

## Rebuilt Bus Makes Great "Bale Grabber"

"It works great," says Gerald Wick, Toivola, Minn., who converted an old bus into a bi-directional rig equipped with a "grabber" fork that can lift up to 21 conventional bales at a time.

Wick designed the "Wick-Pick", as he calls it, to be compatible with the New Holland automatic bale wagon he uses in his commercial hay production business. Wick rebuilt the bus with dual controls that allow him to drive the bus at 55 mph. Booms, which he welded between the wheels of the frame, have a 20-ft. forward and vertical reach, are powered by a 42 gpm hydraulic pump driven by the bus's crankshaft. The booms support a 10 ft. wide by 8-ft. long grabber fork equipped with 60 curved teeth that can handle one tier of 18 or 21 conventional size bales per "bite."

"It saves labor and lets me use all the space inside my hay sheds," says Wick. "My automatic bale wagon stacks are sheds are 13 1/2-ft. high while my sheds are 20 ft. high, leaving 6 1/2 ft. of wasted space under the roof. I use the 'Wick-Pick' to fill the shed to the rafters. I also use it to load and unload semi trailers.

The only hand labor required in my bale handling system is when I restack bales on a semi trailer for tight packing, but I'm working on a system that will eliminate that labor, too."

Wick says he got the idea for the "Wick-Pick" from Stan Steffen, Silvertown, Ore., who designed a machine to handle 4-ft. square bales (featured in FARM SHOW Vol. 2, No. 3). "The only similarity between the two machines is in their loader arm design and bi-directional capability," says Wick. "The bi-directional design provides great maneuverability, visibility and traction."

Power for the "Wick-Pick" is provided by the bus's 345 cu. in. diesel engine, the same one used in the 1972 International Loadstar 6800 bus. Wick removed the body of the bus and shortened the frame to a 9-ft. wheelbase, leaving the hood and dash intact. He made a new cab for the rig and added a second steering wheel to face the rear, installing boom control valves next to it. He also installed an extra accelerator and brake as well for "reversed" driving, as well as a 42 gpm crankshaft-driven hydraulic pump to



power the boom. He added ballast to the front bumper to balance the load and also installed a 10-ft. wide hydraulic-controlled angle snowplow in front.

The fork's curved teeth bite about 6 in. into each bale. "I can lift 18 bales that are 16 by 18 by 38-in. long, or 21 bales that are 14 by 18 by 32-in. long," notes Wick. "The basket rotates 130° so I can approach a stack 'kitty corner' with the machine and still pick up bales at a 90° angle."

There are seven hydraulic cylinders on the boom, including two for lifting, two for operating the "knuckles" on the arms, two for tilting the bale fork and one for rotating the fork sideways.

Wick, who spent about \$16,000 to build the rig, says he'd be willing to custom-build another one.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Gerald Wick, Toivola, Minn. 55789 (ph 218 427-2121).



## "Plug In" Vise Holders

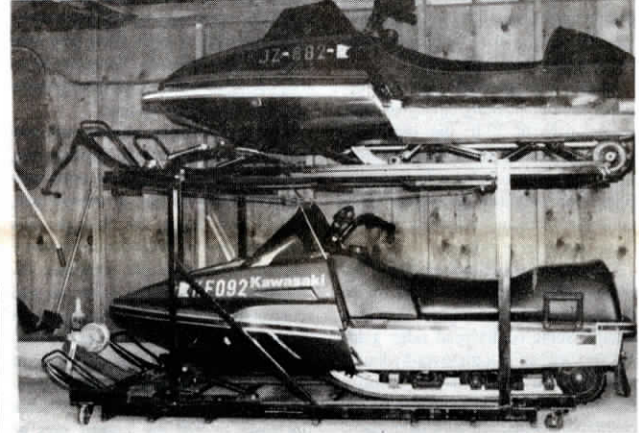
"Much of our repair work is done away from the shop and so we've found that our plug-in mounting brackets for pipe and flat jaw vises are very handy," says Bill Stark Sr., Waukesha, Wis.

"A 2-in. sq. mounting tube is welded to the curb side of the truck bed. A slip-fit square tube, attached to the underside of



each vise, slips into the mounting tube. A drop-in pin retains the vise assemblies. A 'U' clip made from a piece of square tubing provides additional support for the leg on the flat jaw vise."

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## The Sled Stacker

If you're crowded for space to store snowmobiles, The Sled Stacker invented by Bradley Hibben can solve the problem.

The upper deck is lowered and the snowmobile pulled onto the "stacker" with a hand winch. With the snowmobile fastened to the upper deck, the winch is again used to raise the deck to the locked

position. The second snowmobile is then pulled onto the lower deck. Casters allow the entire unit to be moved where needed.

Manufacturer inquiries welcome. Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Bradley Hibben, 16702 Flagstaff Ave., Rosemount, Minn. 55068 (ph 612 432-0315).

## "2 In 1" Bale Stabber

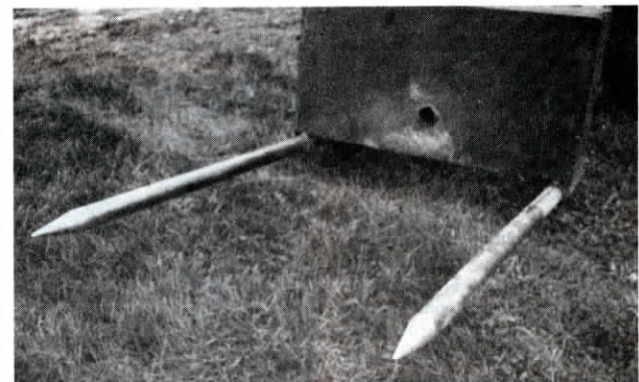
"I put all my round bales into storage 5 to 7 days after baling them so they're usually in good enough shape to move with a single bale stabber. But I needed a forklift during the '88 drought when I was forced to purchase round bales that were rotten on the bottom," says David C. McCoy, Fredericktown, Ohio, who added two extra tines to his home-built "Unicorn" stabber to change it into a convenient "2 in 1" bale handler.

McCoy moves bales with a 50-hp. Deere 2020 utility tractor fitted with a quick-tach Deere 48 loader. He built the bale stabber from a wrecked bucket his neighbor had junked. "I stripped it down to the support frame and the back part of the bucket, and then welded a piece of 1/4-in. plate steel to the front of it with a 2 3/4-in. pipe through the center. I welded

gussets every 120° on the back to support the pipe. The bale stabber itself is a 4-ft. long, 2 1/2-in. dia. solid steel pointed rod that's anchored in the pipe holder with a 1/2-in. dia. bolt.

"This bale stabber cost me just \$200 to build nine years ago and has hauled thousands of tons of hay with no maintenance or wear. Last summer, to turn it into a forklift mover, I simply added two more pipe mounts on the bottom ends, removed the center bale-stabbing tine, and inserted two tines in the lower mounts. It takes just 5 min. to switch from stabber to forklift. It could easily be fitted with hitch pins to mount on a tractor 3-pt."

When moving heavy bales with the loader, McCoy carries a 55-gal. drum 2/3 full of concrete on the rear of the



tractor. It's set up to mount quickly on his 3-pt.

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David C. McCoy, Rt. 1, 16413 Old Mansfield Rd., Fredericktown, Ohio 43019 (ph 614 397-4664).