

#1



SPECS

Awassos MD-60 Mini-Skidder

Weight.....	9,240 lbs.
Length.....	16 ft. 10 in.
Width (standard tires).....	6 ft. 3 in.
Height.....	8 ft. 7 in.
Wheel base.....	.98 in.
Ground clearance.....	20 in.
Max turning radius.....	13 ft.
Max articulation.....	40 degrees each side
Max speed.....	12 mph
Engine.....	Kubota, 68 hp
Transmission.....	manual, 3 speed
Soil impact.....front,	7.4 psi
.....rear,	4.9 psi
Tank capacity.....	22.5 gal.
Cab.....	RUPS
Joystick.....	generates dozer blade, steering, winches
Hydraulic line for trailer.....	available
Price.....	\$84,000

MANUFACTURER

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Awassos MD-60 Mini-Skidder

Mini-skidders have not had much impact on the market in the past. Loggers will always choose the full-size models for production use. However, with greater awareness of the need for low-impact wood harvesting where possible, there has been renewed interest in small machines. Debusqueuses Awassos of Roxton Falls, Quebec, Canada has recently introduced a lightweight skidder that has some interesting possibilities.

My best opportunity to view the machine was in interior Quebec in the small rural village of St. Jacques de Leeds. There I met Tom Briere, who was more than willing to share his opinions with me. Like many small-town entrepreneurs, Tom is involved in a number of activities. We sat in his busy little furniture-making shop where he told me about purchasing an Awassos skidder a few months ago and discovering that it fits in

quite well with his line of work.

One of Tom's springtime projects is land reclamation, particularly tree planting. He formerly hauled his planting machine with an ATV, but found that the heavy chore was not a practical one for an ATV. The costs of maintenance and parts replacement were prohibitive. Therefore he decided to try the small skidder, which apparently works quite well. The weight of 9,240 pounds leaves a shallow footprint at 7.4 pounds per square foot

Left: The freshly fallen snow was heavy underfoot as Tom Briere set out with his small Awassos skidder.

with the standard tires (14.9 x 24).

The narrow 6 foot 3 inch width is also advantageous. With a maximum 40 degree articulation in either direction, the machine has a turning radius of 13 feet. Tom's machine is a little wider than standard, however; extra-wide tires increase his width to 7 feet. The machine's size and weight also contribute to easy transport with a pickup and a trailer.

We traveled out to a spruce plantation on Tom's property where he is doing some selective thinning. The ground and trees were covered with an exceptionally heavy snow, but we stayed long enough for Tom to show me that the skidder works well among standing trees when making selective cuts and the articulated frame adds to the machine's maneuverability.

The Awassos skidder is powered by a 68-hp Kubota engine, said to consume 0.35 to 0.53 gallons of diesel fuel per hour. The transmission is 3-speed, manual.

The built-in radio control operation can engage or free-wheel the winch, accelerate or decelerate the engine, and start or stop the engine. This was all quite convenient when struggling through heavy snow.

Tom Briere highly recommends the Awassos mini-skidder for low-impact work in the forest and for working in close quarters during tree harvest and thinning.

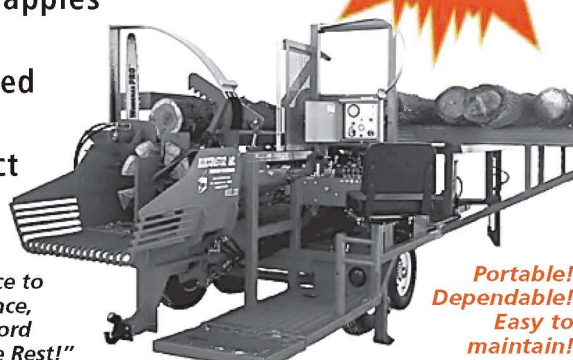


Weighing a little over 9 1/2 tons, and with wide tires, the Awassos leaves little in the way of footprints.

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