

“Show Stopper” Articulated Cub Cadet

John Lusk of Holley, N.Y., would love to build a full-size articulated tractor, but he doesn't have enough shop space. So he built a small one using a couple of the old Cub Cadet garden tractors he had collected.

Apparently he did a good job because when he took it to an area tractor show a man asked him, “When did International make those?”

The retired machinist says articulated vehicles have always fascinated him, and when he dug into the project he thought it would take a month. It ended up taking about 2 1/2 months, with much of the time spent looking for parts he needed.

Lusk started with 1969 and 1980 Cub Cadets that he'd purchased for about \$200 total. He cut off the front end of one to make a new rear end.

“All the cross members of the tractor had to be cut out and moved,” Lusk says. “The front wheels were set ahead 15 in., so the front end didn't look like it was hanging too far over.”

It was trial and error to figure out how far

he could make it swivel without the wheels touching and how to get the power to the rear end. Lusk made wooden prototypes of knuckles and hinges before making what he needed out of metal.

“The hardest part to figure out was how to keep the rear fenders low to the tires yet still have side-to-side swivel,” Lusk says. He solved the problem by making the back fenders and hood raise with the tires, when the tires go over a hump.

Lusk's final result is a 12 hp articulating Cub Cadet with two 3-speed transmissions and two creeper gears, which help him win “slow” competitions at shows. It also has electric-over-hydraulic steering (electric motor driving a hydraulic pump). With the gears, big tires, other new parts and the \$200 for the old Cadets, Lusk spent \$1,400 on his creation.

It can be driven in front-wheel drive, rear-wheel drive or all-wheel drive.

Lusk is willing to advise Farm Show readers



Lusk's granddaughter, Rachel, tests the electric-over-hydraulic steering on Lusk's articulating Cub Cadet.

interested in making their own articulated vehicles. Lusk, 4535 Co. Line Rd., Holley, N.Y. 14470 Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, JohnW. (ph 585 638-6586).



Darryl Schmidt used the rear axles from two 1970's Cub Cadets to build this dual wheel, articulated tractor.



Dual Cub Cadet Looks Factory-Built

When people tell Darryl Schmidt they didn't know Cub Cadet made a dual wheel, articulated model, he feels satisfied that the 3 1/2 years he spent working on his custom tractor was worth the effort.

“The single most challenging part was connecting the front and rear axles together so that the speeds were in perfect synchronization,” says the Alexandria, Minn., man. He used rear axles from two of the (1970's) Cub Cadets he had picked up over the years. He used the articulation principles from the International Harvester Steiger-built model 4366.

“I found a gearbox by Hub City Manufacturing to transfer the power to the rear axle. The ported hydro on the rear

half provides the hydraulics for steering, and I reversed the swash plate in the front hydro to allow the ground speed ratios to match. I powered it with the stock Kohler engine from an old 1650 Cub Cadet,” Schmidt explains.

It was also challenging to keep the proportions correct. Schmidt, who grew up on a farm and has worked in farm equipment and industrial supply sales, notes that he built his custom tractor with limited tools. He worked out of a revamped chicken coop and used a sawsall, cutting torch and a wire-feed welder.

He started with plenty of old Cub Cadets for parts. He ended up with a scrap pile of failed ideas that taught him many

Tractor is powered by a Kohler engine from an old 1650 Cub Cadet (above). Its articulation point was based on the design used by Steiger tractors.



lessons. “I could tell you a lot of things that don't work,” Schmidt says. “This project was rewarding because it was such a challenge.”

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Stretched-Out Cub Cadet Has Wooden Dump Bed

“I had a lot of fun building it,” says Kent Peach, who stretched out a late 1970's Cub Cadet 1650 garden tractor. He also added a hydraulic-operated wooden dump bed and a two-person wooden seat.

The rig is equipped with a 5-ft. long, 4-ft. wide dump bed made from maple flooring that he removed from an old store that was about to be torn down. The seat was also made from the same flooring.

“I collect old Cub Cadet garden tractors and built it two years ago just for the challenge,” says Peach.

He stretched out the tractor by removing the seat, then unbolting the rear end and bolting on a new frame made from 5 by 1 1/2-in. channel iron. He used a length of 1-in. dia. steel rod to extend the

driveshaft. However, the rod vibrated so bad whenever he revved up the engine that it almost came loose. He solved the problem by installing an oak carrier bearing block at each end of the rod.

The bed is tilted by a hydraulic cylinder that operates off the same ports originally used to raise and lower the mower deck and the 3-pt. hitch.

“I ran the maple flooring through a planer to get it shined up and then brushed a layer of polyurethane on it to bring out the flooring's natural color,” says Peach.

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Kent Peach stretched out this late 1970's Cub Cadet 1650 garden tractor, adding a hydraulic-operated wooden dump bed and a two-person wooden seat.