



"BUILT-RITE"

Machine Operator
John Smith

Log Handler
Zach Smith

Time
28 min. 20 sec.

Ricks Split
1.5

Ricks/Hour
3.2

Built-Rite 11HPWS

ONE OF THE FASCINATING things about watching the firewood splitters is the connections between the person, the machine, and the wood. This all came together for John Smith, the Built-Rite 11HPWS splitter, and the half cord of wood that he would be splitting for the Firewood Competition. With his son, Zach, standing by to off load and with the first log on the splitter, everything was ready for the starting signal.

The little 11-hp Honda could not even be heard above the roar of the firewood processors, but it took on the logs at a steady pace. John made the most of the 6-second cycle time by using the 18 tons of force to crush the wood through the height-adjustable 6-way wedge. While one pass through would have produced firewood small enough for most wood

stoves, Zach could not quite pass many of the wedge-shaped pieces through the target hole, and had to return them to be re-split. "Sometimes all six pieces that came off the splitter (from one log) had to go back through," he recalled.

The splitter has several time-and labor-saving features that worked in its

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favor. By pushing and holding two hydraulic levers until the split has started, the operator initiates the "autocycle" process by which the wedge automatically continues into the wood to split it, and then retracts. "This," John explained, "allows the user to load the next piece of wood or do other tasks

A PARTICIPANT IN



while the splitter works.” He continued, “It is also a safety factor, since the operator’s hands are clear of the machine while it does the splitting.”

John saved even more time by hefting most of the firewood chunks up onto the splitter, using the hydraulic log lifter

only for a few of the heavier ones. All of this kept Zach “working like a dog,” as John put it. Splitting the half cord in 28 minutes, 20 seconds, the father and son managed to split their half cord of firewood at a rate just a sliver better than 1 cord per hour. ■

