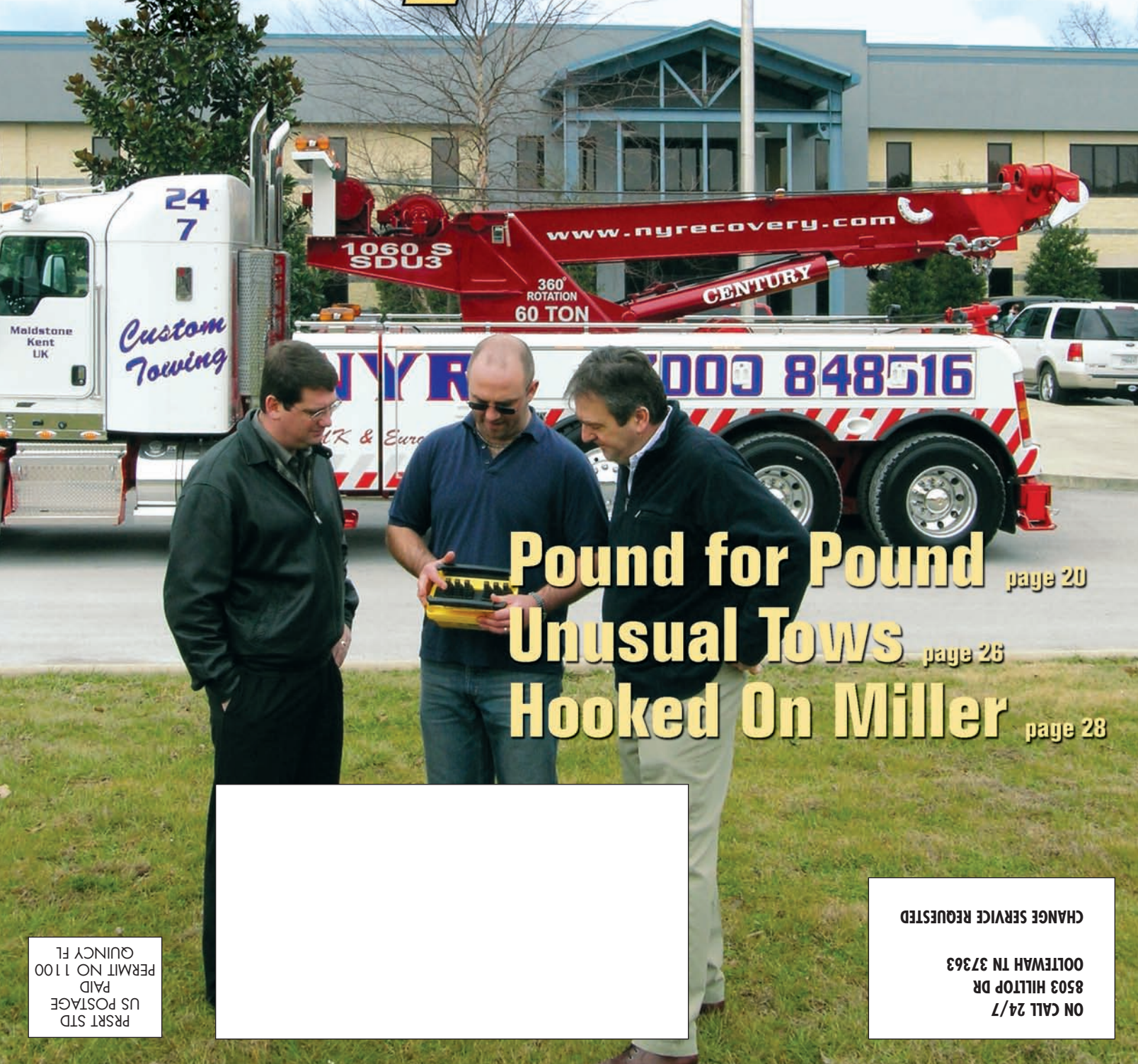


# 24/7 ON CALL

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2  
SPRING 2005  
COVER PRICE \$5.00 ea.



**Pound for Pound** page 20

**Unusual Tows** page 26

**Hooked On Miller** page 28

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# 24/7 ON CALL

I would like to personally thank everyone who has responded with pictures and stories for this edition of ON CALL 24/7 and encourage you to send or e-mail your information or questions for future issues.

Growing up in a family towing business in Northern Minnesota, and having spent my entire life in and around the towing industry, I have seen a lot of changes. One thing that hasn't changed however, is the people. The towing industry is comprised of some of the most dedicated, hard-working people you can find anywhere. I feel honored to be part of this industry and to call so many of you my friends.

I look forward to your continued correspondence and visiting with many of you throughout the year at upcoming shows. If you have not yet signed up for your free subscription to ON CALL 24/7, just visit our website at [www.millerind.com](http://www.millerind.com).

*With Sincere Appreciation.*

*Randy Olson*

**Randy Olson, Editor  
On Call 24/7**

Miller Industries Towing Equipment Inc.  
8503 Hilltop Drive, Ooltewah, TN 37363  
or e-mail to [oncall247@millerind.com](mailto:oncall247@millerind.com)

## On The Cover

Tom Griffin (left), Director of Export Sales at Miller Industries, and Michael Boniface (right), Managing Director of Boniface Engineering Ltd. in England, explain the operation of the latest radio proportional controls to Neil Yates, owner of NY Recovery Ltd. Neil's company specializes in light and heavy towing and recovery in the United Kingdom and Europe. He recently purchased his new Kenworth with a Century

1060S rotator from Boniface Engineering Ltd. The 60-ton rotator was built and installed at Miller Industries' Ooltewah facility, where Neil, accompanied by Michael, took delivery of the unit. Neil drove the unit from Tennessee to New York City where it was scheduled for a photo shoot before being loaded on a ship for a two-week journey to its new home in the United Kingdom.



# Table of Contents

## 4 From the Top

Today, Tomorrow and Beyond.



## 6 Welcome to Our Home

A play day in the mud was the agenda for visitors to the Ooltewah plant.

## 8 Why Buy From Your Local Distributor?

Don't under-estimate the value of buying locally.

## 10 New Products

## 12 Vulcan's V-30

A workhorse for any need.



## 14 The Roar of the Engine

Miller Industries Race Teams at the tracks.

## 18 Miller Rocks Baltimore

A scrapbook of Miller's 2004 American Towman Show.

## 20 Pound for Pound

More on Miller Industries newest towing attachments.

## 23 Chassis Profile

Ford's 2006 Low Cab Forward (LCF) exemplifies traditional Ford toughness.

## 24 What's So Hot About "Hot Shift" PTOs?

An upfront investment that pays off in the end.

## 26 Unusual and Difficult Tows

It's not what you tow but how you tow it... or is it?

## 28 Hooked On Miller

With the variety of trailers on the road today, there's no one hook-up that works everytime.

On Call 24/7 is published quarterly by Miller Industries Towing Equipment Inc., 8503 Hilltop Drive, Ooltewah, TN 37363. Phone: (423) 238-4171, Fax: (423) 238-5371, [www.millerind.com](http://www.millerind.com). Copyright ©2005 Miller Industries Towing Equipment Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written permission of Miller Industries Towing Equipment Inc.



# From the Top

## Today, Tomorrow and Beyond

*“As the largest manufacturer in the industry, we thank you for your past support. But beyond that, our goal is to make sure we are a company you can believe in.”*



By Jeff Badgley  
President and Co-CEO

After our first edition of On Call 24/7, Miller Industries received both congratulatory letters and constructive feedback from people in our industry worldwide. We are delighted with the industry's response. We plan to continue providing a publication that is both informative and educational in nature to an industry we serve.

2004 was a historic year for Miller Industries. Early in the year, we completed the task of exiting business segments that drained both financial and human resources from our manufacturing company. Once that exercise was complete, a rebirth of Miller Industries took place and we were able to focus on our core business without distraction. The result of that focus was evident throughout the year. Beginning with the Florida Show in April 2004, our people shined and the initiative continued throughout the year. Focus groups of towers worked alongside our personnel to help define new product offerings and enhancements and we thank them for their input and guidance. Distributors worked diligently to enhance their service capabilities. Manufacturing personnel, together with our engineering staff, improved processes. In effect, our singular focus on our core manufacturing business has taken our passion for this industry to a new level. That passion continued into Baltimore for the American Towman Show in November. Our people and our distributors demonstrated products with renewed vigor that resulted in our most successful Baltimore show ever.

