



Left: The Ponsse Bison has a 16-tonne load capacity. The continuously variable transmission allows a stepless acceleration up to the top speed of 20 kph. The management system matches the load on the Mercedes Benz/MTU high-torque engine to the speed over the ground and optimises fuel consumption. Operator interventions, even on rough and difficult hauls, are reduced to a minimum.

Below: The new Ponsse Fox has been designed to increase harvesting efficiency in thinnings. The 4-cylinder Tier-5 Mercedes Benz engine reduces fuel consumption and the C44+ parallel crane provides fast and efficient positioning of the harvester head throughout the stand. A slight bulge below the exhaust on the front section of the Fox is the only clue that the machine complies totally with tighter incoming EU emissions regulations.

Ponsse press event

There have been changes afoot at Finnish forest machinery manufacturer Ponsse plc recently. Here, Hilary Burke tells us more.

BUILDING on the success of recent years, 2016 saw the company make an unusually substantial financial investment. Continued expansion of the Vieremä works accounted for much of the outlay but the research and development of new and improved additions to the product range was always scheduled to run alongside the upgrading of the existing production facilities.

The latest trialled and tested offerings from the manufacturer were presented to the international forestry press in the week preceding the renowned FinnMETKO

forestry trade and sales exhibition. The latest of Ponsse's forwarders, harvesters and forestry cranes were in operation amongst the pine, spruce and birch woodlands surrounding the lakes of central Finland.

Alongside the new hardware, there was a re-introduction to the Ponsse Manager logging operations computerised control system. There has been no upgrade of the software, but communication infrastructure in parts of the world - notably those heavily forested zones hitherto 'hard to reach' - continues apace. For example,



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Above: Ponsse's 'Active Frame' system and a slightly extended wheelbase on the rear bogie gives operator Hannu Vauhkonen a comfortable and easy ride even over the roughest of ground. The new CVT transmission does not suffer from the drawbacks of traditional hydrostatic transmissions; there is no lack of power at the top end and fuel efficiency and tractive effort are both optimised by the control system. The large load space and powerful crane allow for fast and efficient timber handling at all stages of the extraction process.

Left: The design of the new Ponsse Fox has incorporated improved loader base positioning. With a king-post support nearer to the pivot of the two frames, the operator's vision of the harvesting head's action is enhanced. With the H5 harvesting head fitted, the maximum reach of the C44+ loader is 11 m. Use of the more powerful H6 head reduces the operating envelope to a diameter of 10 m but makes the new Fox a very effective unit for clearfelling medium-diameter material.



Above: The new Ponsse K121 loader has been designed for the Elephant and Elephant King forwarders. Increased lifting torque of 195 kNm and a slewing force of 48 kNm make the loader ideal for handling big timber on steep slopes. The generous grapple area of 0.5m² allows for big lifts both in the wood and at the roadside and speedy loading and unloading. Depending on the option chosen, the K121 has a reach of 8 m or 10 m.

Left: Activation of the Ponsse Active Crane system allows timber to be loaded into the forwarder bunk with two easy movements of the joysticks. In effect, the forwarder operator only controls the height and direction of movement of the grapple. Two gyroscopic sensors control movement of the main and outer booms to locate the grapple exactly where the operator requires it. A flick of a switch can re-engage conventional loader control.

Below: The new Ponsse Cobra is available with the C5 sliding boom (10 m reach) or the C44+ parallel crane (11 m reach). The eight-wheel format makes the machine an excellent harvesting solution for a large range of conditions, including work on poor load-bearing soils. The powerful 6-cylinder Mercedes Benz/MTU engine produces 210 kW and endows the harvester with a tractive force of 195 kN.



mobile phone network coverage and internet-based mapping systems have both improved considerably in Finland in the last couple of years. Those involved in the home-grown timber supply chain - from the forest products multinational to the smallest forestry contractor - may now find the benefits of the Ponsse Manager system much enhanced.

At the end of the demonstration, the Scorpion King and H5 harvester head were called into action to round off the day with some impressive work amongst the larger

spruces. Focus, however, concentrated on the items in the Ponsse range that were making their debut; the new Cobra and Fox harvesters, the K121 loader and the Ponsse Active Crane loader control, and the Bison forwarder.

In terms of external styling, the Bison conforms to the modern lines of Ponsse's forwarder range. Ponsse insiders, however, believe that the Bison's continuous variable transmission (CVT) represents as much of a leap in forest machine design as was witnessed with the arrival of the Scorpion

harvester.

Operators were quick to commend the enhanced attributes presented by the Scorpion's innovative design. Many were said to feel that the harvester head in front of them was acting as if it were part of their own body. The ease of control of the new transmission system in the Bison should similarly ease the working conditions of the forwarder operator. He will be confident that the power of the engine will be optimised to cope with the heaviest load on even the toughest and longest of drags.

MACHINERY



Above: The Ponsse Scorpion King is the harvester for difficult and challenging sites. While the Scorpion is equipped with a single hydraulic pump, the Scorpion King has a 145 cm³ pump for the crane and a 190 cm³ unit for the harvester head. The machine can be equipped with the H5, H6 or H7 harvesting head. For work in the eucalyptus forests the H7euca or the H77euca heads can be fitted.

Left: Harvesting average-sized timber on reasonably level ground is expected to be the base workload of the new Ponsse Cobras. Whether it be eucalyptus in Brazil or spruce in Canada, the operator will be spending most of his time directing the power of the engine through to the crane and harvester head. The single, large-capacity (210 cm³) hydraulic pump is perfectly suited to this mode of operation. Low running and service costs are expected to be an added attraction for customers.

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