

# B E T W E E N the BRANCHES

## Tigercat ships 4000th machine

**On April 2, 2003 Tigercat reached another milestone. About a hundred employees braved the brisk morning cold, gathering at 140 Consolidated Drive to see off the 4000th Tigercat, a 240B loader. The machine was bound for G&S Equipment in Prattville, Alabama.**

Tony Iarocci, Tigercat's president attributes the company's unprecedented growth to "constant innovation and unparalleled engineering expertise, a wide and expanding product line and in-house manufacturing capability. At Tigercat we have the opportunity to build versus buy. This increases our manufacturing quality and flexibility. Anyone who has toured the Tigercat facilities can attest to our steel fabrication and machining capabilities."

With over twenty base models in its stable Tigercat is always willing to build variations and special machines to suit specific customer requirements. Again, it's the flexibility attained by in-house fabricating that allows this to occur. Counting some of these variations, Tigercat builds upwards of thirty different machines.

Superior product support has also helped end users to feel comfortable buying Tigercat machines. "The personal attention to customers' service issues has created a great deal of confidence and good will," explains Iarocci. "It has enabled us to build and sell more machines than might have been otherwise possible." ■

4000 machines shipped in just over ten years.

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Loader assembly team: Herbert Pineda & Jose Hernandez.



Build versus buy. Tigercat's fabrication and machining capabilities are key to the quality that customers and dealers have come to expect.



# Retired Loader Technician Larry Almond is Recognized

The fact that the 4000th Tigercat machine is a loader is significant. Tigercat has made an impressive impact in this competitive and price sensitive market segment.

In 1997, Tigercat introduced the 230 loader primarily to complete the product offering for the southeastern US dealer network. Just six years later, Tigercat now has a full line of log loaders covering many applications.

Instrumental in the development of the loader line was recently retired Tigercat team member Larry Almond. Almond began at Tigercat in the summer of 1993. The young company was just getting started when he was laid off from a competing manufacturer. Having worked at Koehring-Waterous for over twenty years, Almond had extensive experience assembling this type of equipment and knew many of the people at Tigercat.

“At first, getting a job at Tigercat was better than not working,” Almond recalls. “But as I continued to work with this company I realized that these were a great group of guys.”

Due to his experience, Almond was involved with the development of the 853E in 1995, Tigercat’s first track feller buncher. Then Almond helped to build the prototype 845 track buncher, designed primarily for the southern US.

But it was Almond’s contribution to the loader line that has left a lasting impression on Tigercat. Starting with the 230 in 1997, Almond was key in the development of each loader model. He worked closely with the design group on each prototype, doing the initial assembly and providing input to the engineers, particularly from an installation and service perspective. Then he would help to initiate the assembly process for the

Tigercat build teams on subsequent production runs. Almond comments that he enjoyed doing this type of work. “It was never the same which made my job really interesting,” he says.

After the 230, Almond participated in the assembly of the 240 prototype and in 1999 he worked on the first track loader. In 2001 Almond was integral in the design of the Tigercat 250 loader which incorporated the track feller buncher load-sensing hydraulic system.

Almond’s contributions to Tigercat’s success are widely appreciated. Track machine product manager Grant Somerville comments, “Larry has an outstanding ability to understand hydraulic systems - always being the guy that could solve the difficult problems. In all my years working with Larry at Koehring, Timberjack and Tigercat, he was one of the best hands-on mechanical people I’ve ever met.”

“I just helped out where I could,” Almond says modestly when discussing his role at Tigercat. “The only piece of wisdom that I could possibly add is to always remember the old mistakes and don’t repeat them.”

While Almond is missed, president Tony Iarocci says his legacy lives on. “We appreciate Larry through the products that he helped develop that are still being produced and all the knowledge he has passed on to the younger technicians, including his grandson Jason Vervaeke who has followed Larry’s footsteps at Tigercat.”

