

## Hoffman Harvesting makes the move to Midland



As the guys were moving, they were stopped and waiting for a harvester who had to off-load his combine to make it under the pictured bridge. For us, it was a tight squeeze once we let the air out of 3 of 4 of our combine tires to get under this bridge.



James is in combine 3 and Johan is in the grain cart.

### Tuesday, July 19

Last night we finished up with harvest in the Limon/Genoa area. Since it was a bit sooner than anticipated, I am sad our run is already over in Colorado.

We also thought there would be a break between our jobs in South Dakota and Limon, but this is not the case. Work in Midland had us rushing to get loaded and on the road. It feels like a normal harvest having to rush somewhere.

Most of the crew and the equipment moved today. I stayed in Limon and plan to hit the road tomorrow with my parents. They headed to Colorado to help us move back to South Dakota. Having them join us on the harvest trail is great! They were also happy to visit will old friends and, of course, see Kaidence. They said she's changed since May 13, when they last saw her.

### Wednesday, July 20

Today, along with my parents, Kaidence and I made the move to Midland, S.D. The "guys" and the equipment started moving after lunch the previous day. The trip took them two days since they can't move wide load equipment in the dark. It is also a slow move because of the elevation, narrow winding roads, wide loads and high heat. They arrived in Midland at 2 p.m. We arrived in Midland just in time to get supper ready.

### Saturday, July 23

Hoffman Harvesting is busy working in Midland. Typically

known as cattle country, farmers in western South Dakota are proving us wrong. As far as the eye can see around the Mundt Brothers' farm is wheat or corn. There is a lot of potential in this area and they are reaping from it.

Winter wheat is yielding in the 40s while test weights are around 60. The fields are larger and hillier than in central South Dakota where we live. In that area, farmers are reporting diseases in their winter wheat due to all the rain they received this spring and summer. Fortunately, farmers have managed to escape diseases in this area.

Due to rainfall in the evening hours last night, we were unable to start harvesting until the mid-afternoon but still had a productive day. We did have some problems with an auger that needed to be fixed. This had trucks running behind, but things were back to running smoothly before we called it quits for the night.

### Sunday, July 24

Happy Birthday Moses! Today was Moses' (Andreas) 22nd birthday. Along with his birthday came several breakdowns. In the early afternoon, Callum's hydraulics on his unloading auger quit working. We had to take a quick parts run to John Deere in Phillip. It took about 20 minutes to fix his combine once we had the part.

Unfortunately, that wasn't our only breakdown today. A couple hours later, Leon had to run to Onida for a bearing housing to fix



James, Leon and Roly try to fix the grain cart, but it is a lost cause.

the grain cart. A quick fix this was not. The grain cart still wasn't fixed when we left the field today. Tomorrow we will have to unload the grain cart and take it in to get fixed.

I also got a flat tire on the way home. It seemed like all odds were stacked against us today. What seemed like an easy day to finish up in Midland was stonewalled by a series of breakdowns. Tomorrow they will easily be able to finish up what is left to cut here, then we will travel to Gettysburg to start harvesting winter wheat. Hopefully our day will be much better and we'll be able to celebrate a belated "happy" day for Moses.

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## Documentary filmmaker shoots footage of Misener crew



Conrad with his camera.

### Monday, July 18

We made it to the first stop on our way to Gregory, S.D. Mom, Dan and I left Elk City, Okla., on Saturday and headed to Grinnell, Kan., where we dropped off the John Deere all-crop head that we had been working on at home. While we dropped that off David and the family—along with the guys—headed to Andale, Kan., to start loading up for the trip north.

Tomorrow we'll start the journey north to Gregory. My sister Katie and her family will be joining the convoy. We're always excited to have them come and visit. This will complete our move since David, Verena, and Thad left from Andale on Sunday.

We're hoping to be cutting by the end of the week, but as we all know, we go with the flow. Weather and crop conditions are a factor in our line of work, and I'm kind of glad we're moving up to Gregory. I'm not looking forward to heading back to humidity though, but will enjoy the almost chilly nights. I'm an Oklahoma girl and used to 110 degrees with about 20 percent humidity. I prefer the heat, but when the humidity is high there's little chance of cooling down.

I'm also happy to be progressing north because it's a new part of the country. I not only love the harvest, but the people we meet along the way. I love the traveling.

### Tuesday, July 26

This past week the Misener crew has had the privilege to be part of something great. Conrad Weaver, owner-operator, Conjo Studios LLC, has come from Maryland. Conrad is creating a documentary of wheat harvest through his filmmaking company called "Wheat Harvest Movie."

We met Conrad back in March 2011 at the annual U.S. Custom Harvesters Inc. convention. He shot a safety video for USCHI to help in practicing safety precautions. He mentioned to us that he would like to come out this summer to shoot footage for his new inspiration and we agreed. Who wouldn't want to promote the American farmer? This is what we do and we need to tell the world our story and show them how we feed the world.

We were his first stop on the way to the Midwest and I must say we can all sort of relate to Conrad and his crew because his crew is his family.

