

Modified Cub Cadet Makes Right Size Loader/Backhoe

Ken Esposito's Cub Cadet loader/backhoe does everything his big Case 580 does, just in smaller bites. The Cub 1772 Super with its 3-cylinder diesel can get some good-sized jobs done.

"It amazes me every time I use it," says Esposito. "I can pick up 1,000 lbs. with the 12-cu. ft. bucket and use forks to handle pallets. When I want to use the backhoe, I just flip the seat around and go to work."

Like all post IH Cubs, it has an aluminum transaxle housing. It is known for a problem where bolts that loosen due to vibration create play between the transmission and the frame, causing the trans mounts to break off. Esposito found an older cast iron housing and swapped out his aluminum one.

"The cases were only a few thousandths of an inch different, so it just took shimming to replace the gears, differential and axle in the cast iron case," recalls Esposito.

He got a Kwik Way loader from a neighbor who had it on a Cub 782. Esposito modified the mounting brackets and fabricated a new 5 1/2 cu. ft. bucket for it. He used 1/8-in. steel with 1/4-in. where he needed reinforcement. He also made quick-tach brackets for the bucket and a forklift attachment, which he also fabricated.

"The forklift frame is 1/8-in., 1 3/4-in. steel tubing with 1/4-in. steel for the quick-tach brackets," says Esposito. "I used cutting edges from dozer blades for the forks. The hardened steel will flex, but it won't bend and always returns to the original position."

The backhoe, which he ordered from a distributor in Oregon, was designed for Cat. I, 3-pt. hitches. It came with its own operator's seat, hydraulic pump and reservoir.

Esposito cut away the operator's seat, pump and reservoir and modified the Cub's seat to raise and swivel to the rear. He devised a quick-tach system with a receiver plate on back of the Cub.

The receiver plate consists of 3/4-in. steel upper arms that are bolted to the Cub frame and a lower yoke that consists of 2 J-hooks. The yoke is welded to a frame that extends forward to the subframe of the loader. The 2 frames are bolted in place to make a single unit.

Here's a photo of my dad's New Holland 166 self-propelled baler. The last time we had it running was a year or two ago when we took it to the world plowing championships near Methven, New Zealand. I still have the baler's original operator's handbook and parts catalog as well as the original wrenches and grease gun.

It's great to see that some of these rare self-propelled balers have survived the test of time, especially when so few were ever built – only 305, I believe. Our baler has the serial number 1276. According to New Holland, their first self-propelled baler was produced on July 30, 1956 and the last one in April of 1957. (John Paterson, 2009 Georgetown-Pukeuri Road, 4 K.R.D., OAMARU, New Zealand 9494; dunallan@slingshot.co.nz)



"It amazes me every time I use it," says Ken Esposito about the loader/backhoe he built out of a Cub Cadet garden tractor.

"I replaced the 3-pt. on the backhoe with a frame for a pipe that slips into the yoke and clevis-type receivers that pin to the arms," says Esposito. "I back up to the backhoe, connect the hydraulics, and it lifts itself into place for pinning."

Esposito modified the Cub seat to lift and rotate. He pinned four 6-in. lengths of 3/4-in. sq. steel tubing between angle iron brackets bolted to the Cub. The other ends of the tubing are pinned to the bottom of a swivel plate from an old office chair. He attached the Cub seat to the swivel plate. Pins on a retraction spring lock the seat in place either forward or back.

"I designed the seat to match my height," says Esposito. "When I raise it up, it brings me close to the backhoe controls with the right space to the footrests."

Esposito also changed out the Deere-type control valves for CAT controls. He replaced a faulty relief valve and added a second boom swing cylinder.

"With the one cylinder, I could stop the boom with my hand," says Esposito. "I did a mirror image connection on the other side, and now it swings with some force."

When he dismounts the backhoe, Esposito slips on a 3-pt. hitch he fabricated for the quick attach unit. He also designed a ripper using a carbide tipped tooth from an asphalt-milling machine, 1/4-in. steel plate and schedule 80 pipe to fit the yoke on the 3-pt. hitch.

"I doubt it will wear out in my lifetime,"



When Esposito wants to use the backhoe, he just flips the seat around and goes to work.

says Esposito.

Esposito is so satisfied with his Cub loader/backhoe rig that he is transferring some of the ideas to his Case 580 backhoe. He also added some new ones, like a Bobcat grapple fork modified for quick-tach plates.

"It belonged to my grandfather, who also was a heavy equipment operator," says Esposito. "I made the quick-tach units for it using 1/2-in. steel with some 2-in. for reinforcement. I made 2-in. thick, 5-in. side forks for it using 1/4-in., 3 by 3-in. and 2 by 6-in. carbon steel tubing. The bar that supports the forks is solid 2-in. steel."

There's a video showing how the backhoe connects at www.farmshow.com.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ken Esposito, Clark, N.J. (ken6x6@comcast.net).

