

Idaho Logging Safety News

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"I GLANCED AT THE LOG TRUCK DRIVER AND WAVED, LOOKED BACK AND HERE CAME THE TRAILER RIGHT AT ME!"

That is what the driver of this pick-up told the people that stopped to help at this accident scene. The pick-up driver, who happened to have quite a bit of experience working in the woods and knows how a logging truck and trailer are SUPPOSE to go down the road, said he couldn't understand how come the truck was going one way and the trailer the other!

The reason, as you guessed by looking at this picture, was that the trailer reach broke as the log truck turned onto the main highway from a side road. Luckily, with the logger just taking off and the pick-up getting ready to turn, both vehicles were traveling at a low speed. Because of the quick actions by both drivers, serious injuries were avoided.



I don't think those airlines will stretch much further!

ABOUT TIME TO HIRE SOME SNOW SHOVELERS

By Cliff Osborne

When the snow level reaches enough depth that your timber fallers require someone to shovel their trees, certain issues should be addressed. The main concern is where should the man with the shovel be in relation to the faller. Staying two tree lengths away, or further, may be the answer in some instances. In the past however, accidents, including fatalities, have occurred when this method was used.

In many cases young, inexperienced people are hired to do the shoveling. Being out of sight of the faller and becoming a little confused, there is that chance of the snow shoveler working back in the path of a falling tree. It has happened more than once!

We have talked to several timber fallers that have quite a bit of experience working in the deep snow with
(continued on page 2)



THE ONLY THING IN THIS PICTURE THAT HAS MORE EXPERIENCE IN THE WOODS THAN THESE FOUR LOGGERS IS THE LOG THEY ARE LEANING AGAINST! (and that includes the trees standing in the background)

Doing the job for Coon Logging are (L to R) Darv Nelson, faller; Ron Hartig, woods boss; Rob Bohn, landing; Martin Stout, cat skinner.

This big ol pine wanted to fall out of the unit, but the boys convinced it to come along peaceful!

Ron always points out how valuable it is having such an experienced crew. “All you have to do is point to which road you want them to go on next and they handle it.” Even with all the years they have put in, their attitude toward safety is “refreshing”.

Darv said, “there is never a day in the woods I cannot learn something new.” Rob talked about how important it is to cut out escape paths, chunk up whips on the ground and take time to look at the other end of a down-fall before you go whacking on it. Martin told this story: “As a young guy I asked a logger, who must have been 99 years, how old are you when you stop learning things in the woods? The elderly logger told me I would have to ask someone older than him!” I think if we could bottle up this experience, attitude and knowledge, and spread it around a little, the safety business would be a lot easier. Good job guys, we appreciate it!

SHOVELING SNOW (continued)

people hired to do their shoveling. These particular fallers all agreed that they prefer shovelers working right with them so they know exactly where everyone is at all times, minimizing the chance of confusion.

Whatever plan your fallers and shovelers come up with, they have to be clearly understood. The one faller brought up the point that when you ask someone just hired if “they understand your directions”, they will sometimes say “yes” whether they do or not. “You guys remember back when you first started logging, the last thing you wanted to admit was that you did not know what was going on”, the faller continued, “you have to make that extra effort to be sure they understand!”



PERIODIC TRAILER REACH INSPECTIONS

By Monte Biggers

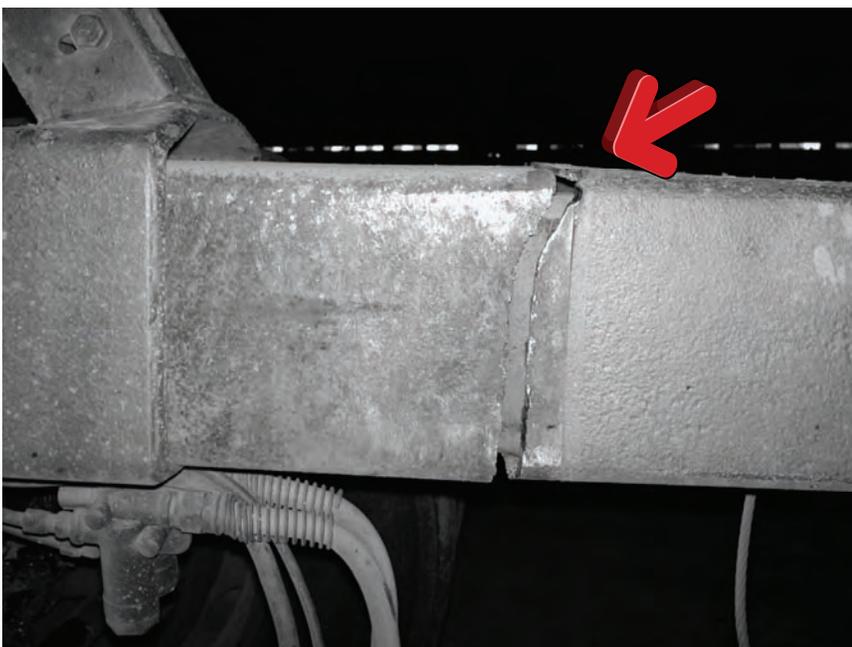
(Believe it or not, this article was in the hopper before the incident on the front page came about)

