

Adding a Cab to a SpecCast Oliver 1750



Here is the 1750 and cab that were sent to undergo the transformation.

Hello once again! This month, I am going to take you through the process of adding a cab to a SpecCast Oliver 1750. This particular 1750 was provided to me by a customer who farmed with a 1750 gas before he retired. This 1750 also came equipped with a wide front. In a previous column, I took you through swapping the Oliver 1950 wide front with the 1750 narrow front, so I will pick up at adding the cab.

When the customer sent me the tractor, he also sent the cab he wanted installed on the tractor. At first, I didn't think it would be that difficult, but many simple tasks often seem to grow in complexity.

After removing the 1750 and the cab from the box, I gave them a quick test fit and it was clear that the cab was not going to fit without some modifications to the cab and the tractor. The customer also sent a photo of a 1950 Oliver with the same cab that he had used on his farm. Looking at the picture, I could see that the cab had recessed areas on the side for the fenders to sit into. This was my first clue of what I was going to have to build.

I started planning how I was going to cut the recessed areas into the cab. The first step was deciding where to cut. I used masking tape to lay lines until I found a set of lines with which I felt comfortable.

I wanted to keep realistic lines under the window and I also wanted to keep the lines parallel with what would be the cab's door.

Satisfied with the lines I had masked, I used the Dremel with the cut-off wheel attached and cut along my masked line, cutting the cab side free except for 1/8 of an inch from the bottom. With the sides cut, I then went to the back of the cab and cut each side in 1/4 of an inch on the top, making the cut a perpendicular cut to the base or window of the cab. Here again, I only cut enough out so it left the bottom of the cab still attached. With this section removed from the rear of the cab, I then folded the side panel in the 1/4 of an inch I just cleared. With this completed on both sides of the cab, it was time for a test fit.

Test fit is important

With the test fit, I could see that this idea was going to work, but it also gave me an opportunity to see a few of the next obstacles. First, I could see that there was going to be an issue around the



Both sides of the cab folded in and clearance cut out on the back of the cab for the rockshaft.



Yet another test fit. This one shows the cab sitting tight to the fender but 1/4 inch above the platform.



With masking tape along my score line, I measure the fender to have the lower 1/4 inch removed.

hood when test fitting. While test fitting, the cab would occasionally rub the hood which would lead to a scratch in the hood. To combat this, I wrapped some masking tape around the hood, giving a layer of protection.

The next problem I ran into during the test fit was having clearance around the three-point/rockshaft area. To tackle this problem, I set the cab on the tractor and used a pen to mark the area on the cab back that was causing the problem. With the cab marked, I used my caliper to score lines of equal width to each side of the rear portion of the cab, giving me the width clearance



Another test fit, and it's looking good!

I needed.

Next, I set the cab back on and measured the height the cab was setting up off of the platform. This number gave me the amount I was going to have to remove on the back side of the cab. With the height figured, I then used my caliper to score a horizontal line between the two vertical lines I had just added. With the score line easily seen, I again used my Dremel to remove this area, making sure not to take too much. It is a lot easier to remove more material if the cuts are too small then replace the material if too much is cut out, so test fitting is critical. It took me three to four cuts to get the result I wanted.

With the tape around the hood and rockshaft clearance around the rear of the cab, it was time for another test fit to check fender clearance. During this test fit, I got to see what my next problem was going to be. I had clearance around the rockshaft, my hood was safe and the cab fit nicely between the fenders, but the cab would not fit down tight to the platform. As a matter of fact, there was about 1/4 inch between the bottom of the cab and the top of the platform.

This leads me into my next challenge—what to do about that gap. I could add 1/4 inch of material to the



Filler panels added to the cab, giving the steps a mounting location.



The first piece of 1/4-inch brass being added to the cab's now recessed area.

bottom of the cab, but then the height of the cab would be too much. There was already a gap between the top of the hood and the cab. The next thought was lowering the fenders, but before I was going to cut these fenders apart to lower them the 1/4 inch, I wanted to make a test fit with the fenders removed. So the Phillips screwdriver came out and the fenders were off. With the fenders removed, a test fit showed the cab was fitting nice. As a matter of fact, I would say it looked good!

Lowering the fenders

Now to lower the fenders. First, I gave the fenders a good look. The entire fender was cast as one piece, so I wasn't going to be taking the fender apart and reassembling it without some work. So out came the caliper again and I scored a line 1/4 inch up from the bottom of the fender itself—not from the mount, but the fender.

Then, I took the fender to the bandsaw, cutting the bottom of the fender and fender mount free from the top of the fender, keeping the cut line below the score line. With the mount cut free from the fender, I removed the what would be fender material from what would be the mount of the fender. I first cut the extra material off



Steps built and mounted to the cab, holding the front of the cab securely to the tractor.



This shows the fender bolted to the cab and the modified fender mount.

the sides of the mounts with my side cutter. Then I used masking tape to place a line across the mount where the fender would have stopped. I used my Dremel with the cut-off wheel to follow this line and cut to a depth that was equivalent to the thickness of the fender. With this line cut, I proceeded to remove the rest of what would have been the fender, creating an L-shaped area for the top half of the fender to mount back into.

