



Mower engine belt-drives pto shaft that powers a gearbox which in turn belt-drives the 3-section deck.

6-FT. DECK "FLOATS" ON 3-PT. HITCH

4-WD, 4-Wheel Steer Riding Mower

"I built it six years ago and it still works great," says Larry Munro, Tiverton, Ontario, about his 4-WD, 4-wheel steer lawn mower that's equipped with a 6-ft. wide, 3-pt. mounted deck in front. Munro also uses the tractor with a 4-ft. wide snowblower and 6-ft. wide garden tiller.

He used 2-in. sq. steel tubing to build the tractor's frame. Power is supplied by a 26 hp Wisconsin 4-cyl. gas engine off a New Holland skidsteer loader. The engine belt-drives a pto shaft that powers a gearbox which in turn belt-drives the 3-section deck.

The mower has three transmissions. A Volkswagen transaxle is used as the main drive with a Honda transaxle mounted on each end to provide 4-WD. The Volkswagen transmission chain-drives each Honda drive via a jackshaft. A forward-reverse "shuttle shift" off an old Owatonna swather mounts between the engine and the Volkswagen transaxle's input shaft.

Four-wheel steering is provided by a hydrostatic steering unit off an old combine. A hydraulic cylinder mounted on the front axle moves a tie rod on the axle back and forth. The front axle is mechanically linked to the rear axle so that when it turns in one direction, the rear axle turns in the opposite direction. The 22-in. high, 1-ft. wide soft

rubber wheels are off an ATV.

The 4-WD and 4-wheel steering really comes in handy because I have a lot of hills and trees," says Munro. "My turning radius is only about 12 ft. The deck is 6 ft. wide, but the rest of the unit is only 4 ft. wide so I can mow right around a tree. The deck is built in three sections and supported by eight caster wheels so it mows evenly over rough ground. It doesn't scalp the ground or leave uncut grass.

"I spent \$700 to \$800 to build it. A new comparable size riding mower would sell for \$5,000 to \$6,000 and wouldn't have 4-WD and 4-wheel steer. Also, I can use it year around. It has plenty of power to handle a snowblower and with 4-WD I don't have to worry about spinning out. I can hook the pto shaft up to one of two pto stub shafts that run side by side. One stub shaft runs at 1,000 rpm's and the other at 540 rpm's. I use 1,000 rpm's for the lawn mower and 540 rpm's for the snowblower and garden tiller.

The shuttle shift clutch lets me go from forward to reverse without stopping and without grinding gears."

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"LETS MY 2-YEAR-OLD SON RIDE SAFELY ALONG WITH ME"

"Safety Seat" For Riding Mower

"I know most safety specialists would not recommend this idea, but I figure kids are going to ride along on riding mowers no matter what you do so I decided to make a seat that would keep them safe," says Jeff Lonsky, Rogers, Minn., about the "safety seat" he built for his 2-year-old son that attaches to his Deere 116 riding mower.

Lonsky used a bicycle "kiddie seat" and mounted it on a heavy-walled 1 3/4-in. steel tube that slides into a receiver-type hitch under the seat. The kiddie seat bolts to a 3/4-in. thick plywood board that fastens to a steel plate that welds to the steel tubing.

"It's the talk of the neighbors. It's built strong and works good," says Lonsky. "I made it last spring and used it all summer with no problems. My son loves it. He used to sit on the driveway and cry because he couldn't ride with me. It's a lot safer than letting him sit on my lap while I mow. He sits at about eye level to me. He's secured by a seat belt and by a safety harness that goes over his shoulders and between his legs. There's also a safety bar with hand grips in front of him to hold onto. I built it so that he's not out far enough to tip the mower over, yet he's not so close to me that



Schmidt used 1,200 cc engine from Datsun B210 car to power home-built mower.

Front-Mount Riding Mower Powered By Datsun Engine

A few years ago Gordon Schmidt, Ohaton, Alberta, came across a junked-out riding mower that had a "good condition" 72-in. deck. He bought it and set out to build his own front-mount mower, using the deck and other salvaged parts.

He got a hydrostatic drive from an old Massey garden tractor, a 1,200 cc engine from a Datsun B210 car, a governor from a Massey Harris 27 combine, and the rack and pinion steering from a Honda Civic. The steering system connects through a jack shaft and a set of sprockets to the mower's single rear wheel. The deck's three 24-in. blades are belt-driven by a pto shaft that's belt-driven off the engine crankshaft. He used 3-in. channel iron to build the frame and 16-ga. sheet metal to make the hood.

It's easy to operate and does an excellent job. I spent only about \$300 to build

it. A new comparably-equipped commercial riding mower would sell for \$8,000 to \$10,000," says Schmidt, who built the mower three years ago. "The engine is compact and runs smooth. It has a lot of power and doesn't use much fuel. The zero turning radius makes it ideal for mowing around trees.

"I can't lift the deck but I never need to raise it anyway. The only thing I'd do different next time would be to lengthen the body slightly to provide better air flow for the radiator. It runs a little warm on hot days."

The mower's seat is off an old garden tractor, the front tires off an ATV, the air cleaner came from the Datsun, and the throttle off an Oliver 88 tractor.

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Lonsky's son rides in bicycle "kiddie seat" mounted on Deere 116 riding mower.

I'm banging into him all the time. He weighs only about 30 lbs. and we have a fairly level lawn so the extra weight on the side of the tractor hasn't been a problem. I wouldn't do it if I had a hilly yard.

The Deere 116 riding mower is hydraulic driven and has controls mounted near the rear fender so I can keep one hand near

my son and one on the steering wheel at the same time. His feet are placed inside an enclosure so whenever I go near a tree they can't get caught. He also wears earmuffs for hearing protection."

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