Recently we had a couple of close calls involving broken trailer reaches. We were fortunate that nobody was seriously hurt on either occasion. In the past, that has not always been the case. This article was intended to remind everyone the importance of periodically inspecting your trailer reaches. The picture of the accident on the front page along with the picture of the almost accident below, shows us why.

On most trailers it is a simple matter of loosening the reach clamps and sliding the reach out of the trailer tunnel. It is important to slide it out past the forward reach clamp as this is an area where cracks are common. The point where the reach exits the tunnel is also a common area for cracks and is where most reaches seem to break.

Once you have the reach slid out, clean it off with a wire wheel or any number of flapper discs that are available these days. After cleaning, a thin coat of spray paint will often show cracks if they are present. If you would do this three or four times a year the odds are good that you could catch cracks before they lead to a break, and possibly a serious accident. Also, the more often you slide them out for cleaning and inspection, the easier it is to move them in the woods when there is only short logs in the deck!

While I was writing this article I found that the two stage reaches are not immune to breakage and they tend to break in the same spot as a one piece reach. I received a phone call one evening from a truck driver friend of mine telling me I had to come down to the shop, and bring my camera along. In this case the driver told me he had noticed a very small crack, only about an inch and a half long, where the main reach went into the trailer tunnel. He went ahead and loaded, figuring he would make it to the shop O.K., where he could report it to the mechanic. Before he made it in, the reach broke almost all the way around. The only thing that kept everything together was the fact that the inner reach extended about six inches past the break, just enough to keep the trailer in line. He was able to hobble it to the shop, but it was a very close call to say the least.



We pulled the reach out of the tunnel a little ways to get a better picture, as you can tell by the rust. Again, talking to several truckers that have been in the business for a lot of years, this is the area where problems “usually” start.

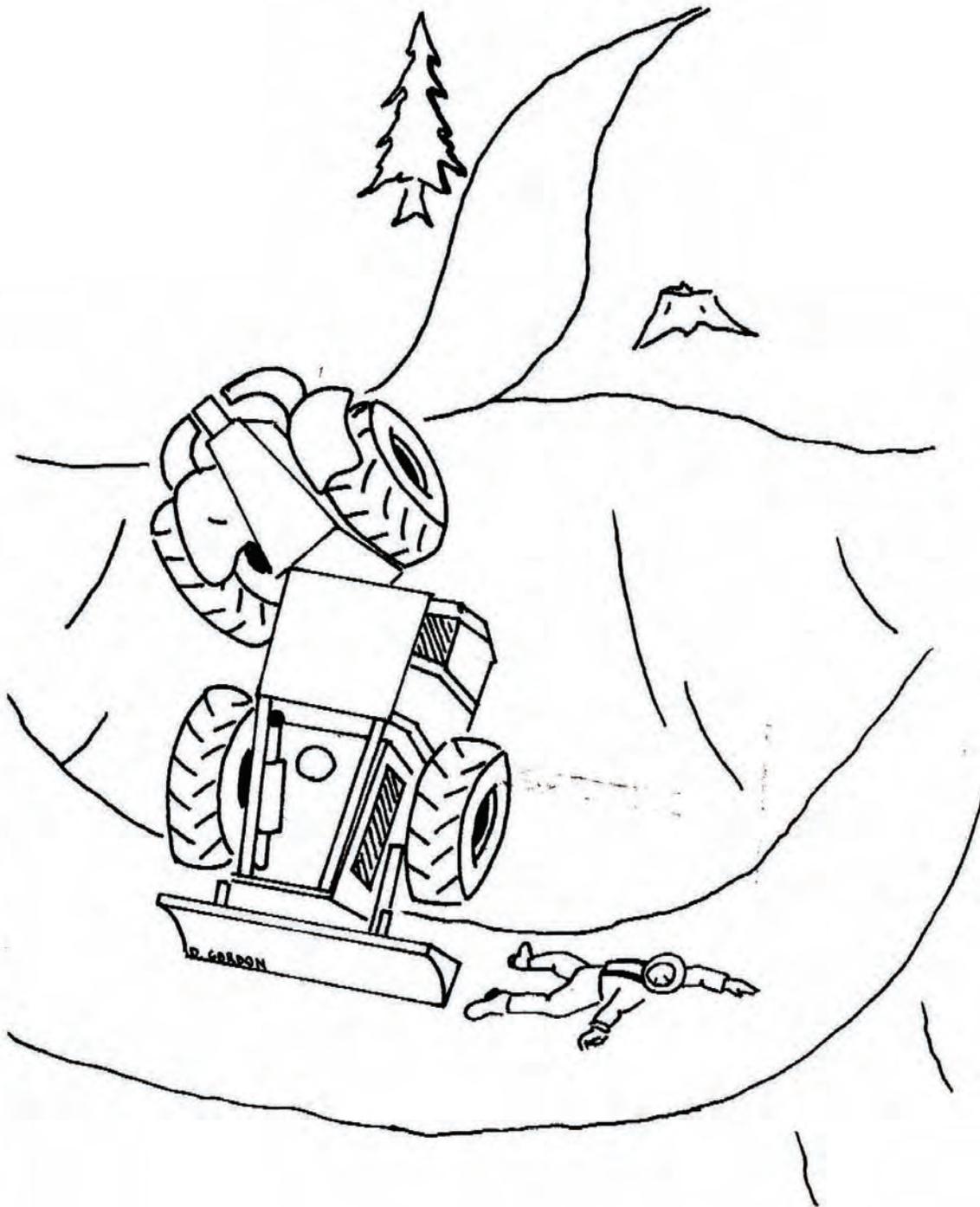
This article is on inspecting reaches, but I guess that goes for all your logging equipment. An old logger once said that the best piece of safety equipment you own is a steam cleaner. “By the time the machine is clean, you have spotted most potential wrecks !”