The year 2004 has become our building block for this year. Part of what we accomplished in 2004 will be previewed at the Florida Show as new product introductions. Most importantly, 2004 reconfirmed that people perform their best when they are contributing to something they believe in.

As the largest manufacturer in the industry, we thank you for your past support. But beyond that, our goal is to make sure we are a company you can believe in. We will not forget "who and what brought us to the dance" – you, our customers. And we know that our rewards in this industry will be in direct proportion to the contributions we make. So continue turning to us for all of your towing and recovery equipment needs as we proudly continue serving you.

24/7

# 24/7 ON CALL



Randy Olson, Editor  
rolson@millerind.com

### Contributing Editors



Warren Govinchuck  
wgovinch@millerind.com  
*Why Buy From Local Distribution*  
Page 8 – 9



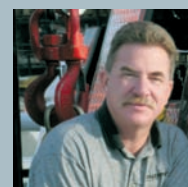
Brent Mournahan  
bmournah@millerind.com  
*Vulcan's V-30 - A Workhorse for Any Need*  
Pages 12 – 13



Joe Brown  
jbrown@millerind.com  
*What's So Hot About "Hot Shift" PTOs?*  
Pages 24 – 25



Tom Luciano  
tluciano@millerind.com  
*Hooked on Miller*  
Pages 28 – 30



John Hawkins  
jhawkins@millerind.com  
*Pound for Pound*  
Pages 20 – 22



# Too Many Questions? There's No Such Thing!

You see, when it comes to towing equipment – whether it's an auto load, a car carrier or a towing/recovery unit – it's important that you get everything you want. The only way to know is to ask questions – lots of questions. Can it? Will it? What if? Our Vulcan distributors like to hear those questions because they are experts in towing equipment and have answers. Not just any answer but answers that will help you make better buying decisions.



*Innovative. Durable. Brutally Tough.*

Call your local Vulcan distributor today and ask away!

Call (800) 489-2401 or visit [www.millerind.com](http://www.millerind.com) to locate the distributor nearest you.







The Century 9055 SP850XP is rigged to the mixer mired in the mud below.

## Welcome to Our Home

### PRIMED FOR POWER & PAINT

Todd Bowers of Bowers Towing in Godfrey, Illinois, recently took delivery of his new Century 9055 SP850XP installed on a Kenworth T-800 at the factory in Ooltewah, but not before Tom Luciano and several towers from the northeast gave it a good workout.

On an unusually chilly morning, the group began in a gravel parking lot with a cement mixer tipped on its side. The mixer drum had been filled with water to simulate a load. The group did a side recovery by rigging the mixer with one line going to the rear of the mixer, through a snatch block and back to the D-ring on the SP850XP's stabilizer leg. The second line was run from the 9055's recovery boom to the front of the mixer. Finally, a Century 3212 was rigged to the back side of the mixer to serve as a catch truck. The winching began and the mixer was easily back on its wheels in no time.

With this task complete, the energetic bunch looked for a tougher challenge. A recently excavated hill mixed with some heavy rain over the past few days created the second scenario to test the brute strength of the 9055 SP850XP. The mixer was mired in the muddy pit and the 9055 positioned up the hillside to test the stability and power using the SP850XP stabilizer leg and winch. The recovery unit remained firmly planted on the hillside as the mixer broke free and was winched up the hill. A second line from the 9055's recovery boom had been rigged to the mixer to stabilize it from tipping as it was winched.

At Miller Industries we value the opinions and suggestions of



#### **Left to Right:**

John Hawkins – Miller Industries

Todd Bowers – Bowers Towing, Godfrey, IL

Ray Oakley – A & P Transportation, Ossining, NY

Fulvio Tamburro – Lonestar Towing, Stamford, CT

George Fellows – Tolland Automotive, East Hartford, CT

Tom Luciano – Miller Industries

James Modzelewski – Modzelewski's Towing, Danbury, CT

#### **Not pictured:**

Chris Lambiasi – New England Truck Masters, Stratford, CT

professional towers who operate our equipment every day. Simulated recovery situations, along with field testing, are just two more ways we ensure we design and manufacture the type of equipment to accomplish your difficult recovery tasks. Many thanks to Todd Bowers for the use of his truck, and the operators who took time from their busy schedules to participate.

**24/7**





Lines are rigged from the Century 9055 SP850XP to the tipped mixer.



Two-part line is run from the SP850XP's winch.



A Century 3212 is positioned as a catch truck to hold the mixer as it comes over.

In no time the mixer is back on its wheels.



## Nice Shot Neil!

Neil Yates, owner of NY Recovery Ltd. in Maidstone, Kent, drove his new Kenworth with a Century 1060S rotator from Tennessee to New York City for a photo shoot. The background choice was very appropriate – for one thing, Neil's company and our famous U.S. city share initials – N.Y. And what better location for an overseas-bound truck than our famous port city? Neil and his new truck arrived safely at their homeport and we're happy to say both are hard at work.



# Why Buy From Your Local Distributor?

## Don't under-estimate the value of buying locally.

By Warren Govinchuck

Today's towing companies face escalating business expenses due to higher insurance, fuel, employee and equipment costs. To cut expenses, some towing companies search for lower equipment prices via the Internet or trade publications in lieu of local distribution. When it comes to the purchase of towing equipment, being a smart or educated consumer is a must to survive today. But don't underestimate the value of buying from your local distributor.

A towing company's profitability is based upon many factors, but I believe that some of the most successful company owners share common business skills:

- They know their true costs for running equipment
- They have the ability to forecast future equipment purchases, and
- They recognize the value in developing a strong business relationship with a local distributor.

Miller Industries' distributor network has at least one dealer servicing every major market. If your equipment requires servicing, you have a reliable local source.

## Cost of Doing Business

I'm sure most of you agree that there is always someone who claims he can beat your price and tow a vehicle cheaper. Your job then becomes educating the customer as to why you have to charge what you do. This may include explaining that you have state-of-the-art equipment to do the job right, carry adequate insurance, react in a timely manner, have properly trained operators and stand behind the service that you provide if a problem arises. It's all about customer service and maintaining repeat customers.

Towing equipment distributors are just like you — they are a service-based business and there is a cost to providing that service. There is more to an equipment purchase than the initial sales price. Miller Industries has over 100 independent distributors nationwide to provide the service you require to keep your fleet of tow trucks on the road doing what they need to do — make you money. We understand that you have a "perishable" product and if you cannot provide the service (because your truck is down), the customer will move on and find someone who can do the job in a timely manner.



*A good relationship with your local distributor can insure your equipment is handled in a timely manner and that parts are available when you need them.*





## You and Your Distributor

I'm not suggesting that you don't research prior to purchases. I'm suggesting that you use the Internet or trade publications as a tool, to familiarize yourself with equipment and chassis specifications, which will give you a greater understanding of what equipment you want or need. When the time comes for a major purchase, being an educated consumer will help you know exactly what you will get for the price that is quoted.

I am stressing the importance of a good relationship with a local distributor. A knowledgeable distributor can help you understand the different types of bodies and optional equipment available. Trucks, bodies and optional equipment can vary dramatically which can also drastically affect price. One or two items not included in a quote can often affect the price by hundreds if not thousands of dollars and catch your checkbook off guard. Just as a grocery store will put out a "price leader" to get you to come into the store, some distributors market their products this same way. It's amazing how quickly a little customizing can increase the cost of a "price leader" truck.

Due to increased overhead and higher insurance costs many companies have downsized their businesses. Tow companies have reduced the number of trucks in their fleet (fewer spare trucks), which means downtime becomes critical. How

much revenue do you lose when a truck is in the shop? Doing business with a local distributor can minimize your downtime and increase your profitability.