Presently, Vervaeke is responsible for the final quality control process for the track vehicle product line. This involves a rigorous routine of performance testing, adjustment checks and quality inspection for every machine built by the assembly teams. The quality of work that Jason and many like him have achieved is a compliment to pioneers like Larry. ■

Ken MacDonald, Larry Almond and Tony Iarocci celebrating Almond’s retirement.



## NEWS FROM THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

# Papé Machinery takes over Tigercat distribution of leveling feller bunchers.

Papé Machinery, Inc. was recently appointed by Tigercat to distribute the line of leveling feller bunchers in the states of Washington and Oregon.

“We are proud to partner with Tigercat, one of the industry leaders in forestry equipment,” said Rodger Spears, president of Papé Machinery. “The addition of Tigercat to the full-line of products that we represent will allow us to more completely meet the ever-changing needs of our customers in the forestry industry.”

Papé debuted the Tigercat leveling feller buncher line at the Oregon Logging Conference in February where they showcased an LX830 and L870. The machines were extremely well received and both were sold before the show’s end.

Papé Machinery provides sales, rentals, parts and service for forestry and construction equipment in the western and central regions of Oregon and Washington.

Papé Machinery has eleven store locations stretching from northern Washington to southern Oregon. The six Washington locations include Tacoma, Kent, Kelso, Mount Vernon, Yakima and Wenatchee. The five Oregon locations are Portland, Eugene, Salem, Medford and Bend.

Papé Machinery is headquartered in Eugene, Oregon and is a member of the Papé Group of companies. The Papé Group has enjoyed a long and successful history in the heavy equipment industry.

For more information, visit:  
[www.papemachinery.com](http://www.papemachinery.com) ■

Monte and Nicolle Landwehr. Monte is operator of the LX830 that was purchased at the show by Gustafson Logging.



Mark Minahan, owner of Minahan Cutting Inc. (Dallas, OR) with wife Joni and son, Nick who is the L870 operator.

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# Top Honors for Potts Brothers Logging

By Anthony Goad

## Potts Brothers run a tight three-machine operation... and its 100% Tigercat.



An efficient crew: Mike Potts, Tony Sanders, Chris Potts and skidder operator O.D. Wright.

Unlike most industries, the logging business has maintained a deep sense of family and lineage. Most loggers in the southeastern United States were brought into this business by some form of kin, whether it was a father, brother or uncle. Meeting with the Potts Brothers of Lafayette, AL affirmed this, providing an even greater understanding of this connection of family and logging.

Born and bred in eastern Alabama, Mike and Chris Potts got an early start in logging from their grandfather W.P. Barber. During the initial years the Potts Brothers worked independently of each other under what Chris describes as the “two-thirds rule.” They both worked separate crews and operations, each keeping only two-thirds of the profits with each giving their grandfather one third. It was not until 1980 that the two operations were officially merged with the incorporation of Potts Brothers Logging.

Today, the Potts Brothers run a modest yet effective family

operation. Truck driver Tony Sanders is a “half-brother” and according to Mike, their skidder operator O.D. Wright “may as well be family because he has worked with us for over thirty years”.

Mike and Chris each operate a piece of equipment on the job to reduce overhead. Ricky McConnell of Forestry 21 (Tigercat dealer in Lafayette, AL) says, “nowadays it is rare for an owner to operate a piece of equipment, but that is why they are so successful. There is no excessive equipment or labor.”

According to Mike their attempt at increased efficiency is why they began to look at Tigercat equipment. And now each major piece of equipment on their job is a Tigercat.

In 1999, Potts Brothers purchased a Tigercat 726B feller buncher with a 5700 saw from Forestry 21. Mike points out that they immediately saw the benefit of the 726B over their previous model feller buncher. “It was always leaking and hot all of the time,” comments Mike. “The 726B stayed cool and we didn’t change the first hydraulic hose until after three years.” As an experienced buncher operator, Mike liked the “stability of the 5700 saw and the positioning of the tree in the pocket.”