FATALITY 1

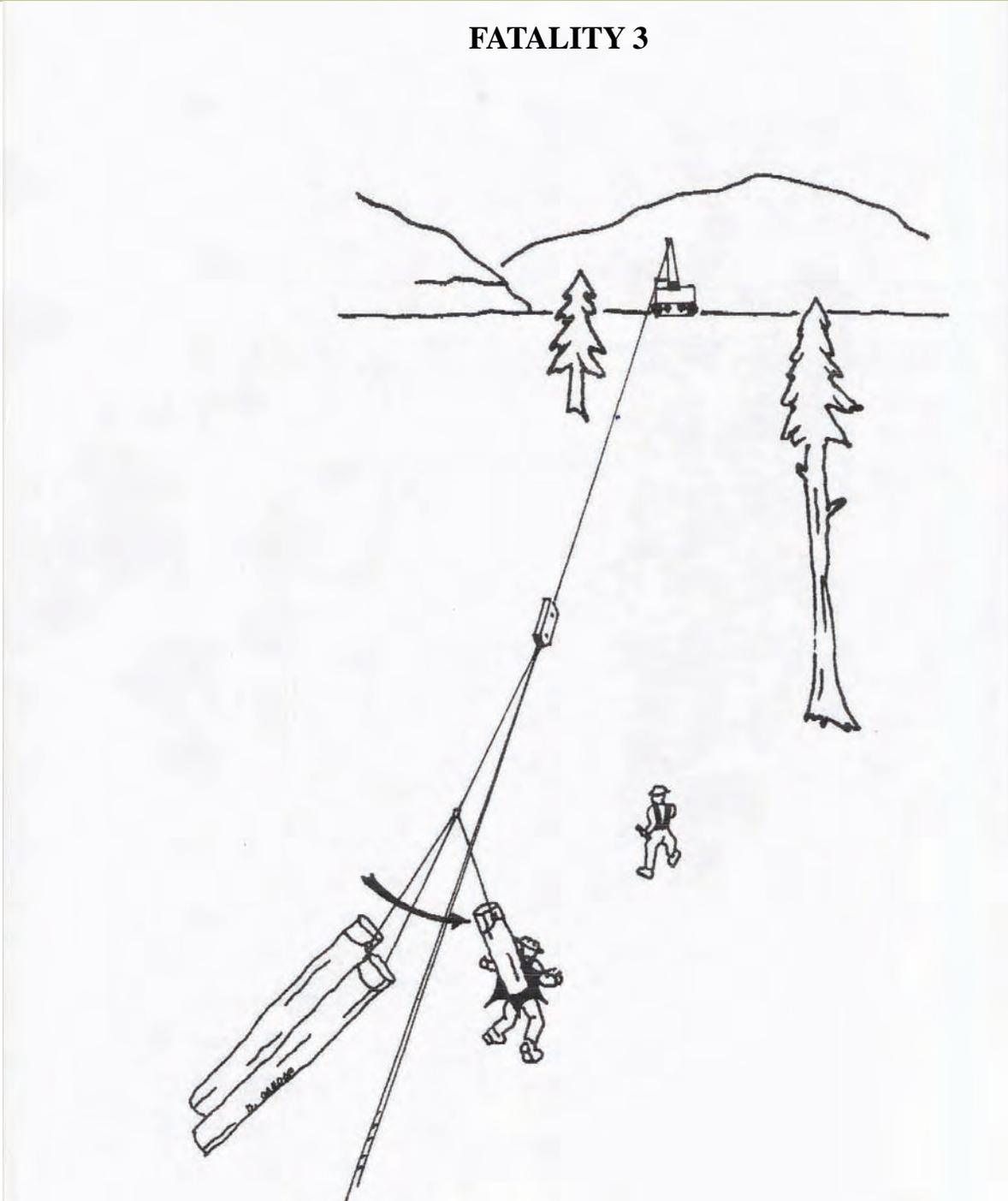


A HOOKER WAS FATALY INJURED WHEN HE WAS STRUCK IN THE BACK BY TONGS BEING TOSSED BY A SKIDDING JAMMER. EVEN THOUGH HE WAS NEW TO THE JOB AND STILL IN TRAINING, HE HAD BEEN DOING AN EXCELLENT JOB AND KEEPING OUT OF THE WAY AT A SAFE DISTANCE. WHY HE WANDERED OUT TO WHERE THE TONGS WERE BEING TOSSED, WE WILL NEVER KNOW

FATALITY 2



A YOUNG LOGGER DOING THE FALLING ON A JOB TOOK AN OPPORTUNITY TO OPERATE THE RUBBER TIRE SKIDDER. THE SKIDDER FAILED TO MAKE THE CORNER FROM THE SKID TRAIL TO THE ROAD, INSTEAD GOING OFF THE CUT BANK. THE SKIDDER LANDED ON ITS BLADE IN THE ROAD, EJECTING THE LOGGER.

FATALITY 3

A YOUNG LOGGER JUST STARTING OUT WAS FATALY INJURED WHEN HE WAS STRUCK BY A LOG WHILE WORKING ON A LINE STRIP. AFTER HOOKING A DRAG, TWO LONG LOGS AND A SHORTY, THE SIGNAL WAS GIVEN TO TAKE IT AWAY. WHEN THE DRAG REACHED THE CARRIAGE THE SHORT LOG SWUNG ACROSS HITTING THE YOUNG FELLOW IN THE HEAD.

**#1**

A grapple skidder lost its brakes while coming off the hill into the landing. The operator did what he could to stop the machine, but when all attempts failed, he jumped clear. At first it seemed the skidder was going to coast harmlessly across the road, but then it hit some debris and turned towards a processor that was working in the landing below!

Gaining speed now that the possessed skidder had a target, it bounced and struck the processor in front of the cab. The result was several thousand dollars damage to the processor and two very shook-up operators.

This company works very hard on their maintenance, but keeping brakes on a skidder is a never ending battle.

#3

A feller-buncher operator was packing a tree length out into a clearing when he backed into a depression, tipping the machine over. He said when he felt the machine going over he dropped the boom, but at the angle his machine was, it might have been the wrong thing to do.

