



New rubber-tracked tractor can be equipped with a fifth-wheel hitch to pull heavy equipment such as laser scrapers or large tillage implements.



Tractor can also be fitted with a "lift-and-dump" grain hopper that raises up hydraulically to dump off to the side, emptying its 450-bu. load in less than a minute.

CAN BE FITTED WITH OPTIONAL GRAIN HOPPER OR FIFTH WHEEL HITCH By Bill Gergen, Associate Editor

Rubber-Tracked Tractor Doubles As SP Grain Cart

Latest application for Caterpillar's rubber belted tracks is this new high speed "multi-purpose" tractor from Sweco Products, Inc., Sutter, Calif., that's designed to be used as either a tractor or a self-propelled grain cart.

The tractor can also be equipped with a fifth-wheel hitch to pull heavy equipment such as laser scrapers or large tillage implements. The Caterpillar rubber tracks are 11-ft. long and 30-in. wide and are the same ones sold on the Challenger tractor and on Claas combines.

The new tractor's cab mounts on the front left side with a 360 hp diesel engine mounted beside it. A "lift-and-dump" grain hopper mounts on the frame behind. It raises hydraulically and dumps its 450-bu. load in under a minute. When grain hopper is removed tractor can be fitted with a bolt-on fifth wheel hitch, 3-pt. hitch, and drawbar.

"We've offered a self-propelled grain cart equipped with steel tracks that converts to a medium-duty tractor for years, but rubber tracks make transport easier on paved roads. They're also wider for better traction and less compaction. They make the tractor very efficient and maneuverable, especially in soft ground," says Robert Sankoff, engineer.

"We came up with the fifth wheel hitch in an effort to reduce damage to conventional drawbar hitches caused by heavy loads. The fifth wheel hitch puts the implement's weight at a point on the tractor where it can handle it better. The implement's weight is centered 2 ft. in front of the track's rear drive wheels. On a conventional tractor the implement's weight is centered behind the axle. That's not a problem when you're pulling light loads, but heavy loads can

bend the hitch and cause the front end of the tractor to bounce up and down, even with front-end weights.

"We've used it with the drawbar hitch to pull a 24-ft. field disk in heavy clay and a 14-ft. stubble disk with 32-in. blades. We've used it with the fifth wheel hitch to pull a laser scraper with a 32,000-lb. load at 7 mph. We can build the tractor with high clearance for rice farming or with normal clearance for general farming."

The tractor has no mechanical drive linkages. Instead two hydraulic pumps power a hydrostatic motor on each drive sprocket. "The hydraulic drive system provides power at all times, even while you're turning," notes Sankoff. "When you make a hard turn with the Challenger tractor and brake one track, you're removing power from the braked track. On our tractor hydraulic power

continues to flow to both tracks so you're less likely to get stuck in muddy fields."

The tractor sells for approximately \$150,000.

The company is also selling a new self-propelled mobile wood chipper equipped with Caterpillar rubber tracks. It's designed to work in orchards between rows of trees. The machine picks up brush, chips it, and feeds it into a bin. A 3-ft. wide conveyor at the rear of the machine unloads chips from the bin onto a stationary belt that conveys them into a self-propelled chip cart. The rig is powered by a 503 hp diesel engine and can chip a 12 in. dia. log.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Sweco Products Inc., 2455 Palm St., Box 259, Sutter, Calif. 95982 (ph 916 755-0521).



New Add-On Rubber Tractor Tracks - A new add-on track system, designed to convert existing tractors to rubber tracks, has been developed by ag engineers in England. The tracks support the weight of tractor on four rollers and a rear idler fixed to a sub-frame which is in turn attached to the main tractor frame by a parallel linkage suspension system incorporating hydraulic dampers and air springs. Because of their superior suspension, the tracks allow higher field speeds. They're direct-driven by sprockets mounted on the drive axles. Tracks are no wider than a normal tractor tire but cover twice as much ground area, cutting compaction in half. They can be mounted on any 2-WD or 4-WD. No modification required. Production of tracks is in the process of being licensed to manufacturers. Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Mike Dwyer, Silsoe Research Institute, Wrest Park, Silsoe, Bedford MK45 4HS England (ph 0525 60000; fax 0525 60156).



Experimental Cat Tractor - This experimental Caterpillar tractor, fitted with extra-wide rubber tracks mounted on an aluminum carriage, was part of a recently completed 3-year study on the Mike Pieper farm near Wever, Iowa. USDA researchers tested three fleets of tractors and combines - one fleet fitted with tires, one with regular rubber Cat tracks, and the third with these extra-long, extra-wide experimental tracks which exert just 2.5 pounds of ground pressure per sq. in. (versus 18 psi for tires and 6 psi for regular tracks). Over the 3-year test period, corn yields averaged 86 bu. per acre in tire-compacted soil, 98 bu. per acre in rubber-tracked fields, and 102 bu. per acre in fields farmed by the experimental low pressure tracks. Other equipment used included track-equipped Claas combines and Kinze grain wagons.

Order Form For New Subscribers

Yes! I want to be first to learn about latest new products. Please send me one full year's subscription (\$13.95 per year in the United States; \$16.95 per year in Canada - payable in Canadian dollars - and foreign countries). I understand I can cancel at any time and receive a full refund if not satisfied.

My check (\$ _____) is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Make check payable to FARM SHOW. Clip and mail this coupon to: FARM SHOW, 20088 Kenwood Trail, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044.