

Custom Harvesters Nominate Best, Worst Combines

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around the header pto shaft. "We use a Maurer hydraulically driven speed up kit on our clean grain bubble up auger and Maurer jumbo tank extensions."

Case-IH: A Minnesota custom cutter is happy with the capacity and easy serviceability of his 1994 1688.

"I only wish they built them to last longer. The price compared with the length of service is out of line. New updates are available in the 2100's that should have been on these combines years ago. We're generally satisfied with the header. We had some sickle problems and Case took care of them.

"We use Bish hopper extensions and Mud Hog rear assist systems on our combines."

Deere: "I recently traded my 1995 9600 for a 1997 CTS, partly because the 9600 was such a dependable machine," reports a Kansas cutter. "I've often thought they need to change the concept of the grain table. We're using heads with the same technology as the 1970s."

He runs Maurer bin extensions on his combines.

Deere: A North Dakota harvester says his 1996

"Performance and capacity are okay, but daily service on the strawwalkers is a real pain. You've got to get up on the tire on the right side of the machine to service them."

9600 is an "all-around good, reliable machine. But I feel they could design a better grain concave, one that wouldn't loose as much grain."

Deere: "Performance and capacity are okay, but daily service on the strawwalkers is a real pain. You've got to get up on the tire on the right side of the machine to service them," says a Kansas about his 1994 9600. "The sprocket on the clean grain return elevator also wears too fast."

Case-IH: Four 1995 and 1996 2188's have been nearly trouble-free, says a Minnesota harvester. "The corn and bean heads do a great job, but we'd like to see a better cutting system on the bean heads. We'd also like to see more power. All that needs changing is the rotor drive system, and then the machine could handle extra power."

Deere: "They'll thresh 60 bu. wheat with ease and, unlike rotary machines, we can cut 30 percent moisture wheat late in the season with no problem," says a Texan about his 1994 9600's equipped with 930 headers and 914 pickup headers, which he likes.

"Although we use a factory 930, we can purchase headers for most any crop with all the adapters that are available on the market. I only wish Deere would develop a header brake to stop the header almost instantly. This would come in handy when cutting short wheat in the rocky fields of Montana."

Deere: "Definitely satisfied" is how a South Dakota cutter describes his 1994 9600. "The Deere cutterbar could be improved, however. It still doesn't work as well at high cutting speeds as the competition.

"We've used full-wrap concaves to try to get a cleaner grain sample, but in real tough conditions, such as wheat with 20 percent plus moisture, you lose a little capacity."

Deere: "We were traveling 5.5 to 6 mph in 100 bu. milo and it only took us 15 minutes to get a 330-bu. bin full - without leaving a kernel

on the ground. Now, that's capacity and performance," says a Kansas harvester about his 1991 and 1994 9600's. "I am pleased with the corn head, pickup head, and the rigid wheat head that Deere makes, too. I've had problems with the rigid head removing straw in front of the feederhouse in spring wheat at speeds over 5 mph. I have considered trying a Macdon head to solve that problem."

AGCO: An Oklahoma harvester's 1996 Gleaner R-62 has over 500 hours on it with no downtime.

"It has good power and upkeep is easy - simply grease what needs greasing and keep elevator chains snug. I would like to see the header raise higher and the right hand console consolidated with the operator's seat. If you're thinking of a buying a Gleaner a couple options are a must. First, a return to the cylinder, especially for small grains. The 1/2-in. spaced cylinder bars. Then, either the easy close rock door or the rock trap. I chose the easy-close door and it does wonders for trap door closing time."

Deere: An Oklahoma custom cutter says performance of his 1997 9600 RWA Rice Machines was excellent even in tough conditions.

"They performed to the utmost of their potential. Nevertheless, they could use a little more power because of their weight, tire size and RWA usage. Construction could be improved, too. Last year, we saw wear in spots we hadn't seen it in before. We replaced cylinder bars at 500 hours, the shoe wore through, fountain augers wore to a razor edge. Quality control needs more attention, as well. There were several problems we discovered through a strict preharvest checklist that could have caused real problems and should have been taken care of on the assembly line."

Deere: Durability and dependability are what a Nebraska harvester likes most about his 1992 9600.

"The corn heads and pickup headers are good. The wobble box on the 930 grain head should be a circular instead of a wobble design."

Deere: "Deere has a great thing going with its 9600," according to a North Dakota cutter who owns three 1996 9600's equipped with both 914 pickup and 30-ft. straight headers.

"The 914 header needs more pressure on the middle of the rollers. The rotary screen drive system needs straight shafts and stronger bearing brackets. The headers usually have a little wobble that breaks the holding brackets. When we get new combines now, we just have new shafts made at the welding shop and solve the problem. The 30-ft. straight head performs great and is very solid."

