BACKYARD MERRY-GO-ROUND

By Robert* E, *Wilson

PRESENTING your youngsters with their very own merry-go-round will make you a very popular father, and your children will be the envy of every child in the neighborhood.

Construction starts with digging a hole 20 in. square and 18 in. deep. In areas of severe cold, make the hole 30 in. deep. A form of 2 x 6s around the top of the excavation produces a concrete "pillar" that projects above ground level. Next obtain the front-wheel assembly from an auto-wrecking yard, including the spindle, bearings, backing plate and wheel. Be sure the bearings are in good condition. Drill four holes in the backing plate to accommodate four 1/2-in. bolts, 12 in, long. Suspend the spindle and backing plate, with the long bulls in place and nuts turned just hand-tight, over the excavation and fill it with concrete. After the concrete has seasoned several days, remove the nuts, install lock washers and tighten the nuts thoroughly so the backing plate is solid. Fit the inner bearing on the spindle, slip the brake drum in place and tighten the large retaining nut. The wheel now is bolted to the drum.

The next step is to build the 2 x 4 framework that supports the merry-go-round platform. Two pairs of 2 x 4s, 8 ft. long, are half-lapped as shown in the detail, and all joints strengthened with steel angles. Two 4 x 8-ft. sheets of 5/8-ln, exterior-grade plywood are nailed to the frame and bolted to the wheel. The intersection of diagonal lines from the comers of the platform locate the center from which is scribed an 8-ft-dia. circle. Cut an opening at the center of the platform over the wheel nut.

Power for the ride is supplied by a 1/4-hp- electric motor. A 2-in. pulley on the motor is V-belted to a 4-in. pulley on the gearbox of an old washing-machine base. A 5-in. pulley is fitted on the vertical shaft of this gearbox. that originally rotated the wringer rollers. From this pulley a 56-in. V-belt is fitted around the car wheel. The platform on which the gearbox is bolted is hinged so the weight of the box keeps ten sion on the belt Speed of the ride is about 14 to 16 r.p.m-

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MERRY-GO-ROUNDS