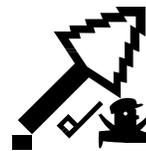
He made it through the tip over with no injuries except for a bruised ego. After they uprighted the machine, however, he climbed up to top off some of the oils that had leaked out and slipped on the oily surface. Now he has some damaged ribs to go with that ego!

(This is the third instance of loggers slipping off machinery and being injured recently. Something to think about!)

NEAR MISSES**#2**

A hooker was speeding down the hill with the rigging under his arm when he stepped on a stick which flipped up and struck him. I know it happens all the time but this stick was just the right length to lodge in his eye. The eye was not punctured but did require a trip to the eye doctor. This logger finally did heal but for several days he had to keep one eye closed to see which log was next to be hooked!

The hooker, which was also the boss, was just trying to show the crew he really could still work. He reported he (almost) always wears eye protection, and this accident reminded him why.

**#4**

An experienced logger that was operating a feller-buncher wanted to pass along a "near miss" he had recently. Traveling from one area to another he spotted a skidder with a drag coming down the trail he was going up. He pulled out in a wide place to wait for the skidder to go by and got out to do some quick maintenance. When the skidder went by, one of the smaller tree lengths caught on something and ended around, just barely missing him.

The logger, who was mad at himself because he said he knew better, said a couple of inches the other way and he wouldn't be standing there talking to me. "Just mention to the other loggers that it happens real fast, anywhere and anytime!"

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