Deere: "Excellent combines" is how an Oklahoman describes his 1990, 1991 and 1993 9600's.

"We've had lots of problems with their strawwalker bearings, though. And headers always need improvement. I use Manchester feederhouse chains because they're heavier and last longer than the originals. I also use St. Johns hard-facing on concaves and cylinders." (Manchester Mfg., 132 Hwy., Manchester, Okla. 73758, ph 405 694-2292; St. Johns Welding Inc., Box 175, St. John., Kan. 67576; ph 316 549-3283 or 605 472-1163.)

AGCO: "These combines have more capacity than horsepower, so overloading cleaning or separating systems is seldom a concern," says a Pennsylvanian about his 1995 Gleaner R-62. "They also produce excellent grain quality. But, in hot conditions, they'll run warm if maximum horsepower is used continually. We've also had some minor problems with the air conditioning.

"We tried German-built SCH 'Easy Cut' cutterbar systems on our combine and had nothing but trouble with sickle breakage. The sections lasted and stayed sharp twice as long but parts availability on the road was poor. We have no plans to run the system on rigid heads again."

Portable Grain Thresher Makes It Easy To Check Crops

"The most valuable commodity you have at harvest is time. Our new portable grain thresher eliminates the need to drive your combine back and forth to the field to get samples to test moisture," says Dave Ryden, inventor and manufacturer of the new "Ryden Reaper", a portable small grain sample thresher.

Ryden has been in the farm equipment business for many years and is also part of a five generation farming family. "I know the kind of pressures farmers face at harvest and I've always known there would be demand for a portable grain thresher that's fast, portable and easy to operate. We spent three years refining, testing, and patenting our unique new threshing process, which works better than any other portable threshing method ever developed."

The housing of the Ryden Reaper is made from lightweight aluminum with a clear Plexiglass panel on front. "We built it that way because I like to see how things work and I think most other farmers do, too," says Ryden.

The Ryden Reaper uses a 4-step method to thresh grain:

1) A toothed cylinder breaks up the heads into white caps after a sample is poured into the unit.

2) The second stage consists of a soft rubber disk that rolls the seed, peeling the hull off, much like you would do in your hand. "This method is so gentle it won't damage any kernels yet leaves many of the hulls still attached to the beards. You can adjust the threshing disk for different sized seeds, close enough to rub out even the small shriveled-up kernels that usually blow out the back of the combine," notes Ryden.

3) The third stage is a blower that has an adjustable shutter for regulating the air flow for proper separation of chaff and seed.

4) The last stage is a sieve, which works almost exactly like a sieve on a full-sized combine.

The unit can be electrically-powered off a 12-volt cigarette lighter, or you can crank it by hand. It comes with a hand-held "head stripper" that makes it easy to pull heads off stalks for threshing.

Ryden says it takes only a few minutes to collect a bag of heads, set up the Reaper, and thresh a sample. "Most



Clear Plexiglass panel allows you to see how the machine works. Note hand-held "head stripper", at lower right.



You can run Reaper off pickup battery or crank it by hand.

moisture meters require only about 1/2 cup of seed so you can greatly cut down on the waste that you get when you use a combine to collect a sample."

In addition to moisture tests, you can use the unit for disease analysis, pre-harvest yield estimates, and protein and test weight information.

"Because it takes just a fraction of the time and expense involved in starting up your combine, we think it makes it easier to do a better job managing your crop," says Ryden, who sells a variety of ag products across the U.S. and Canada.

Sells for \$395.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ryden Development, Inc., 102 E. Broadway, Hallock, MN 56728 (ph 218 843-2252).

"Portable Combine" Makes Grain Sampling A Snap

You can get a threshed grain sample quickly and easily with this new "Simpler Sampler Portable Combine," according to Lockhart Industries Ltd., manufacturer of the "Accu Sampler" for grain augers (Vol. 18, No. 4).

It consists of a box made of light gal. steel, a beater for threshing, and adjustable air flow for separation. It runs off a 12-volt battery so it can be taken to the field, connected to your pickup's battery, and then used to quickly thresh a grain sample for moisture or quality testing.

It operates on two speeds - high for cereal grains and low for oilseeds. Handfuls of grain heads are fed in the top. Clean grain falls into a grain box and chaff is expelled out the end.

The Simpler Sampler weighs approxi-



mately 18 lbs. and measures 15 in. high by 10 in. wide by 15 in. long.

Sells for \$375 (Canadian). U.S. dealer inquiries welcome.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Lockhart Industries Ltd., 3308 - 67 St., Camrose, Alberta, Canada T4V 3N8 (ph toll-free 888 545-1228; fax 403 672-2383).