by 76-ft. barn.

The course offers players the chance to look at some of Schneider's favorite farming antiques while golfing. There's also a picnic table so people can golf and then have lunch.

The 73-year-old farmer spent a summer building the course. He had never played miniature golf so he visited commercial courses to get ideas. The only thing he bought for the course was green outdoor carpeting - everything else was made out of stuff that he already had around the farm. Each hole has a 15-ft. long, 4-ft. wide carpet strip with a disc blade “hole” on top of it. Schneider had a local blacksmith heat each blade and form a ridge on it to make it more difficult to get the ball into the hole.

One hole requires hitting the ball through a steel loop that Schneider made out of an old hog waterer. Two neighbor kids are the only players who ever got a hole in one on that hole. His friend Harvey Paulson built a small red barn that you hit the ball through on the first hole, and Jack Adrian, another friend, built a castle that's on the third hole.

The wood for both structures came from an old house that Schneider tore down. On one hole the player has to hit the ball between several big field rocks lined up in a row. Schneider plans to add one more hole that will require hitting the ball up a ramp and into an old toilet bowl.

Surrounding the course are antiques, including the last horse-drawn wagon built in Elgin, a sleigh that belonged to his wife's parents, and Schneider's version of a horseless carriage - a buggy rigged with a motor, steering wheel, and headlights. Many of the parts for that buggy came from his father's 1917 Cadillac. Several antique tools hang on the wall, including a three-tined hay fork and a hand meter for bucket gas. There are also some items on the wall that Schneider put up just for fun, including wooden cutouts of cows and bears..

Area church groups and some 4-H groups have been out to play and last year Schneider's barn was featured in a county tour of barns with about 80 people from around the state coming to visit. He lets people golf for free but says it could be a good sideline business.

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