Conrad and his family are really down-to-earth people and I believe they will definitely be great promoters of agriculture globally. We have enjoyed having them come out and shoot footage of us and our way of life. Unfortunately, the wheat around Gregory, S.D., wasn't quite ready so it was really kind of a downer that we weren't able to get in the field, but Conrad is happy with the footage he got. I am

really looking forward to seeing his movie.

Conrad and his family stayed for a couple of days before heading toward Mount Rushmore for some sightseeing before they meet up with some other harvesters. Thanks Conrad and the crew for supporting harvesters and farmers and telling our story.

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Shown here (from left to right) are Conrad Weaver's nephew Brandon, his son Spencer, Conrad, wife Jodi, and daughter Laken with their dog Princess.



Shown (from left to right): me, Conrad, Thad, and Dan.

## Scott's crew prepares machinery for wet conditions



(left) An elevated parking lot makes jacking the combines up a bit tricky and can present an unsafe working environment quickly. The block of wood behind the tire just didn't seem to be doing the trick, so we brought in a bigger, green block for reinforcement just to be certain the combine wasn't going anywhere.

**Sunday, July 17**

Storms have also been rolling through parts of South Dakota and there's a chance the ground conditions may be a bit muddy when it's time to begin harvesting the wheat up there. This means we have decided to set up our combines for mud now and that way we can quickly fasten the duals on if the softer ground conditions are an issue.

We have to make a few modifications to the configuration of the machine from the factory. We have to take off the front tires, rotate sides to keep the tread running the right direction, turn them around to dish the wheel in, install an axle extension, and bolt the dual spacer on the primary wheel. It takes us about two hours to make these changes, but it will only take minutes to install the extra tire later if needed.

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The crew loads the spacers and axle extensions for the combines onto the service truck to transport them to the combines.



The men pry the boll gear loose from the machine.



The guys take a quick count of the hardware required to put on the spacers for the duals to ensure all is accounted for.



The guys tighten the bolts on the extension before putting the final torque on them.



The boll gear is placed back on the extension and fastened.

## Roland team busy in Chadron area

**Tuesday, July 19**

When we arrived at the field on Thursday morning we immediately decided it was too muddy to even try since we almost got the pickup stuck in the driveway. In hopes of finding drier ground we moved to a different field about 20 miles away and once we made it there we were finally able to start cutting. The moisture was running on the high end at about 12.5 to 13 percent moisture, which was just low enough for the elevator. The grain might have been dry but the fields certainly were not. We spent much of the day fighting mud and got every vehicle out in the field stuck at some point.

The last few days have still been quite productive for us. Brandon's field was too wet to cut so he joined up with the rest of the crew and we were able to knock out a fair amount of acres with the two machines in the same field. The entire crew is still fighting mud and the combines are burning through an unbelievable amount of fuel due to the high engine load.

Along with the mucky conditions, much of the wheat in the area has been hailed throughout the summer. Nevertheless, most of the fields are yielding around 20 to 40 bushels per acre. Many of the farmers in the area believe that these fields would have made between 70 to 90 bushels per acre if they had not been hit by hail. The damaged wheat straw is causing problems for us because we have to cut very low to pick up all the heads. Normally, this is not a big deal but since the fields are muddy the combines can sink down unexpectedly, and the headers can get torn up in the mud pretty quickly. The cutter bar on the header also picks up mud, causing the sickles to plug up, so we've

had to stop periodically to clean the mud off the headers.

The last few days we have been getting phone calls from farmers back home in Hemingford saying the wheat is almost ready. Our plan is to finish up in Imperial today so we can get loaded up and head towards home.

**Friday, July 22**

To our relief, we were able work our tails off and finish in Imperial earlier this week. We've been short-handed lately, running with a crew of only four people. With two combines, one grain cart, two semis, a service truck and a pickup, we are easily outnumbered by our equipment. On normal days our "small and mighty" crew is very efficient but on moving days life tends to be on the stressful side. Lately, Dad has been using the following analogy: Harvest is like a game of chess—we can't just think about the next initial move, we have to think far in advance to at least the next 10 moves. We're starting to become quite proficient at this skill and we're learning how to save trips and think further ahead.

Even with our small crew, we finished cutting our last field in Imperial, shuffled trailers around and loaded up all the equipment. Normally we travel from Imperial and pull straight into our farm yard and begin cutting our own wheat. However, this year we had a bit of a different game plan since we are working in the Chadron area, which we have not done for many years. Due to our late start from Imperial we pulled into our yard just at dusk and parked all of the equipment for the night. We stayed at home that evening and the next morning we continued the last 30 miles up to Chadron and began harvesting right away.



Due to the recent hail, much of the wheat is broken over so we have to cut very low to get all the heads.



Dad hooks up the hydraulic hoses on his header.

**Saturday, July 23**

Dad helped Brandon, James, and me get started in Chadron and then he went back home to begin cutting our own wheat with our old TR98 combine. Along with the help of my uncle and aunt, my dad and mom having been whittling away on our family's wheat near Hemingford for the past few days. Brandon, James and I have remained very busy in the Chadron area and hope to finish up here today or tomorrow so we can get moved back home.

Between our own wheat and our customers in Chadron and Hemingford, we have many acres of ripe wheat that need to be harvested. With so much work ahead, we are very grateful that the rest of our family can take the time to help catch us up when we really need it.

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