



“Why drag the logs out of the woods when you can take the sawmill to the woods?” asks Walter Rodler, who built a mobile sawmill mounted on a trailer.

Mobile Sawmill Goes To The Woods

By Jim Ruen, Contributing Editor

When Walter Rodler starts harvesting trees, he likes to leave waste in the woods and just bring home lumber. That’s why he built a mobile sawmill mounted on a 4-ft. wide trailer that he can pull into the woods for selective harvest on site.

“Why drag the logs out of the woods when you can take the sawmill to the woods?” asks Rodler. “I bought a Hudson with a 21-in. log capacity and two 6-ft. track sections.”

Rodler quickly found ways to fine-tune the sawmill, such as moving the engine to the center of the base to reduce wobble. He swapped out the 3-in. clutch for a 4-in. racing clutch from an old go-kart.

“It is a heavier reciprocal clutch that keeps the blade from slowing down when it hits a notch,” says Rodler.

He also designed and engineered a band blade tensioner with an idler wheel. It steadies the blade on the 2 main drive wheels. The idler also guides the blade over the top of the new clutch.

He found the tracks provided with the sawmill were bowed in the middle about 3/16 in. from welding.

“I added a simple bolt-on tensioner to make the track true and stronger,” says Rodler.

Two track sections didn’t provide enough length for Rodler, who wanted to cut longer beams and boards. He made extra 6-ft. sections of track fabricated from the same type of 2 by 2 by 1/4-in. angle iron as the original. Sections of flat steel bolted to the underside of the section ends for about a foot reinforce the joint.

“I use a pair of vice grips to hold the sections together until I can insert the six 1/2-in. bolts and tighten them,” says Rodler. “I use mechanical dowels to align the sections. If it isn’t quite square, I use a washer to true it up.”

The dowels are 1/2-in. bolts threaded into tapped holes in one end of a track section. Rodler used an angle grinder to remove extra thread, leaving just enough to attach a washer and nut where it protrudes through the next section.

“It works to align the track quickly,” he says.

To make the Hudson truly mobile, Rodler built a special trailer and mounted a section of track on it. The 6-ft. long, 4-ft. wide trailer frame is fabricated from 2 by 2 by 3/8-in. sq. steel tubing. Wheels salvaged from old trailers are cut from axles just ahead of the springs. Two wheel stubs are then welded to a subframe that is mounted to the frame for a walking tandem axle.

“I used road-rated, heavy-duty, sealed



Mobile sawmill allows selective harvest of trees on site.

bearings to mount the walking axle to the frame with a flange,” says Rodler. “Unlike a simple pin attachment, it is tight and trails well on the road. I’ve towed it at up to 120 kilometers per mile (75 mph) with no problem.”

The trailer can be used for a variety of purposes with Rodler’s multi-use bed. It can be used as a log bed with stakes or adapted to carry an ATV. While there are no springs or other suspension, Rodler has found letting out a little air softens the ride for big loads.

When transporting the sawmill, Rodler bolts a length of track to the trailer. Two small plates can be bolted to the track to either side of the sawmill wheels to hold it in place during transit. They also serve as stacking points for additional lengths of track, which in turn are locked in place with bolts, making one solid piece for transit.

Once on site, the track section with the sawmill can be off-loaded and an alternative frame mounted to haul sawn wood away. Once track sections are connected and leveled side to side, Rodler is ready to mill out lumber.

“I like to lay the tracks on a 5-degree grade,” he says. “This lets the weight of the mill do all the pushing with constant pressure. If you push, it can vary the pressure and deflect the blade.”

Logs are held in place by Rodler’s no-dog milling guides. Their sloping sides fit any size log for initial cuts.

“With improved and selective timber management, it makes sense to do the milling in the woods,” says Rodler. “With a mill like this, you can cut full dimension lumber that is in increasing demand. People are looking for beams, and I even had one guy looking for lumber milled on only 3 sides.”

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Splitting wedge is attached to an arm that slides up and down on a steel post. Wilcox lowers wedge over the chunk of wood, then hits it with a heavy sledge.

“Sliding Wedge” Log Splitter

“I don’t know how new this idea is. Someone else may have also come up with the idea. All we know is that it really works well,” says Roger Wilcox, North Waterboro, Maine.

He attached a big splitting wedge to an arm that slides up and down on a steel post. The chunk of wood to be split stands on the base and you lower the wedge over the top of it, hitting it with a heavy sledge. You don’t have to hold the log and the wood doesn’t have

to have a square end since the weight of the wedge holds any shape wood. It gives you a lot more splitting force and you can split longer chunks without worrying about them tipping over.

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Loader-Mounted Processor Grabs, Cuts And Splits Wood

Imagine how easy it is to pick up a 10-in. long piece of uncooked spaghetti and break it into 5 or 6 pieces. Now, imagine doing the same thing with a 10-in., dia. 10-ft. long log? That’s what you can do with the new Timber Processor built by Quickfencer. You almost have to see the video to believe it.

The attachment mounts on a tele-handler or backhoe. It uses hydraulic power to grab, cut and split up to 14-in. dia. firewood logs in one motion. First the Timber Processor grabs a log laying on a horizontal surface, picks it up, then rotates it vertically. The log drops into a cutting chamber on the attachment, where a hydraulic knife shears off an 18-in. piece and splits it into 2 pieces. Two powerful 22 1/2-ton hydraulic cylinders maneuver the Processor and power the cutting and splitting shear. The maneuverability of the tele-handler allows the Timber Processor to perform its work over the top of a truck, a roll-off or a pallet bin. There’s no manual labor involved.

Quickfencer, the British company building the attachment, is taking orders from UK and European customers. Prices for the 1-ton unit begin at about \$9,000.

Quickfencer USA, the company representing the product in North America, says no timetable has been given for a U.S. introduction. You can see a video of the processor in action at www.farmshow.com.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Quickfencer USA (ph 715 203-0075; www.quickfencerusa.com).



Loader-mounted processor picks up a log and rotates it vertically, then drops it into a cutting chamber equipped with a cutting and splitting shear.