Say you travel thousands of miles to buy a unit that saves you \$500.00 on initial purchase price. Did you calculate what your time was worth away from your business? What about the travel costs to bring home the unit? If that towing equipment requires any type of service, is the local distributor more likely to provide better service to the customer who buys their equipment from him or those who do not? Final assemblies of most equipment are usually done at a distributors' place of business. I would say that the vast majority of service issues that arise on new equipment are installation-related. The distributor who installed the unit ultimately becomes responsible for correcting the problem. If the equipment you bought is not from a local dealer and is down for any length of time, how much revenue do you lose waiting to get it repaired?

Most importantly, a good distributor relationship can be more like having a consultant. Once a distributor becomes familiar with your business, he can recommend equipment that best meets your business needs, help minimize downtime, make product recommendations and problem solve. Working together and forecasting your equipment needs will make it easier for him to stock what you may want or need down the road.

Years ago it was much easier for distributors to handle a customer's needs. The main questions were "did you want a 440 or 480" and "was that going on a one-ton Chevy or Ford?" Today's equipment choices and options are endless which makes it extremely difficult for a distributor to inventory the wide range of products available. If you require a small wrecker, will you need a single or twin line? 8-, 10-, 12- or 14-ton boom? What capacity underlift? Steel or aluminum body? 60", 84" or 108" cab-to-axle? Autoload or conventional style underlift? If you require a car carrier will it be a steel body or aluminum? 19', 21', 22' or longer body? Removable rails or tube side? 10, 15, 20 or 30 Series bed?

As you can see, there are thousands of possible combinations that exist and this does not even begin to cover the chassis requirements such as standard or automatic transmission, hydraulic or air brakes, variable engine and horsepower requirements, and a multitude of available colors. One of my distributors has a saying on his office wall that I feel sums it all up:

"It is our belief that every customer is entitled to and shall receive two distinct services, one from the product itself and the other from the organization backing it."

It is our goal to have local distributors who understand your company's needs and provide outstanding service to keep your fleet of trucks on the road making you money. **24/7**

## A NEW MEANING TO MILLER INDUSTRIES LIGHT-DUTY

**For the fourth consecutive year, First Gear, a leading manufacturer of die-cast collectibles, is introducing die cast replicas of Miller Industries Race Recovery carriers.**

**These outstanding 1:34 scale replicas are crafted from over 150 parts and feature the authentic decals and logos that appear on the actual Miller Race Recovery units as seen at major race events throughout the 2005 race season.**

**The black International 4300 features a Century bed while the white Chassis is outfitted with a Vulcan carrier.**



The carriers can be purchased at many Miller Distributors, by calling First Gear at **1-888-771-5576** or visiting their Web site at **www.firstgearonline.com**. Orders are now being accepted with expected delivery in early July.

# New Products

## MILLER DEBUTS NEW PRODUCTS AT THE FLORIDA TOW SHOW

### Holmes D.T.U. Offers Versatility

The Holmes Detachable Towing Unit (D.T.U.) provides up to 113" of extended reach with a retracted lift rating of 35,000 lbs. and a fully extended rating of 16,000 lbs. The D.T.U. secures to your truck using a front lock down bracket and your 5th wheel plate. Powered by a wet line kit on your truck, the unit is available with several winch options. The front legs allow the unit to easily be removed in a matter of minutes so your truck can be multi-functional for towing or pulling trailers.

The design of this unit also allows for reduced overhang behind the rear axle to provide better weight distribution and increased safe towing capacity. Popular options include toolboxes, lanyard controls and additional lifting attachments. For more information, contact your local Holmes distributor.



### Options Added to Carrier Lines

The new Century and Vulcan 10 & 15 Series Carriers recently underwent several improvements that further enhance these quality lines. The new bed lock system is adjustable to better insure a tight fit along with an improved body support system. Bolt-on control boxes can easily be replaced in case of damage, and longer control handles require less effort to operate. Flush-mount LED ID lights are installed in the center of the tailboard to help eliminate lens breakage. The galvanized subframe has been an extremely popular option in areas of the country where road salt is heavily used, and a new optional removable solid aluminum side rail is now available. Check with your local distributor for additional features on your new Vulcan or Century Carrier.



*For more information visit our Web site, [www.millerind.com](http://www.millerind.com)  
or call 1-800-292-0330 for your local distributor.*



## Composite Compartments Available on Miller Self Loaders

Century has introduced a totally redesigned 301 Midnight Express to their proven line of self-loaders. The new 301 Midnight features a modular design center section with removable toolboxes as found on Century's heavy-duty units. The new compartments are constructed of a high impact composite material to provide increased durability over steel construction along with eliminating rust or corrosion. The boxes can also be ordered in several different colors with a gel coat finish to match the cab of your truck and eliminate the need for paint while providing a more smooth and durable finish. The new composite compartments will also be available on the Vulcan Intruder.



## New Low Profile Crossbar Offers Easier Lifting

The Century 3212 and Vulcan V-30 have incorporated a new 3" x 4" low profile fabricated crossbar. The crossbar is designed with removable end sections so it can easily fit between the tires of the towed vehicle when using lift forks. Both units come standard with fork receivers, three sets of cast forks, chain hook end caps, L arms and receivers. An optional towing attachment allows for use of a 5th wheel plate, trailer ball or pintle hook for your trailer towing needs.



## Aluminum Body Now Option on Vulcan Heavies

In addition to their present steel and stainless steel compartments, Vulcan will now offer an aluminum body option to their heavy-duty product line. The new boxes will be lighter in weight and provide enhanced styling while maintaining Vulcan's distinctive look. The unveiling of this exciting new product will take place at the Florida Tow Show. **24/7**

# DON'T MISS

## THE MILLER INDUSTRIES BOOTH

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**THURSDAY, 7-10 P.M.**  
Pre Show Kick Off Party

**FRIDAY, 7-10 P.M.**  
Customer Appreciation Party

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# Vulcan's V-30

## A Workhorse for Any Need

**Not since Vulcan introduced the strapless wheel lift system has there been so much talk and excitement about a new product in the Vulcan line.**

*By Brent Mournahan*

John Cullum accepted the challenge of designing a user-friendly unit versatile enough to tow a wide range of vehicles while also offering recovery capabilities. With over 34 years of engineering experience in the towing business, John is credited with designing many of Vulcan's most popular units — from the heavy-duty model 940 to the Intruder self-loader. After months of exhaustive research, talking to professional towers about what features were important, and building and testing several prototype units, the Vulcan V-30 was created.

I was making a few calls to customers to check on the performance of their Vulcan V-30s when I called Shelly Rogers of Bar S Towing in Leesville, Louisiana. Shelly is President of the Towing and Recovery Professionals of Louisiana and runs his towing company along with his wife Jenny and son, Chance.

When asked how his V-30 was performing, Shelly invited me to come down, spend a couple days and see for myself. So I packed my bags and headed down to the big town of Leesville, home of the Fort Polk Army base. I arrived early one evening and had a chance to visit with old friends and



*With 160 inches of maximum hook height and 54 inches of reach past the tailboard at a boom elevation of 30 degrees, the Vulcan V-30 has enough reach to lift the entire pick-up truck with sufficient clearance between the load and the V-30's tailboard to load it onto a trailer.*



*Shelly with his Vulcan V-30 has no problem towing the 44-passenger bus.*





have a great dinner. The next morning it was time to get up and put that V-30 to work.

The unit we tested was a 2004 M2 Freightliner extended cab powered by a 3126 Cat® engine and an Allison automatic transmission. The truck had a 202" wheel-base with air ride suspension. The first call of the day was at the Army base to pick up a 44-passenger bus. Shelly easily hooked up to the bus and we headed back with the bus in tow. Next we hooked up a 1994 International 8100 single-axle tractor with a 3126 Cat® engine and a 9-speed transmission. No problems there and we were easily on our way.

After returning to the shop, Shelly headed back to the impound yard to load a pickup truck that had hit a tree and was pretty much destroyed. The Vulcan V-30 with its maximum hook height of 160" and 36° of boom elevation was ideal for lifting the truck and setting it on a trailer to be hauled away. When Shelly, like many other tow operators, was looking to purchase a new

unit, he was looking for enough versatility to handle a wide range of applications.

