"We figure it'll last 20 years or more, versus 4 to 5 years for conventional combines," says one farmer who already owns a Sweco combine.

EASY TO SERVICE AND DESIGNED TO LAST LIFETIME

California Combine Now On The Market

"We built it to last a lifetime," says Bill Ziegenmeyer of Sweco Products, Inc., Sutter, Calif., about the company's new high capacity hydrostatic 582 Challenger combine that was developed and perfected over the past 13 years by Ziegenmeyer.

The combine is built heavy and designed for easy maintenance. Belts, bearings, pulleys, sprockets, orbit motors and other replacement parts are all readily available at local parts stores. The basic combine design has been "tested and proved", according to Ziegenmeyer, by California and Latin American farmers who bought the first 35 full-track combines custom-built over the past 13 years primarily for harvesting rice and other specialty crops.

"We're now going into full production with our new rubber-tired Challenger combine for all-around harvesting of everything from alfalfa seed to ear corn," Ziegenmeyer told FARM SHOW. "The success of our machine in rice — which is one of the most abrasive and difficult to harvest crops — has convinced us our combine will out-harvest and outlast any combine on the market."

Chuck Heuschkel, Willows, Calif., has operated a Sweco full track combine for seven years in rice and milo.

"It's got the best feeding system I've ever seen with twice the capacity of my similar-size Deere combine in rice. And it's built so well we figure it'll easily last 20 years or more versus 4 to 5 years for our conventional combines," says Heuschkel. He notes that maintenance is one of the combine's strong points.

"Except for sickle sections, cylinder teeth, belts, and one orbit motor, I haven't had a single expense. Yearly maintenance costs run about $500 compared to $2,000 or more on my other combines. We expect further repairs to be easy because nearly all parts are standard and readily available."

Heuschkel says his track-equipped combine is the best machine he's ever seen in mud or other tough conditions. "It's perfectly balanced whether it's full or empty and it keeps going at full speed even in downed and tangled crops because of its efficient feeding design. It also does a superior cleaning job, especially in milo, which is ordinarily a tough crop to clean."

As for the cab, Heuschkel says it's perfectly positioned with good visibility. "I can see everything without straining," he says.

According to Ziegenmeyer, the 582 Challenger combine is essentially conventional in design. "We used the best principles of past combines and added our own unique features, which improve both feeding and cleaning of the crop. All internal components are built as heavy as the rest of the machine," he says.

The hydrostatic-driven combine has a 175 hp. 3208 Caterpillar diesel engine. Most components are hydraulic-driven, including the unloading auger. It's equipped with a 22-ft. header with a 24-in. dia. platform auger, a 52-in. dia. reel and a 55-in. wide feederhouse. A curved "header trough," which boosts capacity, is one reason for the machine's high efficiency, according to Ziegenmeyer.

The combine is equipped with either a spiked tooth or chromed rasp bar cylinder that's 22-in. in dia., 55-in. wide and powered by variable speed belt drive. Concaves are hard surfaced and precision ground from plow steel.

The combine has five straw walkers. They're equipped with moveable "risers" fastened at the top in place of conventional steps, which allow them to be easily tailored to changing crop conditions. The combine also has a specially designed contoured tail gate and rotary deflector.

Other components of the combine include a 3,233 sq. in. top chaffer screen, a 2,491 sq. in. bottom screen sieve, a 24-in. variable speed fan, and a 3-speed transaxle that drives through Deere planetary final gears.

The machines are built almost entirely by hand by Sweco's crew of 100 workers in the company's manufacturing facility in Sutter.

Bob Weddle manages farms for the Newhall Land and Farm Company near Meridian, Calif. He says he's used a Sweco full-track combine in rice and wheat for the past two seasons. "It does a good clean job in both crops and will go places we can't go with our other combines. It's built much heavier than conventional machines and does a good threshing job. I particularly like the cleanness of grain and the good balance of the machine in rough ground," he adds.

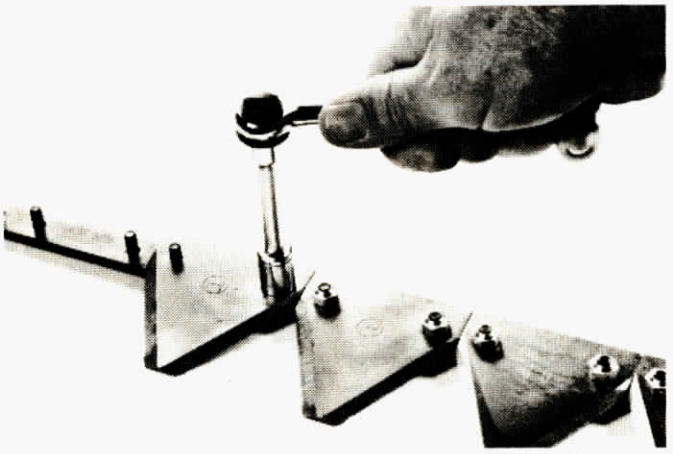
Weddle says the Sweco combine has "as much and maybe more" capacity than both the Deere 8820 and IH 1480 combines that work alongside it on the Newhall farm. He says he hasn't had any major maintenance on the machine in two years but says it appears to be easy to work on.

Weddle says the combine is relatively easy to switch over from one crop to another. "But the adjustments are not as sophisticated as those on other combines, such as our Deere 8820. There are more manual adjustments to make on the machine."

Two 582 combines are being tested in small grains this summer in California. The company plans to operate the combines extensively in corn this fall with Deere row crop heads on the machine.

The 528 Challenger sells for $125,000.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Sweco Products, Inc., Combine Equipment Division, 2455 Palm Steet, Sutter, California 95982 (ph 916 755-0521).



Bolts have splined ends so they don't turn as you tighten the nut.

CHANGE SICKLE SECTIONS WITH A 7/16 IN. WRENCH

End Riveting With Bolt-On Sections

Now you can save valuable harvest time by bolting sickle sections on combine and hay cutting equipment instead of riveting them on, thanks to "Bolt-A-Section", recently introduced by the Herschel Corp., Indianola, Iowa.

"While there have been other bolt-on sickle systems on the market before, we're the first to offer bolts that fit the regular rivet holes," says Gary Ruble, marketing manager.

The specially-built Grade 8 bolts fit in the sickle bar and have splined ends so they won't turn as you tighten the locknuts. All you need to replace a sickle section is a 7/16 in. wrench.

Ruble explains that the bolts are stronger than rivets and are reuseable. If a section breaks, remove the nuts, replace the section and tighten the nuts. "The nice feature of the Bolt-A-Section system is that you can gradually change over from rivets to bolts as you replace broken sections says Ruble. "And, if you ever run out of bolts, you can always use a rivet."

He notes that most sickles will require new arch clips with a higher clearance for the bolts, and that you can't use the Bolt-A-Sections on sickles with the knife bar on top.

The company offers Bolt-A-Sections as complete sickles, or as kits to refurbish your present sickle. Kits, with enough nuts, bolts, sections and arch clips for 10 ft. of sickle length, sell for $21.95.

The company's Tiger Tooth and Tiger Jaws sickles feature the Bolt-A-Section concept.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Herschel Corp., % Gary Ruble, 1301 North 14th Street, Indianola, Iowa 50125 (ph 515 961-7481).