Tech Update - Skidders

John Deere

The new John Deere L-Series skidder has entered the forest with features that promise to increase uptime and productivity, while lowering daily operating costs for loggers.

Described as a ‘game-changing’ machine and John Deere’s most reliable and productive skidders ever, the company says that the L-Series skidder redefines expectations of what a skidder can accomplish for any logging operation.

The L-Series skidder is the first John Deere forestry machine to launch with Final Tier 4 engines.

The transition to a Final Tier 4 engine also means the introduction of an innovative new John Deere-designed Continuous Variable Transmission (CVT) and drive train. What this means for loggers is that there is no need to shift gears.

All L-Series skidders feature more robust heavy-duty axles, including a rugged new Outboard-Extreme axle, which is standard on the 848L and 948L, and optional on the 748L.

L-Series skidders boast significantly more horsepower, stability and grapple options for superb responsiveness and steady multifunction performance. New larger grapples—up to a massive 22.3 sq. ft. on the 948L—give loggers more flexibility to configure a skidder to best match their application.

A newly designed arch and boom configuration also provides a better view to the grapple for easier and more efficient operation.

www.JohnDeere.com

KMC

One of the best all-terrain, all-weather vehicles on the market is the KMC track skidder with its three unique features—balanced weight distribution, torsion bar spring suspension, and high speed steel track, says the company.

The KMC track skidder can skid logs on steep slopes, sensitive soils or wet areas where it is not feasible to operate expensive shovel logging, cable yarding systems or conventional rubber-tired ground skidding equipment.
The KMC has the ability to skid logs on up to a 40 per cent adverse gradient, favorable slopes to 50 per cent, and up to 55 per cent with site-specific risk assessment of the operation. The KMC can also skid in areas of environmental concern with less soil compaction or site disturbance than any other ground skidding equipment, says equipment dealer, KMC-KOOTRAC/Kootenay Tractor.

The KMC tracked skidder is not designed to replace other ground-based, skidding equipment. It is designed to be more effective when integrated with existing equipment. It will increase production while reducing the operating cost of existing equipment by working the areas where those machines are not designed for, thus reducing the wear and tear on the equipment.

www.kmc-kootrac.com

Tigercat

Tigercat has launched the 610E skidder—its latest Tier 4 engine-equipped offering. The 610E is designed for the North American small skidder size class.

Tigercat’s Tier 4 solution can be packaged into a physically smaller engine enclosure. This provided the 610E design team with some flexibility to develop a machine layout that optimizes operator sightlines, while factoring in access to service points, machine balance, overall size and weight.

The 610E comes standard equipped with Tigercat’s exclusive EHS drive system. EHS is capable of providing exceptional tractive effort as well as high top speed, says the company. This is accomplished with advanced computer logic and the ability to take one of the drive motors offline when high tractive effort is not required. In this case, all pump flow is directed to one hydraulic motor, increasing both travel speed and motor efficiency.

The compact 610E skidder is agile and durable, making it ideal in tight spaces, soft soil conditions and selective logging applications. The ergonomic ‘Turnaround’ equipped cab provides the operator with comfort and clear sightlines.

www.tigercat.com

Caterpillar

The Cat D Series wheel skidder has great pulling power and increases productivity while reducing operating costs, says Caterpillar.

The operator can steer, back up and activate arch, boom and grapple functions simultaneously. It is more stable and agile and gives a smoother ride, says Caterpillar. Gears in the six-speed transmission are more evenly
distributed in the working zone to maximize efficiency on any terrain. The torque converter allows the machine to ease smoothly into a start when the skidder has a heavy load in the grapple, and then the proven lock-up clutch automatically engages and the transmission goes into direct drive for high efficiency hauling and up to 15 per cent faster travel speeds in the same gear. The cross-flow configuration and compartmentalization of the engine and cooling system with reversing fan maximize efficiency and reduce debris collection.

The cab tilts for easy servicing. Equipped with the 275 hp Cat C7.1 ACERT engine, the 555D is the largest, most powerful skidder in the Cat line.

www.cat.com

Awassos

Débusqueuses Awassos Inc. manufactures compact skidders for low impact. Because of the way they are manufactured, they can easily be equipped with many options, resulting in a finished product built in an optimal way for any kind of operation.

It is also possible to speak with the tech department in make special requests, which are reviewed with the customer prior to production, so customers receive what they need.

The skidder is built on a robust frame, driven by a hydrostatic transmission, with the best hydraulic components available. Powered with an 80 hp diesel engine, weighing from 10,000 lbs to 11,000 lbs and seven feet wide, the Awassos skidder is said to be easy to move, gentle on the soil, but ready for work in demanding forest conditions, says the company.

www.awassos.com

Tanguay

The Tanguay TG88 track skidder is available in a clambunk or “L Boom” grapple configuration with a huge payload capacity of 35 tons.

Powered by a 400 hp engine, the eight-wheel drive TG88E comes with a choice of track width up to 60” wide for low ground pressure. The 100 per cent hydrostatic drive provides incredible manoeuvrability and perfect traction for minimum ground disturbance.

The TG88 clambunk and its powerful loader with a swing planetary is the machine of choice to economically load and skid tree length logs to roadside over long distances.

The “L Boom” grapple skidder version is also very productive over shorter distances.
This track skidder is an effective and safe alternative to challenging steep slopes, and wet and deep snow logging conditions where conventional ground base skidding was not even possible to consider.

Designed and manufactured in Canada, the TG88E is by far the world’s largest skidder and may open the door to year round operations.

www.tanguay.cc