

STUCK? - USE CHAINS TO GET MOVING!

(But not in the conventional sense) - By: Jack Collins

First off, I do not claim to be the originator of this method. I may have read it several years ago in "Successful Farming" but it is worth repeating.

Working in highly erodible hill country, I have frequently found myself in a "stuck" predicament!

About a year ago, I was mowing the firebreak around some CRP land with my 860 when I came across a washout. As luck would have it, about the time I dropped a front wheel into this washout, the snow started falling so, as any logical person would do, I pulled my hood up to protect my mostly bald head.

I then proceeded to back up, pulling the front wheel out of the ditch and in doing so, since I could not see behind me, backed off into another washout, of which I was unaware, which left the rotary mower on the far bank and the rear wheels far from terra firma!

Walking the 1/2 mile to the house, I proceeded to take my brother and 9N down to pull the subject tractor out. It behaved like a mule and stayed right where it was.

The next day I went armed with jacks and blocks and spent some futile time attempting to get the beast back on firm ground. No success. As I sat there pondering my errors, I said to myself (I get the best answers when I talk to myself) "You need a CAT to get this out of here" All of a sudden, the light bulb between my ears lit up!

The third day I went armed with another set of tractor tire chains (the 9N already had a set on her) and two log chains plus a couple of 5/16" bolts, nuts and assorted washers. Placing the 9N several feet ahead of the 860 and laying the chains out on the ground with the hooks towards the 9N, I then took the loose ends and passed one through the space between the center hub and the rim from the outside of the tire assembly. Pulling the other loose end of that same chain to the inside of the wheel, I passed the end link through the end link of the chain coming through the wheel and retained the same using one of the bolts, nuts and washers.

I then proceeded to do the same thing with the chain on the other side of the tractor. I then took the two log chains and connected to the end crossbars at the hook end of the chains and the other ends of the log chains to the chains on the 9N. I connected these to the chains on the outside of the wheels forward of bottom center so if it were to try to pull the 9N backwards, at the same time it would be spinning it's wheels to move it forward.

After all of this preparation, I climbed aboard the ailing tractor, started it up and drove it up those chains like a stairway to heaven!

Since that time I have used this technique on at least two other occasions. On one of these, only one rear wheel was unsupported so considerable brake effort was required to keep everything straight but the result was the same. Out and working again!

Actually in this case, I had dropped the entire right side of the tractor into a washout with the tractor being supported by the left front wheel and the mower. This native prairie grass is so thick you cannot see what is a few inches ahead of you and in a split second I had gone too far!



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