



Machine Operator
Bobby Hanson

Log Handler
Dave Kravacek

Time
11 min. 32 sec.

Cords Processed
1.5

Cords/Hour
7.8

Cord King 48

THE CORD KING 48 returned to the Firewood Competition this year to attempt an improvement on its performance at the first competition two years ago. Company owner and machine designer Bobby Hanson must have endured some strange looks as he brought the 6-ton machine 600 miles from the company headquarters in Perth, Ontario, Canada. He describes the Cord King 48 as a mid-range firewood processor. “I wanted to have the fastest machine at the competition,” he explained, “but I didn’t need to bring my biggest machine for that.”

According to Bobby, Cord King firewood processors have been in production since 1979, and are still some of the few to use a carbide inserted tooth circle blade for a cutoff saw. The model number, by the way, indicates the size of the blade—in this case a 48-inch diameter. This gives the machine a 20-inch-diameter cutting capacity, which was more than

enough for the logs at the competition. The 80-hp John Deere diesel engine seems to be a popular choice for firewood processors, as this was one of three machines at the competition to use this power plant. From there, everything is done with hydraulics.

The joystick control is unique to this machine. The single control handles the infeed conveyer, and has a trigger switch to control the autocycle splitter. Bobby explained the reason for this arrangement, “We developed this option for a disabled customer who only had the use of one arm, and now we offer it as a standard option.” The chain infeed conveyer advanced every log smoothly to the adjustable log stop. When the operator lowers the blade into the wood, the stop retracts an inch, giving the wood clearance to fall into the splitting chamber.

A 60-hp hydraulic motor keeps the blade spinning at a nearly constant



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1,100 rpms, but the engine scarcely changed pitch whether the machine was cutting or splitting. According to Bobby, the enclosed cab is safe, quiet, and comfortable. “The operator sits 5 feet behind the blade with a bulletproof window for protection. No one has ever been injured on one of our machines.”

Bobby declined to explain exactly how the splitter attains the cycle time of only 2.75 seconds with 29 tons of force, other than to say “it’s all in the hydraulics.” It must have something to do with the four hydraulic pumps stacked in tandem on the output of the

engine. The selection of a 6-way splitter instead of an optional multi-wedge splitter (which can split wood into up to 12 pieces in a single pass) also helped keep the cycle time down.

CordMaster plant manager Dave Kravacek was on hand with a skid-steer loader to make sure that there was a constant supply of logs on the live deck. “We loaded up 10 logs to start; then I loaded the next five when there was room,” he explained.

Dave says that with bigger logs, there would have been even more difference between the Cord King and the chain saw firewood processors, but had no complaint when the time-keeper’s stopwatch indicated 11 minutes, 32 seconds, of running time. “We would have turned in the same time with larger logs,” he concluded. With a cutting



rate of 7.8 cords per hour, the machine performed even better than it had in the 2007 competition. “The Firewood Competition is one of our favorite shows,” concluded Dave. “People are eager to help out and willing to accommodate us anytime we needed anything.” ■

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