As a result of the positive experience with the 726B, Potts Brothers bought a Tigercat 630B skidder in 2001. Initially, Chris and Mike were skeptical about the ability of the hydrostatic machine. After seeing 630B skidders with over 10,000 hours, their concerns were eased.

Chris recalls that it took skidder operator O.D. Wright a couple of days to get accus-

Ricky McConell of Forestry 21 with Mike Potts, Johnny Boyd (Tigercat district manager), Chris Potts and salesman David Crouch.



The B-team: 726B, 240B and 630B.



tomed to the variable speed hydrostatic transmission. “But that once he got used to it” Chris explains, “he got fourteen loads of hardwood to the deck by himself on the third day.” With the long wheel base and excellent weight distribution, Chris describes the 630B as a well-balanced machine. “That stability helps when working on hills,” Chris comments.

The brothers also see operator comfort and “exceptional visibility” as key features of the 630B and Mike points to the fuel savings that result from running the 630B. “When you consider what the 630B brings to the deck everyday there is a reduction in fuel costs because it does the work that three competitive skidders would do.”

Although the initial cost of the 630B is generally higher than the competition, Chris states, “when placed side by side, you could immediately tell the quality difference of the Tigercat over other products.”

The following year, they purchased a Tigercat 240B with a CSI delimeter to complete the operation. As the loader operator, Chris said the decision to acquire the Tigercat loader was an easy one. “It’s got incredible strength and pulling power, while remaining very smooth.” Chris claims that the main advantage of the 240B is its ability to “pull through the delimeter better than any other loader.”

Due to their long-term commitment to running and managing a successful, safe and profitable operation, the Potts Brothers were awarded with the Alabama Logger of the Year Award and have also been nominated for the FRA Logger of the Year award. According to Forestry 21 salesman, David Crouch, “I’ve known Mike and Chris for over ten years... Running an extremely

efficient operation is easy for them - it’s just fluid.”

Despite these great honors, Mike and Chris remain humble, attributing their success to their family, Forestry 21 and their stable relationship with the East Alabama Lumber Company who they have been working with for over 25 years.

The Potts Brothers also see Tigercat as instrumental in their success in the logging business. Mike points out that continual innovation by Tigercat makes logging in these times much easier. He specifically mentions the cross-flow cooling system and the line of felling attachments as examples of Tigercat’s commitment to innovation and productivity gains for the loggers. Mike maintains that the small cost premium for Tigercat machines is quickly shadowed when you realize “they will be working long after the competition has worn out.”

In a letter to Tigercat president Tony Iarocci, the Potts Brothers thanked Tigercat for “building excellent equipment that makes our jobs easier” continuing that Tigercat “makes the best equipment on the market and we gladly advertise that fact.”

Relying on one manufacturer for its entire bunching skidding and loading is an honor that Chris and Mike Potts have bestowed on Tigercat. Potts Brothers Logging is a family business that Tigercat is proud to be associated with. ■

A one-loader operation. Tigercat 240B.



# Tigercat Levelers Shine on Vancouver

By Paul Iarocci

## **Tigercat leveling feller bunchers helped the Vancouver Island logging industry through the transition from manual to mechanized felling.**

An hour southwest of Nanaimo on Canada's beautiful Vancouver Island, a Tigercat L870B leveling feller buncher is working a slope that undulates between a 30 and 40 percent grade.

The second growth Douglas fir and Hemlock averages 37 m (120 ft.) in height and 510-560 mm (20-22 in.) base diameter. The Lake Cowichan area is one of the most fertile regions of Vancouver Island, which makes it one of the best areas in Canada for tree growing. It's little wonder that these stems reach 1-1.2 m<sup>3</sup> (0.9 - 1.3 tons) in a mere 60 years.

