

No Tractor Needed With Self-Powered Bale Flipper

Hauling bales from distant fields just got a lot easier with the Bale Flipper from Hawkins Mfg. that can be used behind a pickup.

"Joe Ellis of Cedar Creek, Texas holds the patent," says Wayne Karschner, Hawkins Mfg. "He raises cattle and hay and has spent the past 20 years developing this product. When he came to us, we knew this was something we could help find its market."

What Ellis developed is a self contained, big round bale loader powered by an on-board motor and hydraulic pump. It tows to and from the field behind a Hawkins bale trailer. Once in the field it attaches to the side of the trailer to load bales.

Changing from transit to bale picking requires about 15 minutes, which consists largely of unlocking moving parts. The motor can be started manually or with the optional remote control. To start picking up bales, the operator simply drives alongside the Bale Flipper, engaging the "drive-by" mechanism. The guide rail and alignment ramp connect the two units and position them for the first bale to be loaded.

No turning of bales is necessary. As the bale enters the loading zone, hydraulic arms automatically grab the bale and lift it up, over and down on a bale cradle. The arms quickly return to the open position.

As each bale is loaded from front to back, the Bale Flipper slides back to the next open position. When the last bale has been loaded, the unit slides off the end of the trailer and

the operator can haul bales to storage at transit speed. Once the bales reach the drop area for storage, the operator flips latches on each cradle, and the bales tip to the ground. An optional remote latch is also available. Upon return to the field, the operator again "drives by" the unit, engaging it and repositioning it for bale pickup.

When the last bale has been collected, the operator reverses the setup procedure, hooks the Bale Flipper in tow position and leaves the field.

"The Bale Flipper eliminates the need for a separate tractor and operator to load bales or for two trips to the field with equipment," says Karschner. "It also ensures that the bale surface with or without wrap is not disturbed."

Prices for the Bale Flipper and a trailer range from \$21,795 for a four-bale bumper pole trailer with manual start and manual latch to \$25,500 for a five-bale gooseneck with remote latch and electric start with remote control. Trailers and Bale Flipper are also available separately.

"Larger operators are asking for a 10-bale, in-line double wide trailer," says Karschner. "We're working on a design for that now."

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Hawkins Bale Flipper attaches to side of trailer and moves itself backward as each bale is loaded.



Loader is powered by an on-board motor and hydraulic pump and tows to field behind the bale trailer.



"Works great for pulling logs out of wooded areas without destroying any young trees," says Barton, about the hydraulic-operated winch he bolted onto his tractor's 3-pt. hitch.

3-Pt. Mounted Hydraulic Winch

"I built a 3-pt. mounted, hydraulic-operated winch for my 50 hp tractor. Works great for pulling logs out of wooded areas without destroying any young trees," says Robert Barton, Speedwell, Tenn.

He bought a used hydraulic-operated winch and bolted it onto a commercial steel frame that mounts on a tractor 3-pt. hitch. The winch has its own hydraulic motor and valve bank with control lever.

He bolted a pair of "brace legs" made from 6-in. angle iron to the bottom of the frame. "The brace legs strengthen the entire framework and also dig into the ground as I pull the tree in, to keep the tractor from pulling backward," says Barton.

"I live in a steep, mountainous area where it's often quite dangerous to work. In the past, I often had to cut a path to the log so I could drive in with my tractor and pull it out. Now I can bring the logs to a convenient and safe work area, without tearing young trees down. By using additional cable and snatch blocks,

I can double the strength of the pull and pull the log out from any direction.

"One problem was too much hydraulic pressure to the winch's hydraulic motor and not enough return line capacity. I solved the problem by replacing seals in the motor and adding a second return line."

He says his total cost was about \$800. "I used all new parts except for the used Ramsey winch. I paid \$100 for the frame, \$75 for the valve bank, \$300 for the cable, \$100 for the winch, and another \$300 to have it rebuilt."

The winch is valuable for other jobs, too, says Barton. "I use it any time I need to make a heavy, precise and stable pull. For example, one time I used it to straighten out a wall on an old barn that I rebuilt. I hooked the cable onto the wall and pulled it back until it was straight."

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Nick Ruen built a wood ramp that lets Orrin Olson walk right into the tractor cab, without having to climb any steps.

Tractor Platform Keeps Older Driver Working

Good tractor drivers are hard to find so when Orrin Olson started having a problem getting up tractor steps, his friends and employers, Nick and Don Ruen, simply eliminated the steps.

"Nick built a wood ramp that lets him walk out to the tractor," says Don, Nick's father. "He also built a bigger entrance platform for the tractor so it would be easier for him to get in and out of the cab."

The 20 by 30-in. entrance platform replaces the existing floor plates that cover the batteries on the Deere 4230 and 4430. A railing on one end gives Olson support as he steps out and onto the wood ramp.

"When Orrin isn't driving, the larger platform just lifts off, and the original slips back into place," says Don. "The larger platform and railing also let Orrin step out of the cab when he wants to take a breather in the field."

The platform and handhold are framed with 1-in. square tubing. The platform is steel grid for good footing. Short pipe lengths at the



The Ruens also made a bigger entrance platform for the tractor that makes it easier to get in and out of the cab.

end opposite the battery slide into sleeves attached to the frame of the tractor.

"Orrin is a good tractor driver, and we really depend on him," says Don. "He likes to drive, and this lets him do it."

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