The Vulcan V-30 can tow a city tractor, motor home or straight truck to the shop and yet has the ability to hook up to an automobile for your next tow. The V-30 was designed to provide the right balance to maximize towing payload in a single axle towing and recovery unit with an approximate front axle weight of 8,000 and 9,000 lbs. and rear axle weight between 9,000 – 10,000 lbs. These are average weights and may vary depending on your specific chassis specifications. Besides the superb towing ability, the two 15,000 lb. planetary winches with air free spool and cable tensioners standard, and the hydraulic rear jacks with multi position flipper feet, allow the V-30 to tackle some pretty tough recoveries. But don't take my word for it, just ask one of the many satisfied Vulcan V-30 owners like Shelly Rogers, or visit your local Vulcan distributor and check one out for yourself. **24/7**

## Vulcan V-30 Features

- 16-ton integrated unit fabricated from high-tensile steel
- 15,000 lb. planetary winches
- air free spools
- cable tensioners
- low profile underlift with 81" of reach
- Vulcan's strapless wheel lift system
- three sets of lifting forks
- hydraulic rear spades
- modular stainless steel tool compartment



*The V-30's versatility makes it a great addition to any fleet.*



# The Roar of the Engine

**From Florida west to California and across the border to Mexico, Miller Industries Race Teams cover the tracks.**

## **DAYTONA 500 – FEBRUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>**



Watching the parade lap during the pre-race activities at Daytona is great, but an even bigger thrill is to be a Miller guest who gets to drive or ride in one of the Race Recovery units during the event. Lucky attendees can get up close and personal with their favorite car and driver during one of the tours of the garage area.

## **AUTO CLUB 500 – FEBRUARY 27<sup>TH</sup>**



Tow operators from across California portrayed a professional image while providing services on the race recovery units for the Auto Club 500.



Enjoying the track can make you hungry, so Miller served barbecue chicken and burgers to the Race Recovery Team and guests while everyone swapped a few tow stories.

## **TELCEL MOTOROLA 200 – MARCH 6<sup>TH</sup>**



Professional towers from around the world rely on Century for their equipment needs. A local fleet of Century 412 Formula 1s and carriers tackled the towing activity for the NASCAR Busch series race in Mexico City. Miller Race Recovery Director Ken Burdine and seven towers from across the US assisted tow operators from Mexico. The Mexican towers presented their northern visitors with sombreros as a sign of friendship.



**IN A 200 MPH WORLD WITH 31-DEGREE BANKS, JUST RECOVERING  
ONE OF THE CARS CAN BE CONSIDERED AN EXTREME SPORT.**



How did the International® 4000 Series qualify for NASCAR tracks? Maybe it was the extreme maneuverability that comes with an increased wheel cut and 44% bigger windshield. Or maybe it was its reputation for unsurpassed dependability. Or maybe those guys just know a serious machine when they see one. Get a closer look at The Industry's First High Performance Trucks. To locate the dealer nearest you, visit [www.InternationalDelivers.com](http://www.InternationalDelivers.com).

**THE BRILLIANCE OF COMMON SENSE.®**



**OFFICIAL TOW OF NASCAR**

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# **An overturned tanker is blocking Traffic is backed up for miles. Now it's all up to you**

Your company got the call because the police count on you to get a big job handled quickly, efficiently and professionally. You and your team have worked hard to earn that reputation. Your Century helped you get there.

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Relied on by more towing companies than any other brand. That's why we're #1.

## **CENTURY®**



**the interstate.**

**You and Your Century.**



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# Miller Rocks Baltimore

**It was our best year ever at the American Towman Show in Baltimore last November.**

**We stole the show as attendees enjoyed a little Miller magic and a lot of Miller equipment.**



Miller Industries rocked the Baltimore inner harbor with the second annual Miller Bull Roast at the Hard Rock Cafe.

Welcome to  
**Miller rocks**


at the




sponsored by



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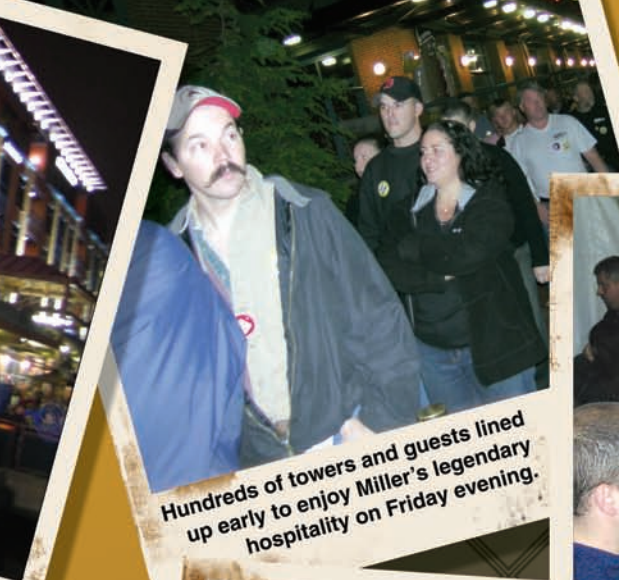


Towers packed the isles of the Century, Chevron and Vulcan booths to listen to product demonstrations from John Hawkins, Fred Grueber, Paul Craze and Debra Liston. Or, they could walk the show floor to view for themselves one of more than 25 new quality Miller Industries towing & recovery units on display throughout the exposition.

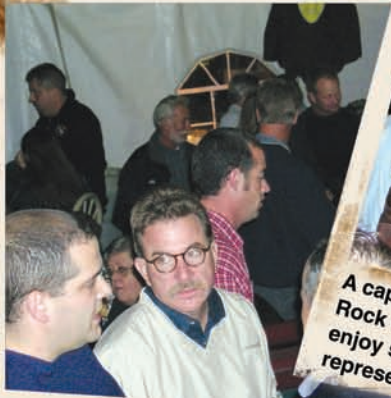


Tom Luciano always draws a crowd with his presentation, "Techniques in Heavy Duty Towing". Miller Industries strongly believes training is crucial to building a better and more secure towing industry and supports many education programs and seminars throughout the year.





Hundreds of towers and guests lined up early to enjoy Miller's legendary hospitality on Friday evening.



A capacity crowd of over 1,000 towers filled the Hard Rock Cafe and adjoining Hard Rock Party Barge to enjoy some delicious food or to socialize with Miller representatives and fellow towers.



The evening was capped off by Miller personnel passing out "Miller Rocks" t-shirts to their guests, commemorating a great evening of fun and fellowship.



Laughter and fun were the key ingredients to Miller Rocks' success.



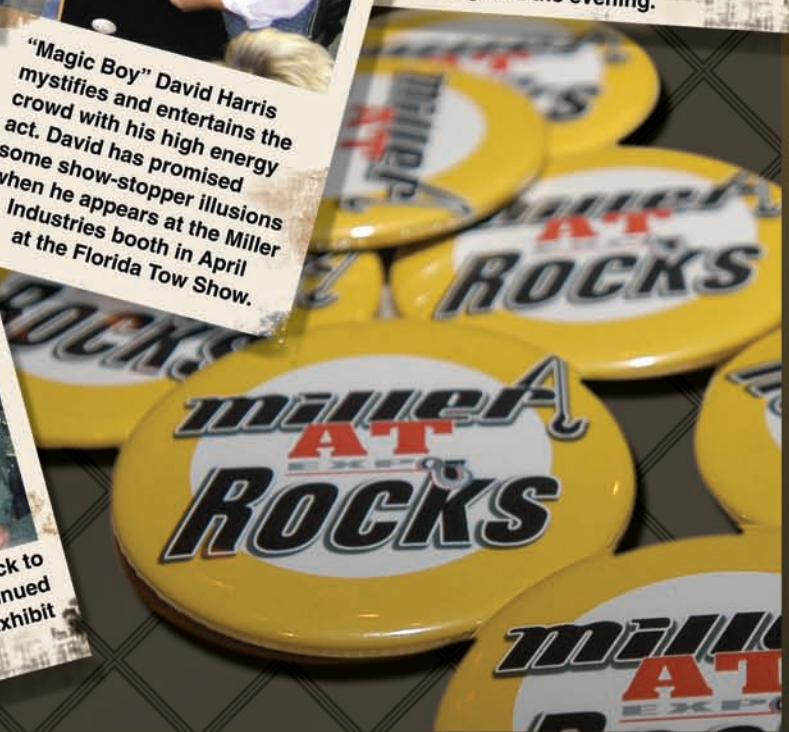
"Magic Boy" David Harris mystifies and entertains the crowd with his high energy act. David has promised some show-stopper illusions when he appears at the Miller Industries booth in April at the Florida Tow Show.



