

A long green line of Oliver tractors are parked along highway in front of Olson's farm.

**"ONE OF THE LARGEST COLLECTIONS OF WORKING OLIVERS IN THE U.S."**

## Classic Collection Of Oliver Tractors

It was just 14 years ago that Jean Olson decided to expand his fleet of Oliver tractors. Since then, he has managed to put together what's reported to be one of the most complete collections of working Oliver tractors anywhere.

What makes the Olson collection of nearly 100 tractors remarkable is that he not only has almost every model that Oliver ever made, but that nearly half of the tractors have been restored to mint operating condition.

"People come from all over the U.S. to visit our farm to see the collection. There may be larger Oliver tractor collections, but I'm told that no one else has as many restored and repainted Oliver tractors in working order," says Olson, of Chatfield, Minn. "I've always been interested in Oliver tractors because my father owned them and my two older brothers, Delbert and Lyle, worked in the Oliver manufacturing plant in Charles City, Iowa, from 1935 to 1938. My father bought one of the first 4-cylinder models made by Oliver, a 28-44 Oliver Hart-Parr built in 1930.

"I've always farmed exclusively with Oliver tractors. My first model, the one I started farming with, was a 6-cylinder model 70 built in 1941. I'm also proud of a pair of 2-cylinder models, a 12-24 and an 18-36, made in about 1928. Hart-Parr tractors were first produced about 1905. I own several of them. My oldest Oliver is a Cletrac model

built in 1919. I've never seen another one like it. Instead of having a Caterpillar tractor's leverage-type steering, it has a steering wheel that mounts straight up and down on a post. The Cleveland Crawler Tractor Company (Cletrac) became part of Oliver in 1944."

According to Olson, Oliver tractors are easy to operate and require very little maintenance. He still frequently uses a 550 model that he bought new in 1965. It has never had a major overhaul. Olson relies on Stan Sorensen, a retired mechanic who formerly worked on Oliver tractors, to do most of the restoration work. Neighbor Les Johnson also helps out. Olson estimates that he has about three dozen Olivers still waiting to be restored, with more being added every year.

Every year Olson has entered the tractors in a Chatfield, Minnesota, parade. Last year he entered 30 models, and it took several people a month to get the tractors ready and drivers assigned for the parade.

A 1935 Oliver on the front lawn makes the Olson farm easier for visitors to find. During Christmas another older model is added, and the Olsons' son and daughter-in-law mount Christmas lights on the two models to make it look like their wheels are turning at night.

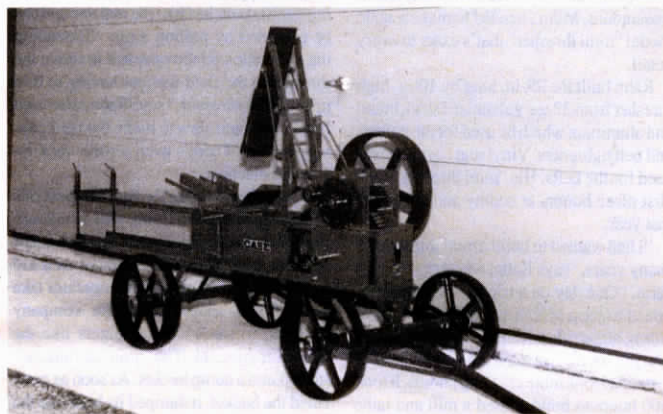
For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jean Olson, Rt. 1, Box 237, Chatfield, Minn. 55923 (ph 507 867-3047).



Jean Olson (seated) and Bill Wright, local White dealer who helps find parts for the tractors. Olson's father bought this 28-44 Oliver Hart-Parr, which was built in 1930.

**FARM SHOW**

**Ag World**



Simonar patterned the 1/3-scale model baler after a photo in a Case catalog.

**1/3 SIZE BALES SELL FOR \$2 APIECE**

## Mini Baler Modeled After 1923 Hay Press

A Wisconsin farmer who had already built his own 1/4-scale Case steam engine decided to build a piece of working farm equipment that he could power with his mini steam engine and came up with a 1/3-scale 1923 Case hay press.

"I had been taking my steam engine to antique tractor shows and thought it would be more interesting if people could see it belted to a piece of model farm machinery," says Norbert Simonar, Sturgeon Bay, Wis. "I had already seen several mini threshing machines and two or three model saw mills, but I had never seen any small hay presses.

"After 6 months of brain knocking and half a truck load of wood patterns, I ended up with this working 1/3-scale model. It's become a big crowd pleaser as well as a money maker since we sell the 5 by 7 by 14-in. bales for a dollar a bale at threshing shows, which helps cover expenses and pays for the cost of wire. We also wholesale them to local craft shops for \$2 per bale.

"I have less than \$75 worth of materials invested in this machine - it has paid for itself several times over.

"People are surprised to learn that all I had to go from in building it was a picture from a Case catalog. I had so many inquir-

ies, in fact, that I finally had detailed blueprints drawn up to offer for sale. Together with my partner, Mark O'Hern, we also offer completed hay presses with a flat pulley for \$2,000. It's ready to belt up to most any low rpm engine. A hay press fitted with an electric motor sells for \$2,200. You just plug it in and start baling. All machines are riveted together with 3/16-in. steel rivets. We use 12-ga. sheet metal for the bottom plate and 16-ga. for the sides and top. The machines are double-gearred and have grease fittings where needed. They're built to operate smoothly and to last a long time. We can paint them using other manufacturers' color schemes such as Deere green and yellow.

"I spent many enjoyable hours building the press - there's a large amount of lathe work necessary and also some mill work and welding. We also sell gear sets and aluminum flanged bearing sets needed to build the baler. We're working on a 1/6-scale model of the same baler that'll produce bales 2 1/2 by 3 1/2 by 7 in. long."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Norbert Simonar or Mark O'Hern, 5901 Country View Rd., Sturgeon Bay, Wis. 54235 (ph 414 743-7142 or 5166).