

“Glue-On” Treads Fix Everything From Skid Steer Tires To Work Boots

By Bill Gergen, Senior Editor

Flint Harrison, Crossville, Tenn., recently sent FARM SHOW photos of a pair of Red Wing work boots, after the worn-out heels had been “retreaded” by Dave Auble, Glue Tread LLC, Hiram, Ohio.

Auble’s “glue-on” treads designed to boost traction on worn tires were featured a few months ago (Vol. 42, No. 6). He and son Andy sell a kit that includes pieces of new, pre-cut rubber tread and an adhesive that bonds the pieces to the tire.

The kit is designed for off-road tires found on 4-wheelers, utility vehicles, golf carts, and tractors. The treads glue on right over the tire’s existing treads and require about an hour to cure. The 2 men use a super glue-type adhesive called Cyanoacrylate combined with a rubber compound that dries quickly and bonds firmly.

Auble says he had an “unbelievable” response to the FARM SHOW story. “We may have stumbled into something awesome with this idea. As far as I know, no one else offers a tread repair kit for shoes. I’ve been in business a long time, but I got 10 times more response to the FARM SHOW story than I ever did from an advertisement. I made close to 100 sales just off your one story. Most orders were for tractors, a few were for ATV’s, and some for homemade machines.

“Some people told me they couldn’t find replacement tires, others said they couldn’t afford to buy new tires, especially if they planned to farm only for a couple more years. Instead of paying \$1,000 for new rear tractor tires, you can keep your old tires and retread them for about \$100.”

When a customer calls, Auble asks what kind of machine they’re using and how often they use it. He also determines the number of treads needed, and their length and width.

Auble says he plans to meet with Tractor Supply Company this August to see if they’ll sell his product. “I think there’s a huge need for our glue-on treads because right now if you have bald tires, your only choice is to buy new ones.”

One Ohio farmer recently used an Auble kit to retread the worn, solid rubber, foam-filled tires on his skid loader. “The tires were completely bald but he needed to plow snow off his 1/4-mile long driveway. Foam-filled tires for skid loaders are expensive and cost up to \$600 apiece, which meant spending \$2,400 for four tires. Also, it’s a lot of work to remove the worn-out tires and install new ones and he didn’t have the machines for the job.”

There’s a lot of torsion applied to skid loader tires, so in addition to the glue, the customer used 1 1/4-in. long screws, driving 2 to 4 screws into each tread. The treads measured 2 in. long by 1 in. wide. “He didn’t have a cordless screwdriver that would do the job, so his son installed the screws by hand,” says Auble. “The screw heads stick up a bit out of the tire, almost like a studded snow tire. But with the new treads and the screws he was able to clear his driveway all winter long with no problems.”

Flint Harrison, who got his boots retreaded, is a diabetic and an amputee. He wears boots but doesn’t have a full foot, which is why his shoes wear a little differently. He mailed



Worn-out heels on Harrison’s work boots were “retreaded” by Dave Auble, Glue Tread LLC. FARM SHOW originally featured Glue Tread kits for attaching new treads to worn tire treads.

2 pairs of identical Red Wing work boots to Auble, who cut rubber treads to fit and then glued them onto the heels. The treads are about 3/8 in. thick and beveled to fit the heel’s wear pattern.

“I’ve used my retreaded shoes for about three months and they’re still working great,” says Harrison. “I paid \$20 to retread each pair, plus \$20 for shipping. Considering that new Red Wing work boots sell for \$160 to \$180, I think it was money well spent. I contacted Red Wing, but they wanted \$120 to resole one pair of boots and that didn’t include shipping.”

But cost wasn’t Harrison’s only consideration. “My boots were well broken in and very comfortable, and if I had bought

new boots I would have to break them in. I didn’t want to do that.”

Auble recently began offering kits to resole work shoes and sells them only over the phone. “People call and say, ‘I like my shoes and want to keep them going, but they’re worn. Can you help?’”

He first confirms what the customer needs. “We ask what kind of shoe you have, and which part of the shoe you’re trying to fix. Then we send you the treads, glue, and instructions.”

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Lightweight trailer dolly was built using parts of an old tricycle, with a ball hitch attached to the seat. Shaw uses dolly to pull a 2-wheeled trailer behind his garden tractor.

Tricycle Converted To Trailer Dolly

Edward Shaw turned an old tricycle into a lightweight trailer dolly. He uses it to pull a small 2-wheeled trailer behind his garden tractor. A ball hitch is attached to the tricycle’s seat.

“I own a 1-acre lot but we have a homeowner’s association, so I can’t keep the trailer on my driveway,” says Shaw. “With my homemade dolly I can drive the trailer into my back yard and out of sight behind a shed. I could have used my car to pull the trailer into my back yard, but I didn’t want to drive over the lawn and risk damaging our automatic sprinkler system. And I didn’t want to spend the money for a commercial dolly or a ball hitch for the tractor. I already had the tricycle, which had a bad front wheel.”

He removed the wheel, fork, and handlebars, keeping a short metal yoke that connected the handlebars to the fork. He also removed the drive axle, which was connected to one of the pedal arms, and uses it as a drawbar pin. “A standard drawbar pin would have been too short and narrow to work with the yoke. The pedal arm prevents the axle from falling through,” explains Shaw.

To install the ball hitch he drilled a hole through the plastic seat, then inserted the



Shaw drilled a hole through the seat, then inserted ball and screwed a nut on underneath.

ball and screwed a nut on underneath the seat. “The ball hitch is screwed onto plastic, not metal, but it has enough holding power for what I need,” says Shaw. “The empty trailer weighs 300 lbs., but has a tongue weight of only about 20 lbs. so there isn’t a lot of pressure on the ball. I could probably reinforce the hitch somehow if I ever wanted to haul a load on the trailer.”

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Kuenzi uses his home-built trailer to vacuum grass clippings and leaves behind a Cub Cadet riding mower.

Trailer Vacuums Up Grass Clippings And Leaves

He’s still in high school, but Jerome Kuenzi, Salem, Oregon, already has a head start on his plans to someday become a mechanical engineer. He recently built a trailer to collect leaves and grass clippings from his family’s big lawn.

The trailer is towed behind a Cub Cadet riding mower. A leaf blower, powered by a 7 hp. pull-start gas engine, mounts on a metal frame on front of the trailer. An 8-in. dia. flex hose runs from a 22-in. wide fan head to the blower and then back through a plywood chute to the trailer. The blower vacuums leaves and grass and blows them back through a plywood chute and into the trailer.

“We make one pass with our riding mower to divert the grass clippings into 2-ft. wide windrows. Then we make another pass to vacuum them into the trailer,” says Kuenzi. “The fan head is supported by a pair of large wheels and swivels on a bar that comes off the trailer with a bolt running through it. It

allows the head to swivel up or down on rough ground,” says Kuenzi.

“It works even better than I thought it would. I got the idea because my mom doesn’t want a lot of grass clippings on our lawn. It works especially well when the grass is tall and thick. We’ve even used the vacuum on our pasture to pick up heavier windrows. I got the engine and leaf blower from my dad, who had used them on another trailer with a different setup.”

The trailer measures 4 ft. long by 2 ft. wide and about 4 ft. tall, and is made from expanded metal (to let air out) and plywood. The box’s rear hinged door opens up to remove the clippings. Kuenzi used 1 1/2-in. square aluminum tubing to build the trailer frame and a 1-in. dia. bar to build the axle.

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