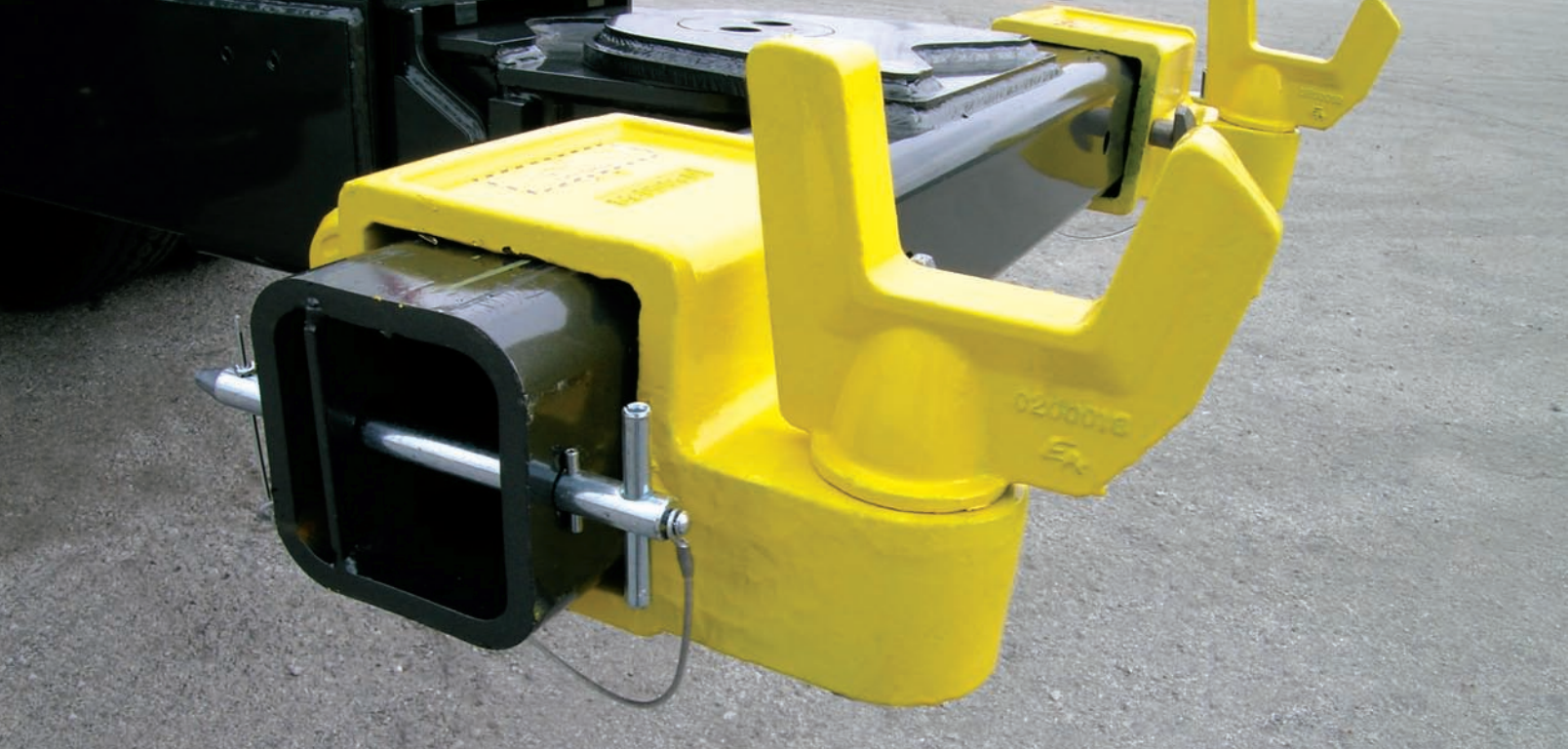
David Harris aka Magic Boy along with the acappella quartet "Part Harmony" entertained the crowd throughout the evening.



Bill (left) and Will Miller (right) present a check to Marc Valentine for Miller Industries continued support of the National Flag Truck Exhibit







*The offset design of the fork holder, pioneered by Century, provides an additional 2 1/2" of clearance, eliminating the need for double picks in most hook up applications. Both the fork holder and fork are cast from an alloy to increase strength, reduce weight and provide a better fit.*

## POUND FOR POUND

### WOW, DID WE EVER GET THE COUNTRY'S ATTENTION WITH LAST ISSUE'S "WEIGHT WATCHERS" ARTICLE.

*What a great response, which told us there's a huge thirst for accurate information on what an actual towing and recovery unit will weigh and what it is capable of legally towing. The true test is to first, relay the facts and second, to clearly tell the whole story. So with that in mind, we'll continue to supply you with the facts to help you make an educated decision about your towing equipment needs.*

*By John L. Hawkins*

#### Enlightening Today's Towers

In the "Weight Watchers" article we proved that none of our competitors had achieved the weight distribution standard set by the Century 5230. But let's compare the *attachments* we have designed to make your job easier versus those supplied by other manufacturers in the industry.

We have a new generation of professional towers entering the industry, so it is important to review some basic information on Miller Industries towing attachments:

- How they evolved to their current design.
- Why those designs are important to help you do your job more effectively and efficiently.

#### The True Test

Have you picked up any other manufacturer's lift forks? Yeah, they all look like our lift forks, except each set of the competitors forks weigh more — in fact their complete set of seven weighs 120 lbs. more than ours. That is because we use cast forks rather than fabricated forks. This not only provides increased strength, but it also makes the forks easier for the operator to lift and handle, especially when hooking up under a truck.

And have you noticed their design? In this case there is no chicken or egg, Miller Industries was first to make these lift forks more functional for the tow operator by lowering the leading edge. This allows the taper to slide under the axle if close — clearly innovation for the professional tower.

Have you noticed the fork holders on the crossbar? In early 1990, a tow operator in Los Angeles showed me how he offset his stock fork holder, lowering the fork clearance some 2 1/2" and allowing him to get under the axle without double-picking.

That summer, our engineering department and I took his concept and manufactured the first set of factory offset fork holders. Thirteen individual pieces of steel welded together made every tow operator's life a little easier. To this day, many of our competitors still do this as an "imitation" of our original holder. Today's fork holders take this design one step further, casting this attachment from a special alloy, reducing the weight, ensuring consistent tolerances and thus a better fit.

The pivot spring lift adapter we all use today did not pivot until 1987 when a member of our engineering department took a fixed adapter that pinched a spring when elevated and pivoted the spring saddle so it sits flush on the leaf spring at all times. As an additional benefit, when the vehicle has a low bumper the pivot





The pivoting spring lift adapter provides both easier hook ups and better contact between the leaf spring and the forks spring saddle. One question that sometimes arises is how to prevent the spring lift adapters from rising out of the fork receivers when encountering a dip in a driveway. Place a short chain over the top of the spring, route one end of the chain under the fork receiver and install it into the front securement hook. Place the other leg of the chain over the top of the fork receiver and connect it to the other securement hook as shown. Slightly tilt your underlift to tighten the chain and secure the forks to the receivers.

spring lift adapter can be placed into the fork holder and pivoted back to allow the adapter to be extended under the bumper. Once past the bumper, the adapter can be positioned in place, eliminating the need for a pre-pick. You may have noticed the pivoting design also currently being used by a few of our competitors.



The Euro-Lift heavy-duty tire lift reduces turning radius and reach when compared to Miller Industries conventional heavy-duty tire lift.

The "Euro-Lift", a heavy tire lift system designed by Michael Boniface (founder of Boniface Engineering, a Miller Industries Company that manufactures towing equipment in the United Kingdom) was brought overseas in 1986. To hook up utilizing the Euro-Lift, the underlift is extended until the front of the disabled vehicles' tires contacts



Miller Industries conventional heavy-duty tire lift is ideal for tough-to-tow vehicles such as buses and motor homes where maximum underlift reach is important.

the cross bar face of the tire lift. At this time the operator uses a rod to reach under the vehicle and pull out the round tube that secures the tire on the backside. Although practical, the Euro-Lift system, when compared to the conventional heavy-duty tire lift pioneered by Vulcan,

- Reduces the overall reach.
- Dramatically reduces the pivot of the crossbar in many towing applications.
- Can interfere with the wishbone on a front axle and the housing on rear axles by bottoming out.

