



The Venieri 4.63H has a standard weight of 5400kg

GOOD-LOOKING ITALIAN

WORDS AND IMAGES BY EDITOR

The Ed made time in his busy schedule to check out a mini wheel loader that is being used to make soil mixes for commercial and domestic use



Another soil mix get prepared for a customer

Tucked away just outside the urban sprawl of north-west Auckland is the 10-acre plant nursery of Lyndale Nurseries Auckland Ltd and sister business Lyndale Custom Mix Ltd. It is here that the custom mix crew makes soil medium products for the three million plants the nursery division propagates each year, as well as feeding numerous commercial and domestic customers—all hungry to use Lyndale's soil mixes for nurseries, landscaping, and planting projects.

What started out as a fledgeling one truck/one machine operation a few years ago has been spun off into its own entity that now requires the full-time attention of dedicated staff to keep three company trucks and associated machinery busy.

Key to the operation is the newly delivered 5.4-tonne Venieri 4.63H wheel loader, which,



From left: Harkhewal Singh driver/mixer, Barrie Pike driver/horticulturalist, Wayne Griffiths operations manager

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Venieri 4.63H	
Weight standard	5400kg
Max weight	6200kg
Engine	Yanmar 4TNV98C
Max power	53kW (72hp)
Rated rpm	2500rpm
Max torque	241Nm
Transmission	Hydrostatic two-speed fwd/rev
Brakes	All wheel hydraulic multi-disc oil brake
Park brake	Mechanical on service brake
Max length	5270mm
Width	2000mm
Dump height	2550mm
Hinge pin height	3260mm
Max lift height	3620mm

despite arriving just over a week ago, is already dusted up and quickly getting accustomed to the busy schedule at the Lyndale Custom Mix soil blending plant.

As the 'blending plant' term rightly suggests, it's here where numerous ingredients get combined, no doubt to closely guarded recipes, into different products specific to different uses and planting conditions.

An average day will see the new Yanmar-powered Venieri wheel loader make numerous trips between the different bins collecting raw materials to be mixed, along with loading out trucks with finished product when time allows. A standby wheel loader and Mustang skid steer loader are also on hand to take up the slack when the number-one machine is busy and for additional duties around the yard.

Small footprint

"One of the key reasons we purchased Venieri, was because the machine had a small footprint (5270mm overall length)," says

operations manager Wayne Griffiths.

"When we were going through the procurement process, some other suppliers suggested we go with their larger machines, but as you can see, we operate in a fairly confined area, so manoeuvrability is an important consideration for safety and efficiency."

With the short stop-start runs, the two-speed hydrostatic transmission helps keep the Italian-made machine up to speed when carrying out its duties.

"The hydrostatic transmission is so much faster than our previous machines, as there's no need to completely stop before moving forward or reversing," says driver/horticulturalist Barrie Pike. "This saves a heck of a lot of time over the course of a day."

Direction controls

In addition to being able to control the forward and reverse motion of the wheel loader from the traditional stalk on the steering column, the Venieri 4.63H comes fitted with a





The curved front and rear screens give a spacious interior cab feeling



The left-hand switch on the bucket lever controls forward-reverse of the machine



The bonnet opens differently to most other loaders



Design-wise, the layout is nice



Access to the starter and alternator is easy

directional switch on the bucket control lever.

"I can use either the stalk on the steering column or the forward/reverse button on the bucket lever to control the movement of the loader," says Barrie.

"I thought the button would take a bit of getting used to, but it didn't take long at all, and it makes things so much faster and safer, as you always have one hand firmly on the steering wheel," he says.

In-cab comforts

One of the biggest changes from previous models is the cab, which Venieri calls the 360-degree cab, and is rated Level 2 ROPS/FOPS. It's mounted on anti-vibration rubber shock absorbers, which its manufacturer says provides maximum comfort.

The new cab is what the company says is Venieri Design Lab's 'significant innovations' and follows the 'family feelings' design brief. While this might not sound as chic when translated to English from Italian, anyone will quickly appreciate the stylish interior and thought to operator comfort.

The curved front and rear windows along with large side windows cleverly give the feeling of additional interior space and offer near unobstructed views for the operator. Additionally, the top half of the driver's door and right-hand side window both swing open barn-style.

The rest of the interior of the Venieri 4.63H has a minimalist look that really does put some other brands to shame. The modern styling of the Venieri is what machinery of this era should look like and not a slightly rehashed 1990's design with some new buttons and flashy monitor that buyers are often fed from manufacturers.

Power plant

Powered by a Yanmar 4TNV98C, the Venieri 4.63H outputs 53kW (72hp), with an economic working range of 1200-1600 rpm. Maximum torque is 241Nm.

Helping keep fuel consumption to a minimum, the dual-speed cooling fan adjusts its rotation speed to the work conditions, which also reduces output noise.

The two-gear pump provides a maximum

flow of 70 litres per minute (optional high flow kit available) and gives a bucket lift time of 4.8 seconds for a full bucket, although, I'm unsure what product was used for the lift test. A total cycle time of lift, dump and lower is recorded at 10.45 seconds.

Summary

The team at Lyndale Custom Mix are understandably happy with their new Venieri 4.63H wheel loader, and it looks an ideal choice for the various tasks required of it each day. It certainly is a smart-looking machine made with tried-and-tested components so there's every reason that it should serve the business well for a good few thousand hours. ■

For more information, call 0800 468 782 or visit endraulic.co.nz.

WHO IS VF VENIERI?

In 1948, Ferdinando and Carlo Venieri built their first crawler tractor. It had been assembled from parts of tracked military machinery left over from the Second World War and was cleverly repurposed for agricultural uses.

Following the success of their first machines, the two brothers further developed operations and moved into wheeled machines and then machinery designed and built from the ground up.

In the 1960s, the business transitioned from agricultural equipment into loader-based earthmoving equipment. During this time, VF Venieri produced machines under their own brand for the Italian market but partnered with other brands for international sales distribution, including household names such as Massey Ferguson, Yanmar, and Case.

In recent years, VF Venieri has changed direction and now promote their own brand worldwide through dealer networks.

