



Jay Merriner built this “unroller” that turns big round bales into small square ones. Tripod in foreground is used to control machine’s loading arm, walking floor, and beaters.



Conveyor floor moves hay to double beaters that fluff the hay, which is then fed into a small square baler. The conveyor and beaters came from a silage wagon.

“Unroller” Turns Big Round Bales Into Small Square Ones

“I needed a way to convert round bales to small square ones, but I couldn’t justify the expense of a commercial unroller. So I found

what I needed at auctions and salvage yards and built my own for about \$2,000,” says Jay Merriner, Sr., Winchester, Va.

Last year Merriner used his invention to unroll 200 big round bales, making a total of 3,000 small square bales with his stationary baler. Tractor hydraulics and the pto provide power.

“It lets me make small bales when I have more time,” he notes. “I sell most of my hay as mulch to a building contractor who prefers small square bales. I work by myself and can easily load the round bales on, operate the hydraulic controls, and stack the small square bales without needing any help. It took several years to get the design right.

“It takes only 5 to 15 minutes from the time I load on a round bale until I’ve got the square bales on a wagon. The great thing is that I can do the work when I have time.”

He uses a front-end loader to put a bale on the unroller at the end of a wagon with a conveyor floor. The bales are unrolled onto the floor, which moves the hay to double beaters that fluff the hay. The hay is then fed into a small square baler.

“Another big advantage of my unroller is that I can pull it behind my pickup down the road to a neighbor’s farm, and hook it up to



A Vermeer round bale shredder, complete with loading arm, unrolls the bales.

his tractor and baler,” says Merriner.

A Vermeer round bale shredder, complete with loading arm and a gate that contains the bale, unrolls the bales. The conveyor and beaters came from a silage wagon. The arm tilts down to the ground for loading. A tarp helps contain the loose, fluffy hay as it’s thrown off the beaters above the baler.

“I use a tripod with two different sets of hydraulic control valves mounted on it to

control the loading arm, the walking floor, and the beaters,” says Merriner. “One set of control valves mounts on the tripod, and the other mounts on a pivoting 16-ft. long metal arm that I can move wherever I want to stay out of the dust.”

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Motorcycle-Powered Picnic Table

Dave Durbin of Oconee, Ill., gets a lot of attention with his one-of-a-kind motorized picnic table.

The machine has a Honda Gold Wing motorcycle front end and a golf cart rear end equipped with lawn mower tires. It can carry 7 adult riders, thanks to a 6-seat varnished oak picnic table that’s built onto a metal frame.

“It once won first place for the ‘weirdest homemade machine’ at a motorcycle rally,” says Durbin, who has taken the machine to several states, including Kentucky and Tennessee. He has put some 800 miles on it from driving in parades and motorcycle rallies.

The machine is powered by an 18 hp Kohler engine, which belt-drives a right angle gearbox off a Cub Cadet riding mower. The gearbox chain-drives the 3-speed transmission off a Deere riding mower. The machine’s 18-in. high rear wheels and axle are also off the Cub Cadet. The rig uses the golf cart’s original brakes.

“It’s definitely one-of-a-kind. People think I’m nuts if they haven’t seen the machine and I tell them I’m going to go drive my picnic table around,” says Durbin. “I even won an award at a motorcycle show that I never attended. I was riding past the show when someone saw me riding around and started taking photos.



“It’s definitely one-of-a-kind,” says Dave Durbin about his motorized picnic table. The machine has a Honda motorcycle front end and a golf cart rear end equipped with lawn mower tires. It can carry 7 adult riders.

“I use my pickup to haul it to parades and motorcycle rallies. Sometimes I let people take turns driving it around, and some of them even pop wheelies. If you let the clutch out too fast it’ll go straight up in the air, but it won’t tip over backward because of the picnic table.”

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