The felling is contracted out to Len's Mechanical Ltd., a partnership between Gord Bilinski and Reg Weber.

The terrain is often stepped with limestone outcrops and for the most part too steep for effective grapple skidding. Trees are extracted down to roadside with grapple yarders.

This means that buncher operator Bilinski,

The Douglas Fir is tall, heavy and large diameter.



is laying the stems perpendicular to the slope. He works up the slope, expertly cutting the face from left to right, overlapping the bunches like rows of fallen dominoes. Later the huge grapple yarders will work from right to left, picking up the top layers first.

The yarder operators who work for Timber West are very happy with Bilinski's system. The positioning of the trees gives them a great deal of leeway as to where they can grab with the grapple. This is important because they may be eyeing up bunches to drop the grapple onto that are 180 - 200 m (600-700 ft.) away from them. If the trees were laying parallel to the slope, this task would be much less forgiving.

The 870B that Bilinski is operating (this model was recently re-designated the LX870 with 'X' denoting closed loop track drives) is his second Tigercat leveling feller buncher. The first was an 860 purchased in

May 1999. Despite long shifts of up to 14 hours, handling large timber in the toughest imaginable terrain, the 860 has logged 9000 hours of extremely reliable operation.

“There’s never been a weld on the boom,” comments Bilinski.

Weber estimates that the elder machine does about 40% of the toughest slopes and the new LX870 tackles the remaining 60%.

The feedback Tigercat engineers have received from customers like Bilinski who own these early leveling machines helped Tigercat to develop the current design. Tigercat is confident that this new leveling system will prove to be the most durable and long lasting available to steep-slope contractors.

This is important because felling contractors like Bilinski and Weber consider reliability to be the number one priority. They can’t afford to have a machine down and neither can Timber West.

“With \$1 million yarding systems on site they need to have a lot of wood on the ground,” says Weber. “They can’t sit and wait for it.”

Like Tigercat, much of Len’s Mechanical Ltd. success comes from pleasing the customer. They remove all the old growth stumps encountered so as to not hang up the yarders. It’s extra time “but you do what the customer wants,” says Weber.

In the last five years there has been a pronounced shift from hand falling to mechanized logging on Vancouver Island. By some estimates, there is currently a 60-40 split in favor of mechanization. This is partially due to the shift to smaller (a relative term) second growth timber that predominates in the southeastern part of the island. Another important factor is safety. Feller bunchers get workers off the ground and decrease the incidents of injury and death that have historically occurred on island hand fall operations.

Bilinski, who has extensive experience operating both the old 860 and new LX870 leveling machines, has some interesting observations regarding open and closed loop track drives. The 860 machine uses Tigercat’s standard load sensing hydraulic system. Tigercat developed the closed loop drive system for the LX870 mainly in response to demand from steep-slope loggers for this type of system.

Bilinski observes that the climbing ability differences are negligible. The open loop drive system on the older 860 model has fantastic performance on slopes and does an excellent job sharing oil flow between the various requirements for real simultaneous control of machine functions.

To suit differing applications and operator preferences, Tigercat will continue to offer both open and closed loop drive systems on the 830 series and 870 leveling feller bunchers. ■

The LX870 piloted by experienced operator Gord Bilinski handles the steep slopes and the big wood.



# Tigercat Builds Additional Mulcher Model

## M724D MULCHER IS A GREAT CHOICE FOR PART-TIME LAND CLEARING CONTRACTORS.

Tigercat now offers a 240 hp M724D mulcher to complement the larger 425 hp M760. For the past few months the prototype M724D has been working in north Florida on a 2,800 acre (1,133 ha) tract comprised mainly of 4-8 in. (10-20 cm) pine trees.

Initial field evaluations have been very positive especially when compared with machines competing in the same horsepower class.

The M724D is equipped with the FECON BH250H Bull Hog but the flexible hydraulic system can be tailored to accept various horizontal drum cutters requiring 200 hp (149 kW.) The hydraulic system is designed to direct all horsepower to the head if required.

