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Reprint
from top agrar 10/23

top agrar TEST

Continuously developed

Amazone has been marketing the third generation of Catros disc harrows since 2015. Recently, this third generation saw the addition of a three-point mounted folding model. We had the opportunity of testing the 5m version.

The third generation of Catros disc harrows has been on the market since 2015. Until recently, the machines were available as three-point mounted models with rigid frames, 510mm discs and 2.5m and 3m work widths as well as semi-mounted TX versions with mid-mounted running gears and work widths of 7 metres and more. Tucked between these widths is the new Catros 03-2 which offers 4m to 7m widths and hydraulic folding. The badge number of our test model was 5003-2, with '500' indicating the working width in centimetres, the digit '3' the 3rd generation and '-2' the folding frame. Models with pivoting running gears have the letters TS in their badges. For our test, the 5003-2 was tucked into green rye stubble.

A CLUTTER-FREE FRAME

The Catros+ 5003-2 attaches to the three-point linkage and cat. 3 or cat. 4 N couplers. There is only one hole for the lower links, but the pins are stepped and hence secure various sizes of coupling balls; the top link can hook into one of two attachment positions. The oil hoses are colour-coded for identification and have reasonable handle grips (our test machine had two da lines). All pins are fixed to stop them turning, as it should be. Praise goes to the open and uncluttered build which minimises the accumulation of soil and also reduces the machine weight by 270kg compared with the previous model. In fact, the 5m base machine is claimed to tip the scales at 2,400kg. Our test machine was also kitted out with the 580mm diameter channel ring roller UW 580 which increased the weight to 3,240kg. This means, the tractor payload should be at least

▽ The test Catros has a folding frame and attaches to the three-point linkage. Working widths range from 4m to 7m.

Photos: Huesmann

△ The Catros frame is clutter-free and stays fairly clean.

△ A linkage connects the two disc gangs. The working depth is set independently of the trailing press.

4 tonnes in order to handle a proper front weight. Our Claas Arion 660 didn't have any issue with that.

To avoid any drag on the machine's side and especially ridging, the two disc gangs are staggered so soil that is thrown out of the machine by the leading gang is guided back in by the following unit. The outermost discs on each toolbar are individually height adjustable, which is done with a tool and separately on each disc. Guideboards are also available as an option (€590). Each toolbar has 20 discs, which translates into 12.5cm spacings between slices and a bar spacing of 80cm.

STEPLESS ADJUSTMENT

Catros boasts a so-called Smart Frame system for setting the work depth. This system relies on links that connect the two disc gangs. The two tube-steel toolbars mount in pivot points which in turn are bolted to the frame. Their 510mm discs can be set to depths between 4cm and 15cm without adjusting neither the top link nor the depth of the trailing press but with the help of a scale from 1 to 8 for guidance. By default, the depth is changed manually by operating mechanical cranks on the left- and right-hand side of the machine. On our machine, the depth was changed conveniently from the cab, courtesy of the hydraulic system (€1,700) that operates to a hierarchical system and enables the individual sections to lift/lower in parallel. The discs are attached with clamping screws and dampened by rubber sausages which allow them to avoid obstacles.

The depth changes as the tube bars rotate around their axis, thereby altering the depth and angle of the discs. When set to a shallow depth, the discs work at a wider angle and when set to a deeper depth, the pitch is nearly vertical and the cut is deeper. In addition, the clearance increases between the discs and the trailing press on the one hand and the frame on the other, which in turn increases the vertical and horizontal clearance. This is reckoned to avoid blockages.

A TIDY FINISH

Working 8cm deep in harsh soil, our 205hp test tractor was travelling at 12km/hr. Minimum tractor power should be 110kW/150hp, says Amazone. This said, the limiting factor is the payload and not so much the engine power. We didn't notice any pull on the sides and were very happy with the finish. And then we would definitely recommend the hydraulic depth control, because this adjusts the machine rapidly and in a controlled way to suit varying soils or work deeper on the headland, for example.

INJECTORS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE

The machine is available with traditional 510mm discs with smooth, serrated or scalloped edges or with 480mm diameter X-Cutter discs. Also, the machine can be supplied with 440kg extra weights to increase penetration. Another option is the break crop seeder GreenDrill 200 for €6,085.

Another is the Pro version, which has slurry injectors and therefore beefier bearings, slurry outlets and a mounting to accommodate the distribution head. The base specification Catros 5003-2 is priced at €38,287 (list prices excl. VAT). The machine in test specification is a €42,257 investment.

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▷ The transport width measures 2.99m out on the light mountings. The machine can be parked with the wings up to save storage space in the shed.

KEEPING IT BRIEF

The latest generation of Catros discs from Amazone with 510mm discs is now available as a folding version that couples to the three-point linkage.

The base weight of our test machine with trailing press was about 3.2 tonnes.

The depth is set by the so-called Smart Frame system which alters disc depths without adjusting the top link or the roller.