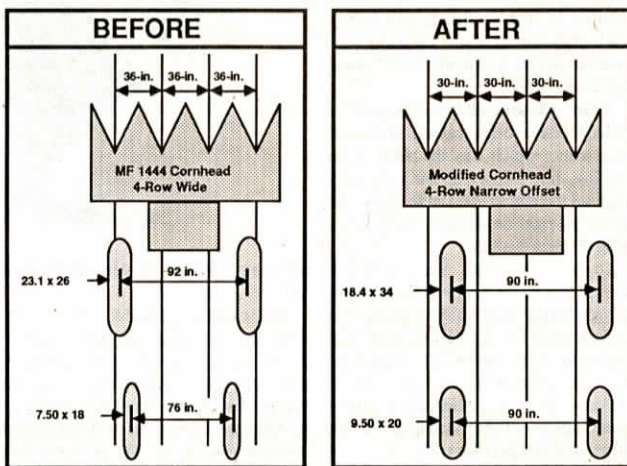


Made It Myself

(Continued from previous page)



Cornhead Rebuilt For 30-in. Ridged Rows

When Iowa farmer Lester Peters, of Plainfield, switched to ridge farming on 30-in. rows last year, he also rebuilt his Massey 550 combine's 4-row cornhead, converting it to a 4-row narrow offset model.

In addition, Peters widened the combine's rear axle, and installed narrower tires. All of the changes keep the combine's tires off the ridges.

To gain yield advantages, Peters had switched from 36-in. rows to 30-in. ridges. He'd traded in his 8-row 36-in. planter and cultivator for an 8-row 30-in. planter and a matching cultivator. He couldn't use his 4-row combine because its model 1144 corn head was set on 36-in. rows.

"An 8-row combine with straddle duals would have worked," says Peters, "but I didn't want to spend the money for a combine big enough to handle an 8-row corn head. There are commercial 4-row narrow corn heads, but no commercial 30-in. 4-row offset corn heads. So, it was either trade combines or narrow up the row units on my corn head."

To make the conversion, Peters removed all the sheet metal on the corn head. Then, he slid the left-hand row unit as far left as it would go, and slid the other 3 row units left to obtain 30-in. spacings. He then cut 26 in. out of the right half of the corn head and cross auger, welded the

shortened auger back together, and put the right end panel back on.

Next, Peters cut a wedge-shaped piece out of each divider snout and a 6-in. piece out of each middle cover. He then squeezed them together 6 in. and wire-welded them, then added a wheel shield on the right side and painted the entire unit.

The rear axle's tires were spaced 6 in. closer together than the front axle's tires, making it difficult to keep them from running on the narrowed upridges. Peters solved this problem by widening the rear axle. He cut the axle on both sides of the center pivot, then welded in 6-in. lengths of square metal tubing, which he formed from 1/4 x 6 in. flat steel and scrap metal plate.

Peters replaced the rear axle's 7.50 x 18 tires with wider and taller 9.50 x 20 tires, which he removed from an old manure spreader. "The bigger tires provide extra flotation," says Peters, "and the widened rear axle gives them plenty of turning clearance."

Peters also replaced the front axle's 23.1 x 26 tires with taller, narrower 18.4 x 34 tires. "They fit right down the centers of the rows," says Peters.

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Truck Tire Field Packer

"It does a good job firming soil before seeding small grains," says Ken Sire, Billings, Mont., about his home-built truck tire field packer.

Sire mounted 23 worn-out 20-in. truck tires side-by-side on a 20-in. dia. well casing. He then sealed the ends of the well casing with welded-on end plates and filled it with 250 gal. of water for added weight.

"The most difficult part of making the roller was anchoring the stub shafts to the end plates. You must reinforce them from the inside. You can't just weld them

to the outside because they won't hold. You shouldn't run a long shaft down the center because it will whip on you and eventually break," says Sire.

A heavy-duty towing frame made from 3-in. tubing lets him tow the 18-ft. wide tire roller with a small horsepower tractor. Total weight of the rig is 6,200 lbs. full and 4,200 empty. It cost \$1,200 to build.

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"Periscope Viewer" Keeps Eye on Row-Crop Cultivator

A "periscope viewer" in front of his Steiger Puma cab lets Paul Pierce, Sullivan, Ill., keep his 3-pt., 12-row cultivator centered perfectly on the row without having to look back.

By looking into the top of the periscope, Pierce can watch one crop row, which appears upside down, as it passes between the cultivator's cutaway disks. "You'll see the corn plant going between the cutaway disks and it'll be upside down," says Pierce. "But all we care about is the side to side relationship of keeping the corn plants centered between the cutaway disks. It's a way of checking where the cultivator is in relationship to the row."

Single surface mirrors didn't work with his Steiger because its tires and axles blocked the view. However, the periscope, which extends to within 1 ft. of the ground, solves that problem.

The periscope is a 4 ft. length of 8-in. PVC pipe with a 45 degree elbow at top and a 90 degree elbow below. In the crook of each elbow is a 10-in. long, 7 1/2 in. wide oblong mirror, custom cut at a local glass shop. The mirrors, which have the profile of a football, fill up as much of the elbows as possible to provide the largest viewing area possible.

The top mirror is set at a 22 degree angle, with its top part at the 1 o'clock position and the bottom part at 7 o'clock. The bottom mirror is set at a 45 degree angle, with its top part at 2 o'clock and the bottom part at 8 o'clock.

"The bottom mirror is angled to reflect straight up the center of the tube, and the top mirror reflects that image, making it visible from the tractor seat," explains Pierce.

Both mirrors are attached to rails mounted inside the tube at the elbows. The rails, made of 1/8 in. metal, follow



the curvature of the elbow.

A toggle bracket is mounted on each rail. Vertical slots in the elbows allow toggle bolts to fit into these brackets. By loosening the bolts with a crescent wrench, Pierce can adjust the bolts up or down to "cock" the mirrors at the proper angles.

To keep dust from interfering with the mirrors, both ends of the periscope are sealed with 8 in. dia. clear glass panels, also custom cut at the glass shop. Each glass panel is "sandwiched" between two 1-in. high rings cut from a piece of 8 in. dia. PVC pipe. The rings and glass are set within the periscope, 2 in. from each end.

During the cultivating season, Pierce says he washes the glasses every day. "We hit 'em with window cleaner, wipe them off, and go again."

Two clamps fasten the \$100 periscope to the tractor, using existing holes in the frame.

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Post Driver Wood Splitter

"It's a simple idea that works great," says Orval Hammer, Mellette, S. Dak., about the post driver he turned into a "monster" wood splitter.

Hammer bolted a hand-built splitting wedge, made from plate steel, on the driving ram of his Shaver post driver. It splits logs standing vertically beneath it.

"You have to make the base of the wedge wide so it'll keep wood from flying off as it splits. You can set the log inside a tire to keep the pieces from flying

off. And you have to split on a solid surface or frozen ground," says Hammer, noting that it's best if just one person operates the post driver splitter. "That way no one can accidentally pull the lever while someone is putting a log into place."

The splitting wedge can be quickly removed to go back to driving posts.

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