

Press release

Clermont-Ferrand, 21st of May 2015

Sébastien MAHAUT (France) was awarded the title of Best European Tractor Driver of the Year 2015 by John Deere and Michelin

John Deere and Michelin demonstrate how technology and following good practices can generate operational gains during road use:

MICHELIN MachXBib tyres allow fuel savings of up to 1050 euros per year per tractor.

Sébastien MAHAUT (France), 36, was awarded the title of Best European Tractor Driver of the Year 2015 during an event organised by the leading manufacturer of agricultural equipment John Deere, with the support of Michelin, at the Clermont manufacturer's Technical Innovation Centre in Ladoux (63, Puy-de-Dôme).

This farmer (with 190ha mixed farming and stockbreeding) and Farm Labour Contractor based in Pauvres (08, Ardennes) competed against five other participants from the UK, Spain, the Netherlands, Portugal and Germany.

Sébastien MAHAUT demonstrated his expertise in the technologies available to him for handling his convoy, at the wheel of which he had to travel a complex route in a given time and consuming the least amount of fuel possible. Like all of his competitors that day, before starting out Sébastien MAHAUT indeed had to select the right pressure for the tyres and to optimally distribute the load on the John Deere 6215R AutoPowr tractor equipped with MICHELIN MachXBib 710/70 R42 & 600/70 R38 tyres, pulling a Joskin twin-axle trailer loaded with 20 tonnes and equipped with MICHELIN CargoXBib High Flotation 600/50 R26.5 tyres.

John Deere and Michelin experts designed an 11 km circuit for this challenge, including 70% on asphalt with a manoeuvrability test and 30% in field.

This circuit reflects reality: that of Farm Labour Contractors, also known as Agricultural Contractors, who work the fields subcontracted by other farmers and thus have to cover large distances on the road between two plots. Their use on the road generally represents between 70 and 90% of their travelled distance.

The winner of the challenge had to achieve the best performance index considering, in addition to the travel time and fuel consumption, the least soil compaction in the field. A manoeuvrability test (slalom) highlighted the safety and precision of MICHELIN tyres.



Winning strategy

To achieve the best speed / low compaction / consumption ratio, Sébastien MAHAUT placed his trust in the John Deere technology by setting the transmission of the John Deere 6215R AutoPowr tractor to "full automatic" mode. He simply limited the engine speed to 1750 rpm, in order to minimise fuel consumption. As regards the tyre pressure, his choice was 1.4 bar for the front and 1.6 bar for the rear Michelin MachXBib tyres and 3 bar for the MICHELIN CargoXBib High Flotation tyres.

"With my six tractors and my three balers, I have customers at a distance of more than 80 kilometres from my farm, so I am aware of the issue of driving a tractor on the road", says Sébastien MAHAUT, "that is why upon studying the route, which closely represents my daily working conditions, I chose to slightly overinflate the tractor tyres and lower the pressure in those of the trailer, in order to protect the fields". This was a winning strategy for the French farmer who, for the final performance index, was ahead of his British, Dutch, German, Portuguese and Spanish competitors respectively.

"Although I was aware of the technology, I had not realised the importance of tyre pressure for fuel consumption," declared Sébastien MAHAUT upon seeing the results of all of the countries.

Up to 1050 euros saved per year per vehicle

For Farm Labour Contractors, fuel consumption is a significant expenditure. During internal testing, Michelin demonstrated that the MICHELIN MachXBib tyre allows 4% less fuel consumption than its main competitor on the market.

A Farm Labour Contractor's tractor, used for 1,500 hours per year with 70% of these on the road, will travel 31,500 kilometres on the road. Considering an average speed of 30 km/h with a consumption of 25 l/h, this allows 1,050 euros¹ to be saved per year per tractor, using MICHELIN MachXBib tyres.

The MICHELIN MachXBib tyre was launched in 2001 to provide maximum productivity for the latest generation of tractors on the market at the time. The MICHELIN MachXBib tyre enabled a world ploughing record to be beaten in 2002, covering 251 hectares in 24 hours. A second world record was beaten in 2003, by planting 98 hectares of barley in 24 hours. The MICHELIN MachXBib tyre has undergone changes throughout its career, most recently in 2012, especially in regard to tyre casings, materials and rolling resistance, enabling it to travel at 65 km/h where laws will allow it. There are 16 sizes of MICHELIN MachXBib tyres.

Michelin also innovates with services: the "Pressure Calculator" mobile application available for tablets and smartphones allows farmers on-going access to advice on the pressure suitable for the load and their use.

¹Considering a non-road fuel price of 1 euro per litre



Michelin is also ready to meet future technological challenges: its tyre casings are fully compatible with the constraints of remote inflation systems, the use of which is spreading throughout the agricultural world, making it possible to vary the pressure to adapt to the loads and uses, in order to provide even better safety, better soil protection and better operational efficiency to farmers and Farm Labour Contractors.



Sébastien MAHAUT (left), with his John Deere dealer, Beranger MAILLARD (TERREA).

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http://mediaevent.michelin.com/PRESS/02_PNEUS-TYRES/AGRICOLES-AG/JOHN_DEERE/