At Miller Industries we have found most professional towers in North America prefer our conventional design over the Euro-Lift, but unlike many of our competitors who chose the Boniface design, we offer you a choice.

## The Path of Least Resistance

As stated earlier, we are always thinking of ways to make your job easier. Most towers prefer attachments that minimize both damage claims and hook-up time. Time is money and we want you to be as successful as possible.

With this in mind we have added two NEW patented attachments that were released earlier this year. The new **U-bolt attach-**



The U-bolt attachments are placed into the fork receivers. When the underlift is raised, they act as a centering device for the attachment to position itself on the bottom of the axle saddle.

ment was conceived and perfected by Tom Luciano after conversations with many tow-ers attending his towing education classes. The towers were having difficulty in some rear tow applications. The attachment was designed for towing tractors or trucks from the rear, especially when fully chromed, or with 46,000 lb. rears on Peterbilts. The bus wheel-lift will work, but lets be truthful — it's heavy and time consuming. While the U-bolt attachments were being field tested, several changes were made to achieve the proper height and sizing.

Many ask if the attachment is safe. Use two 1/2" tow chains to hook up with your truck hitch and you should feel very comfortable. The U-bolt attachment lifts from the bottom axle saddle. The standard size U-bolt is 7/8" round and is manufactured from Grade 8 material. The U-bolt attachment uses the U-bolt itself only as a center-

See Pound For Pound on Page 22



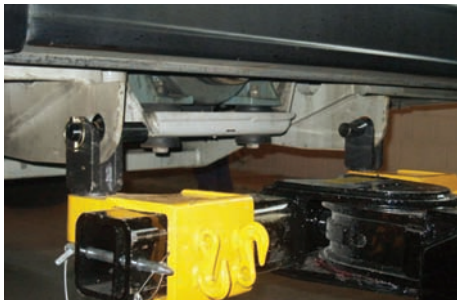


The U-bolt attachments lift the tractor by the axle saddles. Chains or tie-down straps are installed to secure the vehicle to the cross bar.



The U-bolt attachments are ideal for hard-to-tow tractors with chrome dress up kits and custom light packages.

ing device — a chain or tie-down strap still needs to be installed to secure the vehicle to the cross bar. The U-bolt would have to sheer off for it to break free, unlikely since it has a higher breaking strength than those 1/2" tow chains you have used for years. Once again — another attachment to help you do your job more efficiently.



The new clevis eyehooks were designed for safe and easy hook up to the rear of many transit buses while minimizing the chance of damage by over-swing when turning.

Another recent addition is our **clevis eye attachments** designed to address coach and bus towing issues. Because there was no easy attachment to use, damage was occurring during transport back to the shop due to tight turns on city streets and dips in driveways. We addressed the problem in several ways: first we identified a strong attachment area on the bus, then we made



it easy and safe for the operator to hook up in a minimal amount of time. Prototype attachments were made and field-tested extensively with the cooperation of professional towers and transit authorities before they were made available to towers worldwide. By minimizing overhang, over-swing of the towed vehicle is eliminated and turning is maximized with the end result being less chance of damage.

The "Mega" is a four-stage underlift pioneered in 1985 by Jean George, designer and founder of Jige International, a Miller-owned company in France. When unveiled, this system with a reach of 4.3 meters or 178" was revolutionary. The reach required for motor coaches in Europe, the U.K., and the Pacific Rim is far longer than in the domestic U.S. Years later, however, one of our competitors has offered a similar design. The problem with this design for our market is that the height of the outer stage can dramatically affect clearance, which affects reach, so in most cases, nothing gained.

We combined efforts between our engineers in the states and overseas to design and build a new innovative underlift stinger to better meet our customers needs. The three-stage **Low Rider option**, with its lower and wider stinger profile, has an additional 3 1/2" of clearance (when compared to our standard underlift with best-in-class clearance) between the top of the stinger and the towed vehicle while still providing 156" of clear useable reach without the deflection or clearance problems of the 4-stage design, providing ample reach for most towing applications.

Now why is the title of this article "Pound

The unique design of the Low Rider stinger provides 156" of reach without the deflection of a 4-stage underlift. With a 3 1/2" lower profile, the chance of damage from bottoming out on the top of the stinger is also greatly reduced.

for Pound"? It's quite simple. 1,200 Miller employees bring towing and recovery equipment to you and your fellow operators around the world. When you stack us up against the competition, "Pound for Pound" we are simply the best of the best. We listen, we learn, we teach, we design, we test, and then we manufacture. When we put equipment in your hands, it has to respond at a minutes notice — in all climates — in all hemispheres.

Miller Industries is not just the largest manufacturer of towing and recovery equipment in the world, we are blessed with a professional staff knowledgeable about the industry we share. And we are backed by the best distribution network in the industry. When we put a product in the marketplace, no matter if it's a towing attachment or a recovery unit, we stand behind that product knowing it was conceived by knowledge learned from true towing professionals like you. At Miller Industries we listen to your needs and ideas and then act on those suggestions.

Come visit us in Florida this year and see why the Miller family "Pound for Pound" stands above the industry. Sit in our equipment, drive our units, operate our units, attend our educational classes, or simply watch what we do best — provide the most advanced and innovative towing and recovery equipment to towing and recovery professionals worldwide.

24/7



# chassis profile

## Ford Low Cab Forward

The 2006 LCF (Low Cab Forward) exemplifies traditional Ford toughness and will change the way you look at low cab forward trucks. "Built Ford Tough" attributes such as power, quality, reliability and the right specifications solidly address users in the business of towing. While others talk about durability, safety, comfort, visibility, and maneuverability, Ford's new LCF delivers with a proven North American power train. Many tow truck owners will be abandoning their conventional cab trucks for this highly maneuverable newcomer. The LCF offers many great benefits to towers:

**Maneuverability.** When you need to get into a tight spot, this truck gets you in and out. The 53° wheel cut provides such a tight turning radius that it actually out-maneuvers many cars.

**Great angle.** With an unloaded frame height of only 30", (that's 7" lower than many trucks), and up-fitted with a new Miller car carrier, this truck will achieve an extremely low loading angle making cars with low-ride height no problem to load.

**Great brakes.** Four massive disc brakes with dual 60 MM calipers, 15.35" rotors and advanced ABS provide superior braking. These rotors are similar to the brakes on much larger trucks and will help stop you better and last longer.

**Big payload capacity.** The LCF is available in up to a 19,500 lb. GVW, making it an ideal match for a new Miller car carrier or auto-load unit.

**Stronger frame.** This is no wimpy truck. A 50,000 PSI frame makes this one tough truck and Best in Class. Truly built Ford Tough.



**More fuel capacity.** Three options with up to 70 gallons capacity translates into fewer fill ups and more time towing and producing income.

**Powerful.** The V6 Power Stroke® diesel with 200 hp and 440 lb.-ft. of torque will provide the power to carry the loads on your tough tows.

**Easy to drive.** Ford's Torque Shift® automatic transmission features a tow-haul mode that offers easy operation and smooth, responsive shifting regardless of the load or terrain.

**Low maintenance costs.** As a tower, you can't spend all day getting routine maintenance done on your truck. The easy-to-tilt cab allows ease of power train servicing and all regular fluid checks can be made without tilting the cab. The engine, transmission, filters, brakes, axles, alternator and hoses are all common North American components, so if you need to repair this truck, you'll find the parts are readily available and very affordable.

**Ease of body mounting.** Unlike other trucks in its class, this chassis comes with the same standard 34" frame rail spacing that's standard for most American-built trucks and that simplifies body mounting. Cab-to-axle and axle-to-frame offerings match F-Series Super Duty so the new LCF lines up perfectly with Miller equipment.

Add it all up and you get one great new performer in the towing and recovery business, the all new Ford LCF.