The Tigercat M724D also has the capability to power a felling head and the machine can be readily switched from one application to the other. This versatility should be appealing to loggers looking to expand into the lucrative land clearing industry without

having to purchase additional dedicated machinery.

The M724D is a purpose-built mulcher which can also be used as a feller buncher. Unlike the approach of some competing manufacturers, it is not a feller buncher converted to a mulcher.

Other aspects of the machine are common to the 724D feller buncher. The M724D is equipped with Tigercat's cross-flow cooling system, luxury operator's station, heavy-duty boom system, front axle and Tigercat-tough construction throughout. ■

The third production M724D in the Strongco booth at the National Construction Show held on March 20-21 in Toronto, Canada.



## 2003 SHOW SCHEDULE

Tigercat or a Tigercat dealer will be exhibiting at these shows in 2003. For an up-to-the-minute listing, go to [www.tigercat.com](http://www.tigercat.com) and click on 'upcoming events'

SHOW	LOCATION	DATE
All American Loggin' Demo	Tuscaloosa, AL	May 30-31
SkogsElmia	Jönköping, Sweden	Jun 11-14
Logfor Logging & Forestry Show	Quebec City, PQ	Sept 4-6
Lake States Logging Congress	Escanabe, MI	Sept 4-6
Carolina Log'n Demo	Vass, NC	Sept. 19-20
Expocorma	Concepcion, Chile	Nov 12-15

# Nole Boys Logging: A Family Affair

By Ben Twiddy, District Manger

We catch up with Nole Boys Logging in St. Matthews, SC. St. Matthews is known by local loggers for its many acres of plantation pine and the dry, sandy soil. We have had a wet winter here in the south and that's why Nole Boys Logging is working 85 miles (135 km) from their home in Jamestown, SC.

They are thinning a 400 acre (160 ha) pine plantation for Canal Wood. The wood is going to Stone Container in Florence, SC which is about a 100 mile (160 km) haul. It's business as usual for Nole Boys Logging and they are happy to get in their Tigercat machines and go to work.

Nole Boys Logging averages about 1,200 tons (1,081 m<sup>3</sup>) per week with their efficient three-machine system. Today, Richard Simmons is first thinning with a Tigercat 726B. Lil' Al Nole is pulling big drags of wood with a Tigercat 620 and delivering it to Master. Master operates the Tigercat 230. He is delimiting, topping and loading a truck bound for the mill. This truck is driven by Stoney Nole. Sport Nole stands with me while we watch the work being done.

Master, Stoney, and Sport are the three brothers who own Nole Boys Logging. They have been on their own for about three years but they are second generation loggers who have been around logging their whole lives. It is evident that they have plenty of experience as we watch this well-organized operation.

Sport, who refers to himself as "the pet gopher" tells me that they have owned the 230 loader about three years and the 726B feller buncher for two years. They bought both machines used and they have performed beyond expectations. Sport says they chose to go with a used 726B and 230 to replace their existing equipment. "We didn't want too much debt too quick. Monthly payments were, and always are a major concern."

When the time came in October 2002 to upgrade their skidding fleet, they bought a new Tigercat 620. "The 620 has the most horsepower and biggest grapple in its class," says Sport. "This is basically a one skidder job. The skidder has to be reliable, compact and pull a large volume of wood."

The 620 is up to the task and has performed flawlessly since its purchase. Nole Boys bought all three Tigercats from Tidewater Equipment in Walterboro, SC. Sport says they have been very pleased with Tidewater and Tigercat. He attributes the purchase of the Tigercat fleet to salesman Ron Gilmore and the other people at the Tidewater, Walterboro branch. ■



The Nole Boys, Master, Stoney & Sport.

One 620 skidder pulls wood to the 230 loader.



First thinning with a 726B feller buncher.



With the largest grapple in its class, the 620 manages very large loads.



