



## ATV FORWARDING ARCH

**Jerry Forbes is a part-time logger; he has a specialty and advertises himself as an ATV timber harvester. His specialty is low-impact logging, and after meeting him, one has to conclude that Jerry takes pride in his woodland accomplishments. But Jerry doesn't have a skidder, not even a wheel tractor, only a rugged all-terrain vehicle.**



**J**erry's primary livelihood is his work as a bicycle mechanic in Burlington, Vermont, but on evenings and weekends he can often be found in the woods with his Artic Cat 400 ATV. When Jerry receives inquiries from a landowner about timber removal, his usual response is to suggest that they should make a choice as to how they would prefer the land to be logged. The job

can be accomplished more rapidly with a skidder, of course, possibly leaving an undesirable appearance. Or the property can be harvested using a low-impact method, probably costing a little more, but leaving little evidence that the land has been logged. Apparently Jerry has enough concerned landowners to provide him with the woods work he enjoys doing.

So, how can Jerry Forbes do log-

ging in such an unconventional manner, without a skidder or a tractor, and only an ATV machine? The answer is that Jerry does his low-impact logging with a Logrite ATV logging arch.

### Logging Arches

Logging arches are a kind of woods equipment adapted many decades ago when crawler tractors first came into the woods. The arches

## SPECS

were large and could haul a sizable bundle of wood. When skidders came on the scene, however, arches became nearly obsolete for production loggers. For the small-scale logger who desires minimal damage to the land, though, small logging arches have made somewhat of a comeback, and they work well with small tractor power.

The LogRite arch was developed in Oregon a few years ago by Mark Havel under the name of Future Forestry, but is now manufactured and distributed by Kevin Bantle in Vernon, Connecticut, under the name of LogRite Tools. Included in the array of arches made by LogRite is the large tractor arch, capable of handling 6,000 pounds and carrying logs as large as 36 inches in diameter. For activities such as Jerry Forbes's low-impact logging, however, LogRite's ATV arch and the companion fetching arch have found a place in the woods.

LogRite	ATV Arch	Jr. Log Arch
<b>Log capacity</b> (diameter)	26 in.	16 in.
<b>Length capacity</b> (fully suspended)	10 ft.	16 ft.
<b>Weight capacity</b>	2,000 lbs.	1,000 lbs.
<b>Tire size</b> (outside diameter)	24 in.	16 in.
<b>Maximum width</b>	54 in.	30 in.
<b>Ball coupler size</b>	2 in. diameter	
<b>Arch weight</b>	265 lbs.	60 lbs.
<b>Extension handle</b>		6 lbs.
<b>Hand winch</b>	3,200 lbs. 2-speed 3/8-in. choker line	
<b>Price</b> (without options)	\$1,680	\$540
<b>Optional:</b>		Extension handle

**Manufacturer:** To find nearest dealer contact:

**LogRite Tools, LLC** 77 Industrial Park Rd., Vernon, CT 06066

Phone: 800/631-4791 E-mail: info@logrite.com

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### The Smaller ATV Arches

Jerry has been using the smaller ATV arches for four years now. He started out with the manufacturer's snow machine arch, a product no longer made. Now he operates with the ATV arch, a unique piece of hardware that can be adapted for a variety of uses. I joined Jerry one day in a woodlot near Middlebury, Vermont, for a demonstration of his low-impact logging with an ATV arch.

The two LogRite arches designed for use with an ATV are similar in many respects. The tire size is the same and the frame is of similar length. Either arch is capable of moving a log up to 24 inches in size and weighing 2,000 pounds. The ATV arch is capable of carrying logs up to 10 feet in length entirely off the ground by means of a cable wrap and a hand winch mounted on the tongue, leaving no footprints on the ground. Longer logs need to be suspended on one end for dragging. Although designed specifically for use with 4-wheel-drive ATVs, the arch can be used with any vehicle equipped with a trailer ball hitch.

On one occasion Jerry used yet another, smaller arch which LogRite calls the Junior Arch. With the fetching arch attached to the front of the log, the Junior Arch was placed over the rear end of the log. Thus the log was moved out of the woods resting upon four wheels



With the tow tongue removed, the fetching arch may be wheeled directly to where a log is to be removed.



It is possible to skid a log up-slope with a portable winch and the arch.

and leaving no drag marks on the ground. The 60-pound Junior Arch is also useful for felling tree hang-ups, lifting firewood logs for cut-up, and moving logs by hand in the yard.

The fetching arch, on the other hand, has some features which make it possible to retrieve logs on steep slopes or from locations where wheeled vehicles shouldn't travel. This is the arch that Jerry Forbes uses. The unique feature of this arch is the capability of removing the tow tongue. With the tongue in place (and it attaches easily to the arch frame), the fetching arch functions like the ATV arch. Without the tongue it has a different application, as Jerry was about to show me.

With the tongue in place, Jerry first set out to pull a large birch log out of the woods. He placed the arch over the log in a fashion that I had never seen before. Instead of struggling with the ATV to back the arch over rough ground to place it over the log, he drove alongside the log and then grabbed the arch by hand and lifted it over the log into position. The arch is light

enough to do this. Wrapping the 3/8-inch cable around the log, he raised the log end off of the ground by means of the hand winch mounted on the tongue. The ground was fairly level, and he had no problem skidding the log out to the road.

Most operators will place the choker cable about 4 or 5 feet back from the front end of the log, enough to put a large amount of the log weight onto the arch wheels. The remaining log weight on the ground will prevent the log from swinging about while in transport as well as from acting as a brake on downhill slopes. And, of course, with less weight dragging, there is less disturbance to the ground.

Later, with the tow tongue and winch removed, Jerry used a different procedure with the arch. He was retrieving a log that rested at the base of a rocky slope, probably too steep for an ATV. The arch with tongue removed was wheeled down the slope by hand and backed over the log end—not difficult since the arch only weighs about 200 pounds.

Jerry then stood the arch upright over the log and attached the log tongs a little ahead of the midpoint of the log. When the line from the ATV pulled taut against the tow-ring on the arch, the arch pulled down to a horizontal position, jacking up the log end. From up above, the ATV slowly walked the log up the slope.

Jerry also employed another method for pulling a different log out of a hole; he used a portable winch. A small gasoline-powered winch was secured to a tree at the top of the slope and the cable was run down to the fetching arch which was attached to a log. A few obstacles prevented a straight uphill pull to the portable winch, necessitating the use of a snatch block to seek a separate path without resistance. It was a time-consuming procedure, and Jerry admitted that this particular use of the portable winch had limited application. But for special situations like this, it does work.

As Jerry was preparing to leave, loading the ATV and arch onto the trailer behind his pickup, he praised the unique possibilities of ATV logging. He is so firmly convinced of the value of the LogRite arch for this type of tree removal that he is also going to be a LogRite dealer for the area.

These two styles of arches, the ATV arch and the fetching arch, have some very practical applications. The use of ATV arches has some limitations, of course, in productivity and in size of logs that can be handled. However, I have seen a number of landowners use the small arches for the removal of firewood and saw logs, resulting in a gentle treatment of the land. ■

*Bill Gove is retired from a forestry career with private industry and with state government as a wood utilization specialist and lives in Williamstown, Vermont. He is a regular contributor and is the author of several books on the history of railroading and logging.*

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