Delivery of units will start in July 2005 but quantities will be limited during the first two-thirds of the year. So if you're interested in taking delivery, now is the time to order.

*The LCF is the first all-new truck to come out of the Ford and International joint venture company, Blue Diamond. Ford and International are each introducing versions based on similar chassis specifications.* **24/7**



# What's So Hot About "Hot Shift" PTOs?

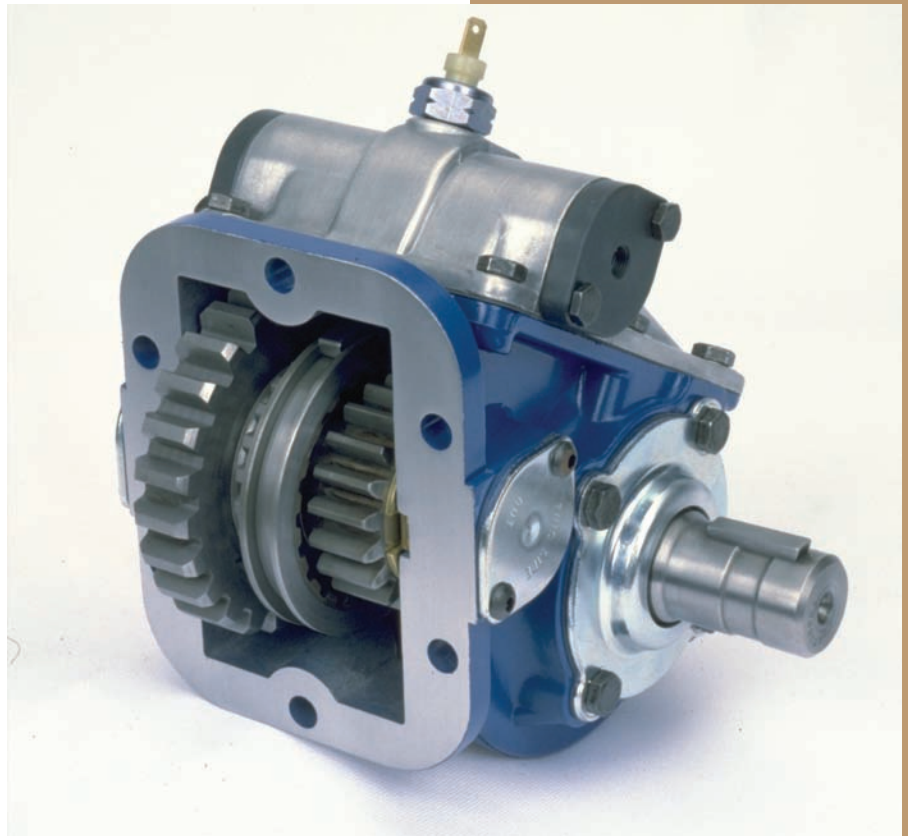
*By Joe Brown  
Director of Engineering & Quality Assurance*

There has been much discussion and confusion about the difference between a Hot Shift and an Electric Shift PTO installed in a vehicle with an automatic transmission. When you look at the dash of your truck, they both have a rocker switch to engage the PTO, so why would I want to pay \$500 - \$600 more for a Hot Shift? This is a classic example of pay now or pay the transmission shop later, and the transmission repair can run about ten times the cost of the PTO, not to mention the loss of income from down time.

I talked with John Durant and Dave Douglas of Muncie Power Products and Tom Luciano of Miller Industries Towing Equipment. These gentlemen sell these products every day and train customers in their proper use. They were very generous with their time and knowledge.

Starting with the basics, a PTO (Power Take Off) is a gearbox or mechanical device used to transmit power from an engine, through a transmission, to another mechanical or hydraulic device. In a standard shift PTO, a gear in the PTO meshes with a gear in the transmission, allowing the transfer of power. With a manual transmission, the relationship between the PTO and the transmission is very straightforward; you push in the clutch with the transmission in neutral, activate the PTO lever or switch, release the clutch, and you are in business.

A number of shifter options are available to engage the standard shift PTO gear, including cable, manual air, electric-over air, or electric. However, these do not change the mechanical gear engagement described above. For instance, comparing an electric shift configuration to cable shift - the cable moving the gear into the transmission is simply replaced by an electric solenoid that pushes the gear in place. The



*Standard PTO with electric shifter option.*

relationship between the gears of the PTO and transmission are not changed.

With an automatic transmission the engagement of the standard shift PTO is also fairly simple when properly performed. With the vehicle stopped and the transmission in gear (remember the manual transmission was in neutral), the operator then engages the PTO while holding the brakes. In this case all of the shift options described above (cable, electric, etc.) are also available.

Although the operation described above is simple, if it is not performed properly, damage and an expensive transmission



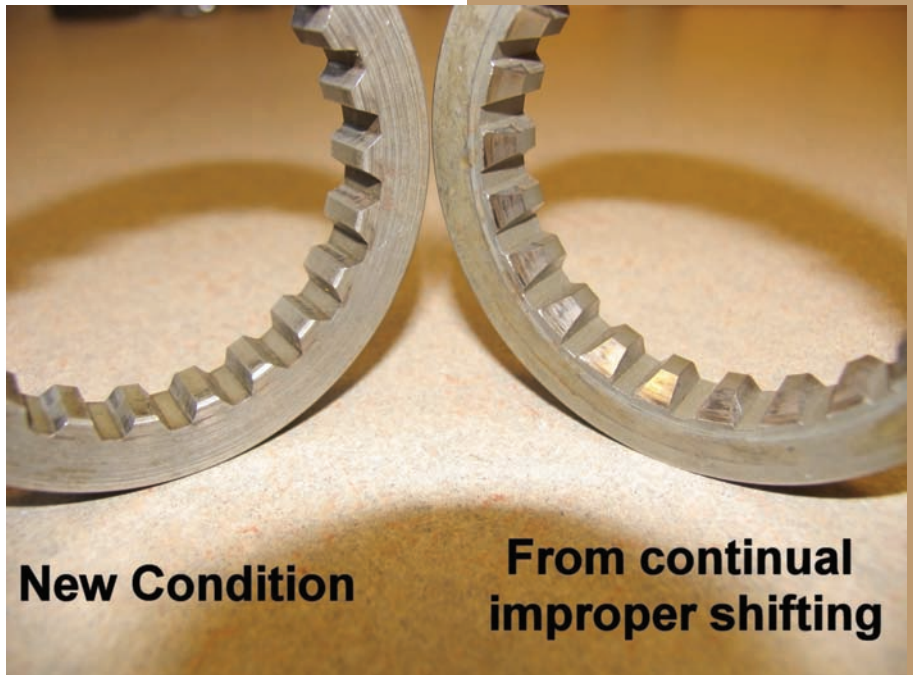
rebuild can result. A point made by Tom Luciano, who conducts many training seminars in the towing industry throughout the year, is that safety is another major issue. The operator must have the automatic transmission in gear with a standard shift PTO when engaging it to prevent damage to the transmission while holding the brake. If after the PTO is engaged the operator forgets to shift the transmission into park or neutral, the truck could move forward or back, damaging property or even worse doing bodily harm to an operator or bystander. It is also very easy to abuse an automatic transmission with a manual shift PTO. If the PTO is not engaged properly, the gears clash and metal filings are deposited into the transmission. Even with your vehicle under warranty, the transmission manufacturer will usually deny warranty when metal filings are found in the transmission.

With automatic transmissions becoming more common in work trucks, the need for improved PTO technology became obvious. The next generation of PTOs to be developed was the “power shift” or “hot shift” technology.

In this design, the moving gear engagement is replaced by a clutch pack, which allows the PTO to be engaged with the transmission gears in motion, a condition that occurs when your truck is stopped and the transmission is in park or neutral. The gears in these devices are always engaged with the transmission gears so there is no possibility of gear clash. The clutch pack allows the operator to engage and disengage the PTO with the vehicle in park or neutral. The hot shift PTO is also available with an optional overspeed switch that monitors the engine RPMs and will disengage the PTO if the operator inadvertently drives with it engaged and reaches unsafe engine speed for the PTO.

