

DEERE RIDING MOWER REVERSED AND EQUIPPED WITH 60-IN. FRONT DECK

Home-Built “Zero Turn” Riding Mower

A lot of people with conventional Deere riding mowers wish they had a front-mount deck for better maneuverability. B.L. Uhnken, Jacksonville, Ill., turned his Deere riding mower into a zero turn mower by reversing it and mounting a big 60-in. deck on front. He had to reverse the steering, controls, and operator’s seat.

Uhnken bought the mower without an engine for \$300. He bought a new Kawasaki 2-cyl. 20 hp gas engine for \$1,100 and mounted it on the back part of the frame. He paid \$700 for the 60-in. deck and mounted a right angle gearbox on top of it. The deck’s three blades are belt-driven off a pto shaft that in turn is belt-driven off the engine crankshaft. A pair of rubber rollers off an old corn detasseling machine mount on the back side of the deck to prevent scalping. He bought new front wheels for the rig and converted the original ones into caster wheels that support the front part of the deck.

He made his own power steering system by mounting tie rods on the mower’s original rear axle and connecting them to a hydraulic cylinder that mounts on the same axle. The cylinder is operated by a power steering pump and motor off an old car that’s connected to a motor on the steering column.

“It works as good as any commercial zero



Uhnken turned his Deere riding mower into a zero turn mower by reversing it and mounting a big 60-in. deck on front.

turn mower, and I saved a lot of money because I built it for less than \$2,000,” says Uhnken. “It’ll go up to 7 mph but I generally go 3 to 4 mph when mowing. The deck is raised or lowered by a cable connected to a hydraulic cylinder. I move one lever to go forward and another one to raise the deck. I also mounted a counterweight on back of the rig to make it easier to raise the deck and to steer.”

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, B.L. Uhnken, 25 Westfair, Jacksonville, Ill. 62650 (ph 217 245-4359).



Add-on 46-in. deck, pulled behind a Deere 318 riding mower and overlapping it by 8 in., allows Crosswhite to mow 7 ft. at a time.

“GREATLY REDUCES MY MOWING TIME”

“Pull-Along” Mower Doubles Cutting Width

“I got the idea while using my Deere 318 riding mower equipped with a 46-in. deck to mow a 40-acre grave yard. I decided to convert an extra 46-in. deck into a pull-along mower that pulls behind and off to the side of the riding mower. Now I can mow a 7-ft. swath with about 8 inches of overlap,” says James Crosswhite, Nevada, Mo.

He had a welding shop build a three-wheeled frame to support the deck and a new 8 hp electric start gas engine. The front caster wheel is off an old Sears trailer and the 8-in. high rear wheels and axle are off a riding mower. The deck is supported by a pair of pins that go through brackets welded to each side of the frame and by a pair of springs attached to levers off an old cultivator, allowing mower to float over uneven ground. The

levers are also used to raise or lower the deck.

The add-on deck hitches to the tractor via a tow arm (made from a steel rod) that extends to the left side of the tractor from a bracket bolted to the front of the tractor. The hitch also floats up and down.

“It works great and has greatly reduced my mowing time,” says Crosswhite. “It takes me about four or five days a week to mow the graveyard compared to six days before. The riding mower’s 18 hp Onan gas engine has no trouble pulling the add-on deck. The mower trails so well it never leaves strips no matter which way I turn. By pulling 2 pins I can unhook the mower in less than a minute.”

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A 3-wheel frame supports deck, which is powered by its own 8 hp electric start gas engine.



“Hot Rod” Wagon Powered By Gas Engine

“It’s a lot of fun to drive and gets a lot of attention wherever I take it,” says Patrick Prom of Eden Prairie, Minn., who “self-propelled” a toy wagon with a Honda 5 hp gas engine.

“It’ll go up to 10 mph,” says Prom, who replaced the original axles and wheels with a chassis that he made out of a pair of old Deere yard tractors.

Prom cut the frame and rear axle off a Deere 111 garden tractor to serve as the back end and used the wheels and axle off a Deere 68 riding mower on front. (The mower steered much easier than the garden tractor). He welded the two frames together, then mounted the Honda engine over the front axle and ahead of the wagon. The engine belt-drives a gearbox that drives the rear axle. He mounted the seat from an old Wheelhorse garden tractor at the back of the box and mounted a steering post and steering wheel in front. The garden tractor’s clutch and brake pedals are also mounted

in front of the box, and the shift lever is mounted beside it just ahead of the left rear wheel.

“My 15-year-old son has a lot of fun driving it,” says Prom. “I built it after I saw a chain-driven go cart a couple years ago that was equipped with a toy wagon box and a seat inside it. I decided to build my own version.

“The engine is protected by a chrome bumper that I made using the handlebars off an old lawn mower. The driver can rope start the engine right from the seat. The gearbox is in the same position that the engine would be on the garden tractor, which allowed me to use the original clutch and rear brakes. I mounted a throttle and a kill switch on the steering post and added a hitch on back of the box.”

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