



Florida Firm Unveils Rubber-Track Tractors

First on the domestic market with rubber-track tractors designed to compete head-on with Caterpillar's rubber belted Challenger is J and M Equipment, of Lake Placid, Fla.

"We think we're on the right track," Jimmy Heard, president, told FARM SHOW. "Just like Caterpillar, we're offering a built-from-scratch tractor equipped with rubber belted tracks that steer with a conventional steering wheel. But that's where the similarity between the two systems ends. Our rubber belted tracks involve a totally different design concept," says Heard, whose firm has produced 15 pre-production model rubber belted utility tractors (100 hp) and plans to have production models (100 to 150 hp) on the market by next February.

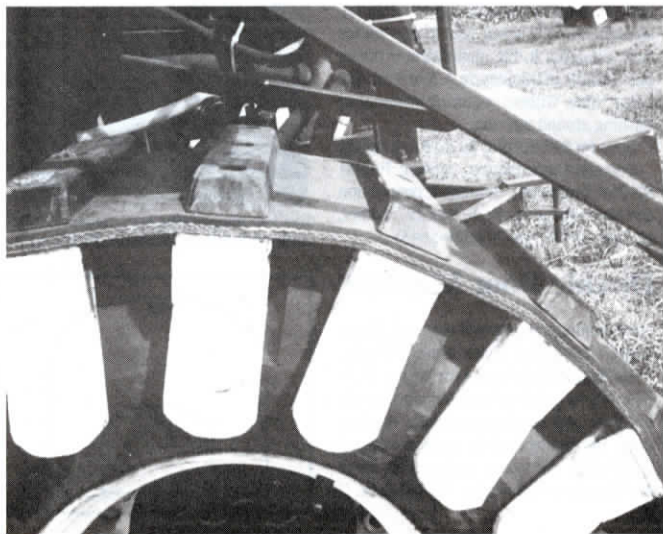
J and M's belted tracks, ranging from 15 to 29 in. wide, are powered by a hydrostatic semi-friction drive. The combination rubber and steel tracks are made in multiple sections, allowing individual rubber cleats to be replaced if they break off. U-shaped steel cleats imbedded in rubber guide the tracks on both sides. "This outside edge guiding concept allows us to operate with less tension on the track, resulting in less wear and tear, and without any pins or bushings. Besides the big advantage in

reduced compaction, we feel it takes less horsepower to power our rubber tracks than it does to operate four wheels on a conventional 4-WD tractor," says Heard.

He notes that two companies are being set up. One will produce and market complete factory-built utility tractors (100 to 150 hp) equipped with rubber belted tracks; the other will produce and market power-driven rubber tracks, for mounting on existing tractors and combines, and non-driven rubber tracks for use on grain carts, manure tank wagons and other towed equipment.

The 15 pre-production models already in the field are 100 hp utility tractors with the engine mounted behind the driver. "We plan to offer models with front or rear-mounted engines, but don't plan to offer optional bi-directional front or rear operation, with a reversible seat and steering wheel, on the same tractor." Cost of the new belted tractors will be right at \$85,000 for the 100 hp model, and \$100,000 for the 150 hp model.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, J and M Equipment, Jimmy Heard, pres., 53 Richfield Drive, Lake Placid, Fla. 33852 (ph 813 465-7458).

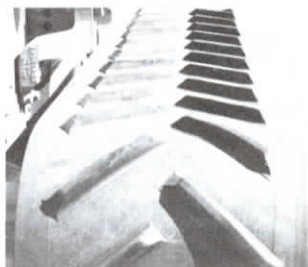


New Caterpillar Experimentals

Caterpillar has rolled out several experimental belted tractors, including the D3B, a belted utility tractor in the "under 100" hp range equipped with lever steering.

Fitted with a 34 in. wide belted track, the 18,000 lb. machine exerts only 2.4 pounds of ground pressure per square inch. That's about half of what an average size man in street shoes exerts.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Caterpillar, 100 NE Adams St., Peoria, Ill. 61629 (ph 309 675-5175).



Track Marshall's TM200

England's answer to Caterpillar's Challenger is Track Marshall's just-introduced TM200, featuring a track drive system developed in Australia.

Instead of the friction drive used on the Challenger, it has a positive tooth drive with lugs moulded on the underside of the tracks meshing with the cog of a steel rear sprocket wheel.

Tensioning of the tracks is achieved automatically. When the engine is started, pressure is created in two hydraulic rams, one for each track, to push the front pneumatic tired

idler roller forward.

The TM200 is powered by a 6-cyl. Cummins engine rated at 200 hp. A mechanical power shift transmission provides 16 forward and 2 reverse gears. Maximum forward speed is just over 13 mph.

Steering, like the Challenger, is through the use of a steering wheel. It involves a differential, hydraulic system designed to slow the inside track while maintaining equal continuous power to both track-driving wheels. (Excerpted from England's "Farm Contractor" magazine).