With the fender mounts built, I reinstall them onto the tractor for some more test fitting. This time, the test fit is for setting the fenders. So the cab goes back on, making sure it is fitting tightly against the platform of the tractor. With the cab setting correctly, I fit the fenders into the recessed area of the cab and down into the mount that was just built. All looks good. But before I start mounting fenders, I need to finish building the recessed area on the cab.

To finish the recessed area, I make sure the cut areas are perpendicular to the cab. The top of the recessed area is bent in 1/4 inch. To fill this void, I solder a piece of 1/4 inch brass flat stock into place.

First, I clean the area in my blast bead cabinet, then I cut a piece of the flat stock to the correct length to fill the top void. After all fits well, I apply some soldering flux and proceed to solder the filler panel to the cab.

With the tops replaced, I then fill the front sections. These have the angle cut to them, so I rough cut some of that same 1/4 inch flat stock to fit the gap and solder it into place. Once soldered into place, I use a rotary tip cutter on my Dremel and trim everything to a nice clean fit. Once that is done, I want to reattach the side panels to the back of the cab. Since the cab is metal and I happen to have a MIG welder, I

weld the pieces together, but soldering would have worked just as well.

Mounting the fenders

On to the next task! With the cab recessed areas complete, I move to mounting the fenders to the cab. I want to do it that way because I can make slight adjustments to the bottom of the fenders to get the proper fit. Having the fenders fit into the cab cavity is essential to the appearance of the tractor. If the fenders are slightly off, it will be seen 20 feet away. But if the bottoms are not 100 percent, they would have to take the tires off to see that.

So I mount the fenders by setting them in place, giving myself enough clearance for paint later. I then drill and bolt the fender to the cab using a couple 0.080 bolts on each fender.

With the fenders bolted to the cab, it was test fit time again. Lo and behold, my planning was paying off. The cab still needed a slight adjustment on the rear for three-point clearance, but that wasn't bad. Now I just needed to figure out how to mount everything.

With the fenders bolted to the cab and the fenders fitting down into the mounts, it was as simple as drilling and adding a pair of bolts to both sides. Bolting the fenders back to the mounts gave the cab a good strong attachment to the rear of the tractor, but this still leaves mounting the front of the cab in an inconspicuous way.

The cab was going to need a set of steps yet, so I thought about building

the step with an extra long mount—one that would bolt to the bottom of the cab as well as the bottom of the platform. This would give me the strength I needed without looking like an afterthought.

To get the front of the cab mounted, I needed a good spot to bolt the steps to in the front of the cab, but the bottom of the cab was wide open. This meant I was going to have to fill the area between the front of the platform and the front edge of the cab. This would not be too hard. I used a thin piece of flat sheet metal cut to fit tightly into this void on the front of the cab. With the piece cut to size, I welded it into place, one on each side of the cab, and test fitted again. There was some minor trimming needed, but it was looking good.

Building the steps

It was now time to build the steps. I did not have anything other than a rough picture taken in the 1970s, so I kind of winged it. Using some 1/4 inch brass flat stock and 1/8 inch square tubing, I came up with a nice step.

With the step built, I made sure the mounting area was twice as long as it needed to be, around 1 inch long. With the extra long mounting area, I drilled four holes in each step. This gave me two bolts into the cab and two into the platform for both sides of the cab. With these four bolts drilled, I held the steps in place under the cab and drilled matching holes to the platform and cab, only drilling and taping one hole at a time then installing bolts so

they would all match.
After all the drilling and

taping was done, it was time to see how strong the cab felt attached to the tractor. So I grabbed the top of the cab and lifted the tractor. Nothing was going to fall apart here!

Finishing touches

Satisfied with the rough finished product, it was time for some minor body work, primer and paint. Once all the parts were painted, I wanted to add a little extra touch. Since the cab was nice and square, I figured adding windows would be easy and would add so much to the end look.

I knew I had some thin Lexan, but I was not sure how to add the windows and make them stay in place. This got me thinking about using double-sided tape. During a trip to the hardware store, I found some Scotch brand thin double-sided tape. I applied the tape around the interior of all of the windows and then cut the Lexan to fit. With the windows cut, I installed them into the cab. Since I didn't have 100 percent faith in that tape, I applied a small amount of clear silicone to the corners and joints of the Lexan for added protection.

After the windows were complete, it was time to put this Ollie together for good. Off came the tape from the hood, fenders were remounted and the cab was installed on the tractor. The steps were mounted and this project is in the books!

It still impresses me how an appearance of a tractor can change so much with a few accessories and a little time. Now I can send this tractor to its new home, where it will be cherished for years to come.

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The completed cab added to a SpecCast Oliver 1750.



Living just northwest of Dyersville, Iowa, in the heart of farm country and farm toy replica country, Chuck Steffens has found a niche in the toy world, building high-detailed replicas in his spare time. He shares his experiences with Toy Farmer readers, hoping to lead other collectors to personalize one of their own tractors. Comments or suggestions can be directed to csteffens@wildblue.net.