



THE CRD METALWORKS WOODBINE **RAPIDO LOCO 60** FIREWOOD PROCESSOR

The CRD Metalworks Woodbine Rapido Loco 60 Firewood Processor has a voracious appetite that demands a constant supply of logs to satisfy its 5-cords-per-hour peak production rate. And that suits Dan Fabrizio, vice president of Trelander Tree Service, just fine.

This is a massive piece of equipment, weighing in at nearly 6 tons, and built on a 24-foot-long trailer chassis. The imposing 60-inch-diameter insert-tooth slasher blade that sits atop the machine is bigger than the blades used by many sawmills, but when processing a 24-inch-diameter log into firewood, the 91-hp Caterpillar diesel engine buries it into the wood almost to the hub.

Trelander Tree Service has been in the tree care and logging business for 25 years. The Syracuse, New York, company does tree service work, but the bulk of the ash, beech, and oak that goes into the Woodbine Rapido Loco 60 Firewood Processor comes from its logging operations. “Basically, anything that doesn’t go for lumber goes through the processor or gets ground into mulch,” explained Dan Fabrizio, who is the primary operator of the machine. Trelander had



With a consistent supply of logs, the machine can produce up to 40 cords of firewood in an 8-hour shift. The 91-hp diesel engine and variable displacement hydraulic pumps are the keys to its productivity. The 8-way splitter adjusts for different log diameters. In the three months they have run the machine, it has processed about 300 cords of firewood.

been running two large firewood processors for years, but they couldn’t keep up with the supply of logs, and did not have the size capacity they needed. Dan continued, “We get a high volume of logs, and we needed another machine to make firewood instead of sending them through the grinder.” After making the 3-hour trip to the CRD Metalworks manufacturing facility in Williamsburg, Massachusetts, a demonstration of the Woodbine Rapido Loco 60 Firewood Processor was enough to convince Dan that the machine would keep up with his supply of firewood logs.

While he says he has pushed the machine to its 24-inch maximum capacity, most of the logs are smaller. Of course, “small” is relative. “It will take 20- to 22-inch wood all day long and not even slow down,” said Dan. “I’m pretty impressed with it. It will split wood pretty

CRD Metalworks Woodbine Rapido Loco 60

Max log size	24 in. diameter, 24 ft. long
Rated output	5 cords per hour
Powerplant	91-hp Caterpillar diesel
Slasher	60-in. Simonds insert-tooth circle blade
Weight	11,500 lbs.
Dimensions	24 ft. by 8 ft. (towing configuration)
Towing	Highway legal in the U.S. & Canada

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quick.” “Pretty quick,” in this case, is a 3.5-second cut-to-cut cycle time. The momentum of the blade carries it through the log. After a brief pause for the splitter to finish its cycle, it is ready for the next cut. With practice, the operator can time the cutting and splitting so that the firewood bolt drops into the splitting chamber just as the ram retracts for that cut-to-cut cycle time of about 3.5 seconds. Dan says he has found the processor easy to learn. “It is just basic controls,” he says, “and pretty soon you learn what to pay attention to.”

The inserted teeth on the blade need very little maintenance. Unless he hits metal and chips a tooth, Dan estimates that he processes about 2,000 cords of firewood before replacing the teeth. The process is quick and easy. “Just grind off the rivet, remove the tooth, put in a fresh tooth, insert a rivet, drive it flat, and it is ready to go.” Other maintenance, according

According to Dan Fabrizio, vice president of Treelander, the firewood processor performs reliably in all weather, even when the temperature dips down to 10°F.

to Patrick Davis, director of sales and marketing at CRD Metalworks, is pretty routine. “There are some grease joints to lubricate, and you need to follow the manufacturer’s guidelines for engine maintenance, but that’s about it,” he told me. He noted that the machine uses off-the-shelf components, which makes it easy to get replacement bearings,

drive chains, and other parts.

Patrick explained that the Woodbine Rapido Loco 60 Firewood Processor uses some innovative hydraulics to make the machine “crazy fast.” For starters, the machine uses variable displacement load-sensing hydraulic piston pumps.

The splitting pump senses the

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FIREWOOD PROCESSOR REVIEW

load at the splitting cylinder and directs more power to it as needed to complete its cycle. "We are the only ones in the industry using them," says Patrick. "They afford better efficiency, fuel savings, and increased hydraulic performance. They are more expensive, but last three times as long as conventional hydraulic pumps." In a break from the trend of single-joystick electric-over-hydraulic controls, the Woodbine Rapido Loco 60 Firewood Processor uses four hydraulic valves to advance wood on the live deck, operate the infeed conveyer, and run the clamping/sawing cycle. The automatic splitting cycle is started with a push-button switch. In less than three seconds, it pushes the wood through the wedge and returns for the next split.

Dan normally uses an 8-way wedge in the splitter. A hydraulic lever adjusts the height of the splitter, and he finds that an 8-way split works for many of his customers who have outdoor furnaces, but that he puts smaller pieces back through

the splitter a second time for those customers with indoor woodstoves. He figures he has processed about 300 cords—20 semi trailerloads—of firewood in the three months that he has had the Woodbine Rapido Loco 60 Firewood Processor. "We keep it busy all the time," he said. "I could keep the two firewood processors running 24/7 if I had to." Lack of a heated cab doesn't keep Dan from making firewood. "I work the machine in just about any weather. It was 10° the other day and I ran it all day," he told me. Unlike many hydraulic systems that fight stiff oil at those temperatures, he says this machine doesn't slow down much in cold weather.

A skid steer is in almost constant motion, keeping the live deck loaded with firewood. On the outfeed side, the conveyer moves the wood into piles. With a little experience, Dan is looking for ways to make the operation run more smoothly. For example, he plans to take advantage of the processor's portability by moving it to make windrows of wood on his

woodlot. Organizing the woodlot is important, since the 5,000 cords of wood have to cure for a year before they are sold.

Dan says that the Woodbine Rapido Loco 60 Firewood Processor has been a good investment for Treelander. "It has definitely met our expectations," he said. "From what I've run through it, it seems to hold together pretty good. If you put a good operator on it, you can put out a lot of wood fast."

According to Patrick, CRD Metalworks is a family company that prides itself in having good relations with its clients. Dan appreciates that, and noted that it is easy to contact the company, and that when he calls, a human answers the phone and quickly connects him to the person he needs to talk with. ■

Dave Boyt has a BS degree in Forest Management and an MS in Wood Technology. He manages a tree farm (2006 Missouri Tree Farm of the Year), and operates a band saw sawmill.

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