# Tigercat Recognizes Outstanding Achievement

While attending the Tidewater Annual Meeting Tigercat President Tony Iarocci presented several Tidewater Equipment Company team members with Tigercat's prestigious Outstanding Achievement Award. The awards were created to honor individual and branch successes during the year. Tidewater Brunswick Branch Manager, Jamie Young comments that "The sales achievements of Tidewater representatives can be attributed to the sense of pride we

*"The roots of true achievement lie in the will to become the best that you can become."*

— Harold Taylor

all have in the Tigercat product line," adding that, "Tigercat products are a compliment to the logging industry."

Tigercat District Managers Johnny Boyd and Heinz Pfeifer also finished the year 2002 with award winning sales performances in their territories. Both are proud to personally present the awards and to honor the hard work and professional successes of each recipient.

## Outstanding Achievement Award recipients for 2002

### Outstanding Performance in 2002

Jim Lattay, Tidewater Equipment Co.  
Jeremy Strickland, Tidewater Equipment Co.  
Ben Smith, Tidewater Equipment Co.  
Todd Matthews, Tidewater Equipment Co.  
Von Dennis, Tidewater Equipment Co.  
Jimmy Watkins, Tidewater Equipment Co.  
Wilbur Waters, Tidewater Equipment Co.  
Skip Stroud, Patrick Miller Tractor Co.  
Wayne Ammons, Patrick Miller Tractor Co.  
Mark Woods, JNS Equipment Inc.  
Jeff Dunham, Cotton-Hutcheson Inc.  
Doug Bates, B&G Equipment Inc.

### Highest Single Store Unit Sales in 2002

Doug Patrick, Patrick Miller Tractor Co.

### Highest Market Share in 2002

Kevin Hawes, Tidewater Equipment Co.,  
Walterboro, SC

### Highest Unit Sales in 2002

Charles Wright, Tidewater Equipment Co.,  
Thomasville, GA

## Tidewater Hosts Annual Meeting

Recently, Tigercat President Tony Iarocci, several Tigercat engineers and District Managers Don Snively, Ben Twiddy and Wayne Cale traveled to Georgia to participate in

Tidewater Equipment Company's annual meeting.

To the delight of the Tigercat attendees, the Tidewater group chose The Lodge at Cabin Bluff as the location

for this year's gathering. The rustic charm of The Lodge and the peaceful, inspiring landscape set the relaxed tone for this event. While on the grounds our Tigercat representatives were invited to join the Tidewater group in exercising their talents at boating and fishing, shooting and golf.

The Tigercat attendees report that throughout the trip there was time set aside to discuss a myriad of topics with the Tidewater group including Tigercat product innovation, sales goals and related parts, service and warranty issues. ■



L to R: Jimmy Watkins, Ben Smith, Todd Matthews, Kevin Hawes, Von Dennis, Jim Lattay, Wilbur Waters, Jeremy Strickland, Charles Wright, Gil Morgan of Tidewater Equipment Co. and Tony Iarocci of Tigercat.

# Vines Open House

Vines Equipment hosted a very well attended open house at their facility in Glenwood, Arkansas on March 29.

Attending Tigercat personnel included chairman, Ken MacDonald, skidder product manager, Shawn Pette, rebuild technician, Carlos Hernandez and Heinz Pfeifer, district manager for Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma.

Approximately 300 visitors enjoyed the loader contest, a log load weight-guessing contest, a horseshoe throwing competition, kids games and a country-western band. A catfish dinner with all the trimmings followed.

Vines Equipment is Tigercat's newest dealer in Arkansas, covering western Arkansas, eastern Oklahoma, northeast Texas and northwest Louisiana. Established for only one year, Vines has already sold

several drive-to-tree feller bunchers and loaders as well as a 620 skidder.

