

# European Speed Tillage Catches On

A new-style tillage machine with a proven record in Europe was recently introduced in North America and has been demonstrated in six states and two Canadian provinces. Farmers like what they see, says Jeremy Hughes, sales manager, Horsch Anderson.

“The Joker compact disc combines speed with effective shallow tillage, whether in conservation tillage or as part of a full tillage program,” says Hughes. “Growers like the combination of high speed, excellent residue sizing and great incorporation of residue.”

The Joker is ideal not just for shallow (up to 4-in. depths) tillage, but also for incorporating a cover crop, fertilizer, residue or manure before planting. It is available in 13, 17, 20 and 25-ft. working widths. Pull the 25-ft. Model 8RT at 12 mph, and you will eat up the ground at more than 35 acres per hour. Power requirements vary from 120 to 320 hp.

The secret to the Joker’s design is the

small, but numerous ¼-in. thick, 18-in. dia., notched blades. The small blades turn faster for better mixing. Spade discs at each end of the blade sections eliminate soil ridging, leaving a level seedbed.

Each pair of blades is mounted on a single arm torsion bar for independent action on rocks and flexing over uneven terrain. Instead of a gang axle, a rubber torsion bar ensures that the blades maintain blade angle and uniform depth. High residue that can plug up a gang axle flows through. If a disk is damaged, it can be replaced by removing only five bolts, not an entire gang.

Instead of greasable bearings, the Joker uses oil-filled bearings more common in European disc tillage systems. The oil filled technology means lower wear and less maintenance.

The Roll Flex system at the rear of the Joker completes the tillage pass, smoothening the surface. It also lightly packs or consolidates the soil for an ideal seedbed. Col-



**Joker compact disc combines speed with shallow tillage. It has 18-in. dia. notched blades on front and a RollFlex system at rear that smoothes the surface.**

ored spacers on the packer assembly make depth settings for the tillage tool easy.

Thanks to a vertical fold mechanism, the Joker folds up to 10 ft. or less for highway transit. Prices range from \$30,000 to \$62,000.

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**Reader Inquiry No. 205**

# “Cultivator” Uses Rubber Tires To Pull Weeds

In 1978 FARM SHOW published a story on the Bourquin weed puller, a mechanical weed puller that used rubber tires to pull tall-growing weeds from low growing crops (Vol. 2, No. 1). The machine went out of production in the 1980’s when Monsanto started promoting weed wiper machines to apply Roundup.

Inventor Dan Bourquin recently called FARM SHOW to say that, due to renewed interest from organic farmers, he has updated the machine and put it back on the market.

“We’ve been getting phone calls from growers who can’t use herbicides but have to grow a crop that’s as weed-free as possible. An organic farmer recently called us after an inspector told him there were too many weeds in his crop. It was too late to use our machine so he had to destroy the crop. If he’d have called us sooner we could probably have saved the crop.

“Another factor is the trend to growing Roundup Ready soybeans after Roundup Ready corn, which can result in a lot of Roundup Ready volunteer corn. Our weed puller is really good at taking that volunteer corn out. It also works great for sugar beets, vegetables, low lying soybeans, Spanish peanuts, and more,” says Bourquin.

The machine is designed to brush along

the top of the crop to remove tall weeds in the row. A series of rubber wheels, which are driven hydraulically, rotate against each other, grabbing weeds which extend above the crop row and yanking them out of the ground.

The unit can be front or rear-mounted and can be used by itself or mounted on a cultivator, tilling the soil and pulling the weeds in a single operation.

The original machine used rubber-tired wheels only, but the new machine combines rubber-tired wheel with a metal roller that’s covered by a rubber mesh material.

“In extremely wet conditions the rubber wheels got wet and could slip. The mesh material prevents that from happening,” says Bourquin.

The wheels on the original machine ran at 160 rpm’s, but on the new machine they run at only 20 to 30 rpm’s. “The slower rotation helps the wheels grab the weed better, and then the forward motion of the tractor pulls it out,” says Bourquin.

Farmers using herbicides may only need



the machine in a crisis, when a breakdown of herbicide occurs, says Bourquin. “The machine won’t always get 100 percent of the weeds but it’ll get most of them.”

The weed puller is available in 2, 4, 6, 8 and 12-row models. It requires a tractor hydraulic system with at least 2,000 lbs. of pressure.

The Bourquin Weed Puller sells for \$1,750 per row.

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