An automatic transmission is an expensive investment. The protection offered by the hot shift PTO is a worthwhile consideration to protect that investment. At Miller Industries, we believe only a Hot Shift PTO should be used with an automatic transmission, a one-time gear clash is sometimes all it takes to deposit metal shavings in the transmission that can plug the valve body and lead to costly repairs, not to mention safety concerns.

**24/7**



*The Hot Shift PTO utilizes a clutch pack to prevent gear clash and possible damage to your transmission.*



# Unusual and Difficult Tows

**Sometimes it's the challenge,  
sometimes the uniqueness  
– but those memorable jobs are fun!**

## It Takes Moxie

Larry Fortier of Sabil & Sons Inc. in White River Junction, Vermont, sent us this shot of one of the more unusual vehicles they are called upon yearly to transport for a local celebration. This 1930 LaSalle is driven by sitting on top of a life size horse that is mounted in the vehicle. The unique auto was originally one of several owned by the Moxie Beverage Company and was driven around the country promoting their soda. Sabil & Sons hauls the LaSalle on their FRR Isuzu with a Vulcan 19.5 ft. carrier and, as the last of the original Moxie cars valued in excess of \$100,000, there is no horse play with this precious load.



Have an unusual or difficult-to-tow vehicle or tough recovery that you handled with your Miller Industries tow truck or carrier. We would love to hear from you. E-mail your pictures in high resolution along with the information to [oncalle247@millerind.com](mailto:oncalle247@millerind.com) or mail to:

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## Oil That Is

Since receiving their new Century 9055/SP-850 mounted on an International Paystar about a year ago, Ron Pullen of Big Red Towing in Syracuse, New York, said he has not come across anything that he couldn't handle. Ron has shared photos of several vehicles he towed that posed a unique challenge but nothing an experienced operator with the right equipment couldn't handle.

The picture shows a well drilling rig that Big Red was called to tow off of I-90. The drill rig weighed over 74,000 lbs., was 55 ft. long and, to make matters worse, was 13'2" high. The challenge was to tow the rig with over 20 ft. of front overhang and keep the height under 13'6". With the integrated design of the Century 9055, Ron was able to back under the boom of the drill rig and pick up the front of the rig on his under lift without exceeding the height requirements. After pulling axles and hooking up air lines they were on their way some 70 miles from where the unit became disabled to the job site with no



delays. Big Red was called on two more occasions to move the rig to job sites before it was finally repaired. Each time Ron said his Century 9055/SP-850 performed great. **24/7**





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## Hooked On Miller

**MILLER INDUSTRIES NOT ONLY WORKS DILIGENTLY TO DESIGN AND BUILD THE BEST TOWING AND RECOVERY UNITS IN THE INDUSTRY, BUT ALSO PUTS THAT SAME CARE AND ATTENTION INTO THE LIFT FORKS AND ATTACHMENTS TO HELP MAKE YOUR JOB EASIER AND ENABLE YOU TO TOW ANYTHING YOU GO AFTER IN AN EASY AND SAFE MANNER.**

*By Tom Luciano*

In this article we are going to look at several different attachments and methods to tow fifth wheel trailers.



### **25,000 lbs. and Under**

Our lead photo shows a fifth wheel style camper that can be difficult to tow if its power vehicle is disabled and you don't have proper attachments. With Miller Industries' fifth wheel plate and pintle hook attachment, you will be hooked up and on the road in no time.

First unfold your underlift, slide your fork receivers inward and place and pin your pintle hook adapter into the receivers. Next, the fifth wheel plate is attached onto the top of the pintle hook adapter. Then install the chain end caps on each end of the crossbar.

The underlift is now extended and raised so the kingpin of the trailer seats firmly into the fifth wheel plate, the rear locking pin is manually installed and a

safety pin is installed so the locking pin cannot come out. Raise it to the desired tow position and retract the underlift fully. Place a 1/2" chain into the hooks welded on each side of the outer tube of the underlift, pull each chain tightly to the chain end caps at the outer end of your crossbar and place the chain into the end cap hooks. Now extend your underlift to tighten the chains, which will allow your crossbar to be in the locked position. Hooking in this manner allows the trailer to pivot on the fifth wheel plate, not the underlift pivot pin, as you turn a corner. Always install auxiliary tow lights and attach the breakaway cable for the brakes of the camper to your fork receiver to comply with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration standards.





*Here's an application where the above hook-up procedure using the fifth-wheel plate is ideal. This trailer has two propane tanks attached along with a shielded supply line on the bottom front of the trailer. If you used a chain hook-up, the propane supply lines would be crushed.*



This hook-up procedure works great for fifth wheel trailers such as horse trailers, car trailers, vans and flatbeds that are pulled by small power units such as 3/4- and one-ton trucks. It can also be used to carry larger trailers as long they are empty or have light or partial loads. The maximum rating for the fifth wheel plate is 25,000 lbs.

## Over 25,000 lbs.

If you have a loaded or partially loaded trailer that exceeds the 25,000 lb. rated capacity of the fifth wheel attachment, I suggest the following hook-up procedure. This procedure uses levers so you work smarter — not harder. Look at the trailer length as a lever; the pivot is the rear suspension. The load is positioned on the floor from the front to the rear of the trailer. The distance between the kingpin and rear suspension is the length of your lever when lifting using a fifth wheel plate. That leverage is changed

like a wheelbarrow with longer handles when attaching to the kingpin with a trailer keyhole plate. Attach 5/8" System 8 chains that are pulled forward to the front of the trailer. The leverage that is gained is from the very front edge of the trailer kingpin. This gives you an additional 30" to 36" of mechanical advantage, lets you lift less weight, decreases overhang and gives you a better turning radius.

Next, install your fork receivers, but as you can see they are to be installed with the receivers pointed up. This gives you a buffer or a taller stop in the event of a panic stop so the trailer or whatever you are towing cannot override the cross bar. Position the chain end caps on each end of the cross bar then lower and extend your underlift so it is under the front edge of the trailer. The chains are then pulled tightly and placed into the chain end cap hooks. Retract your underlift to tighten the chains evenly,



*Continued on Page 30*



then raise your underlift so the fork receivers are tight against the front edge of the trailer. Then raise to the desired tow position. You can retract your underlift for minimal overhang but still allow the crossbar to pivot. Now install the electrical cord and both air lines to the front trailer hook-up point for lights and brakes.

## What if the trailer is broken?

A broken trailer is no problem if you have the proper equipment and knowledge. First, remove the fork receivers from your crossbar and install your fork riser adapters, sliding them in all the way. Then reinstall your chain end caps. Lower your boom to get the adapters lower than the bottom of the trailer. Extend your underlift out so the chain end caps are about 6" under and past the front of the trailer.

Attach long 3/8" Grade 7 or 8 chains to the front spring hangers on the leading front axle of the trailer.

Route the chains so they go under the landing leg lower cross brace to the chain end caps (as shown by the red lines at right). You may need to attach two chains together to get the necessary length needed. Pull the chains as tightly as possible and drop them into the chain end caps. Retract the underlift while at the same time starting to lift upwards. This allows all necessary play to be taken out of the chain without using chain binders.

Now, install your trailer kingpin chain plate and two 1/2" Grade 8 towing chains.

Route the chains up to your fork riser chain hooks, pull tightly and place the chains into the hooks. If you are concerned about your chain being pinched on the front edge of the trailer, install a softener between the chain and front edge such as a block of wood. Raise your boom/underlift to tighten all chains and lift the front of the trailer. As you are picking up the front, the chains routed to the rear are picking up the middle of the trailer. This bridges up the middle broken portion so you can tow the casualty back to your shop. The great thing about this procedure is that no chain binders need to be tightened as they always seem to loosen during transport. You can now complete the hook-up, drawing in the underlift and hooking up your light cords and air lines. Always offload a broken trailer and use extreme caution when transporting. **24/7**



*This information is a guideline to help you tow fifth wheel trailers. Keep in mind there are various techniques that can be used in different situations. With so many variations of trailers on the road today, there is no one hook up that is applicable every time. We encourage you to read your owner's manual, watch training videos and attend training seminars to increase your towing knowledge.*

**REMEMBER:  
OUR MOTTO IS  
WORK SMARTER,  
NOT HARDER AND  
ALWAYS THINK  
SAFETY FIRST.**



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