"Vines has assembled a good team," says district manager, Heinz Pfeifer. "Richard and Bill Bradley do the selling. Richard covers Arkansas and Louisiana. Bill covers Oklahoma and the Texas part of their territory. Marty Martin heads the service department. The parts department is run by Eddie Herring."

The Vines family has been in the timber and logging business in Western Arkansas for more than 30 years. They have been using Tigercat equipment for seven years with great success. ■

President, Richard Vines (right) with Doug Wright, Wright Logging.



870-356-5500 [vinesequipment@alltel.net](mailto:vinesequipment@alltel.net)

## Letter to Tigercat

Dear Tigercat team,

I am receiving your "Between the Branches" magazine and let me tell you that each time I find the new issue in my mailbox, I cannot wait to open the envelope.

I really appreciate your efforts in sending it to me. In the last issue there was the call to all readers to confirm that they want to continue getting the magazine and the accompanying information bulletins. I sure do! Thanks very much and have a lovely Easter.

Jens Roesner  
Eppstein  
GERMANY

## 620 Skidder: Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon?

What we perceive often forms our reality. Sometimes, this can work against us, preventing us from using facts to make what might amount to a much better decision.

Tigercat released the first run of 620 skidders in 1999 amid a flurry of dealer and end-user requests for a smaller skidder that was built tough like a Tigercat.

There were many challenges associated with inserting the hydrostatics and cooling requirement into the smaller package. The 620 design team managed to overcome these challenges.

The 174 hp machine that exists today has worked nicely as a complement to the larger and more complex 630B which is soon to be superseded by the new 630C model.

Over the years, reviews on the 620 have been mixed. Comments abound that the machine is too slow compared with its direct drive and torque converter competitors. But is it really?

When observed side-by-side with a Deere 648, the 620 appears to be quite a bit slower when running empty. However, at the end of the day, the Tigercat pulls more wood to the deck; recent field observations on flat ground in a southeastern US plantation indicated 1-2 truck loads more per day.

As for reliability, machine availability and useful life, there is no case for the competition. Much of the steel that goes into a 620 was inherited from the larger, higher capacity 630 series machines.

To our knowledge, a 620 has never failed a center section. Do Timberjack 460 center sections fail? How about 648 center joints?

Other complaints of competing skidders include a light front end, a noisy cab and constant overheating.

By contrast, the 620 has the longest wheel base in its class. This increases the stability of the machine and decreases the potential for front-end lift. The 620 also has the largest grapple area in its class. That means if

you are comparing the 620 with a competing machine and both skidders 'look' like they are filled to capacity, the 620 is actually carrying more wood.

Anyone who says that load size isn't as important as ground speed is probably wrong. Maximizing load size is essential to efficient skidding.

The 620 boasts the best cooling package in its class with an optional reversible fan. The suction fan configuration is inherently more efficient than the blower-type engine fans found on competing brands.

Then there are the benefits associated with the hydrostatics: better performance in tough terrain, less stress on the driveline components, less operator fatigue, hydrostatic braking for improved machine control and a constant optimal ratio between speed and torque. Can even the finest operator always find the best gear in ever changing terrain conditions and load sizes?

Competing skidders may 'look' like they are doing more work but perception and reality often diverge.

In the workplace, an employee may be compelled to 'look busy' as a tactic for job preservation. Is the employee truly busy? More important, is the employee producing? That is a whole other question.

Load size versus ground speed; do the test for yourself.

Maybe you should demo a 620 today and compare its performance to your other skidders. You may find your expectations surpassed.

My position is that the 620 is a great machine, both for plantation thinning and clear-fell skidding applications. Am I biased? Probably. But Tigercat is in the business of producing equipment that lowers your cost per ton.

During the test on the plantation, the logger was getting at least one extra load per day valued at about \$250. The additional production cost him about ten bucks a day in extra fuel. Sounds to me like the 620 is lowering his cost per ton. ■

— Paul Iarocci, Editor

### Letters to the Editor:

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