



Keith Smith



Xcalibur 10in table saw

ON TEST

The Woodsmith takes a trip to Woodford Woodworking and asks a friend for his opinion of the 'New Yankee' saw

There was a time when 'made in Taiwan' was synonymous with poor quality, but having just spent a day at Woodford Woodworking machinery in Stockport, looking at their Xcalibur range from Taiwan, I can report that this is definitely not the case. In fact, most of the staff previously worked for Wadkins so this should give you an indication of the standards they set themselves and their machinery. Most of their machinery is aimed squarely at the professional woodworker. They have a range of large equipment; panel saws, sanders, tenoners, that, because of their size are only really suitable for a production workshop.

Spec sheet	
Motor Power	3hp
Blade size	250mm
Bore	30mm
Max depth of cut	76mm
Table	900mmx 820mm
Max width of dado	20mm
Dust extraction port	100mm
Price	£1172.65

Comes with a very good tool kit, but no blade.

The main purpose of my visit was to look at the 10 inch Xcalibur table saw. This is the smallest Xcalibur table saw in the range (there are 12, 14, and 16in machines also available) although the 12in is the largest which will run from a single phase supply.

“This type of saw is very popular in the US and is becoming more popular over here due largely to a certain American TV programme.”



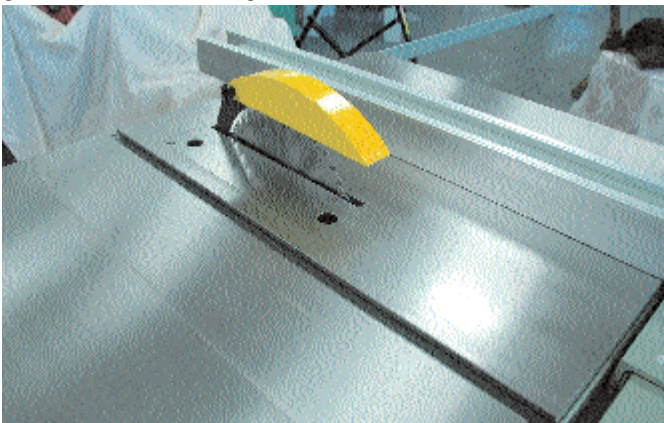
All the bearings on the Xcalibur are sealed for life

positioning well thought out. All the bearings are sealed for life

The cabinet has a large removable panel which allows access to the 3hp single phase induction motor, the 3 v-belts which drive the blade and the blade adjustment mechanisms. The dust created goes into the bottom of the cabinet which has a 100mm port for extraction; this arrangement will require a good airflow from the dust extractor to keep the cabinet clear of dust.

The cast iron table has two cast iron extension wings which give it a total working area 900mm wide by 820mm

Cast iron table comes with wings to give a 900 x 820mm working area



My first impression of the saw was, well, the word that sprang to mind was solid. It is recommended that the machine is bolted down to the floor, but I am not sure if this is to stabilise the machine or the floor. And then there are the fence guide rails, they seem to go on forever, well 1300mm (51 inches) at least. Everything on this machine is of substantial proportions, with the controls and their

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deep (approximately 36 x 32in). The blade is mounted centrally in the table and there are mitre slots both sides of the blade for the substantial mitre gauge.

The fence is another piece of massive construction, despite its weight it runs very smoothly on a couple of easily replaceable nylock studs. It runs the full depth of the machine and extends a massive 1.3 metres to the right of the blade. It locks by a cam to the front rail which holds it firmly in position. The front rail is marked with a clear scale and the fence has a magnified adjustable viewer; no micro adjuster though. When ripping, the aluminium extrusion can be moved forward so that it doesn't project beyond the blade.

Features

This is a single phase machine but on start up the motor draws about 18amps and therefore needs a 20amp supply. The standard crown guard has no dust

Magnifying scale on the fence helps accurate set-up



Ww verdict

As you can see I really liked this machine. My only reservation is that, with the sliding table fitted, you would need a very large workshop to accommodate this machine. At £1172.65 it's a good price, fantastically well made and if I had the space I would be more than happy to have one in my workshop.

extraction facility although a Euroguard with a dust outlet is available as an optional extra. The 14 and 16in saws in the range come with a SUVA extractor as standard. This is available as an optional extra on the smaller machines; the base has pre-drilled mounting holes for the SUVA extractor.

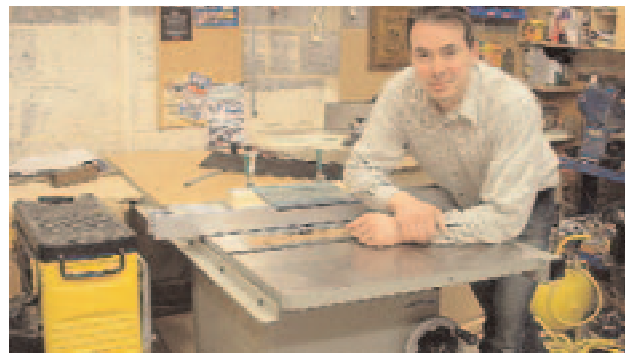
There's an optional sliding carriage available to fit this machine, which costs £465 including VAT. This may sound a lot of money but this is a massive item - I couldn't even budge the box it comes in. It has a very large table and utilises a flag arm and jockey wheel for stability. The downside is that it would take a large workshop to house this saw with the sliding table fitted.

Personally I don't like dado cutters, in my opinion it's all too easy to have an accident with one, no matter how careful you are. However it's possible to fit an 8inch (203mm) diameter dado blade with a maximum width of 20mm to this machine. This requires a mounting kit which is available for £30.

In use

The machine runs very quietly and the blade quickly comes to a stop. There is good access through the fingerplate for blade changing. Both the front handle which controls the depth of cut and the side handle which controls the tilt are substantial pieces of engineering and there's a good clear scale showing angle of cut. The switch is mounted to the right of the machine at knee height with a prominent stop button which is an excellent safety feature.

RATING	1 2 3 4 5
Value	■■■■■
Performance	■■■■■



SECOND OPINION

You asked for second opinions from a 'real' woodworker, well here's our first second opinion feature...by **Phil Edwards**, a reader from Poole

“I am a big New Yankee Workshop fan and this is his saw!”

Well, I've finally been able to spend some quality time with my new Xcalibur 10 inch table saw - a Delta Unisaw clone and a typical American-style cast iron table saw. I am a big New Yankee Workshop fan and this is his saw! Importing a Unisaw is an expensive business but this is the same darn saw and has the advantage that it is CE approved.

It's delivered in a wooden packing crate, well packed and in good condition. The tables are covered in an anti-rust gloop and take a bit of cleaning. The instructions are pretty good; it even comes with a small tool kit and all the necessary nick-knacks. There are two cast iron table extensions which have to be bolted to the main table. Then the fence rails are bolted on, front and rear. These are long - long enough to allow a 52in wide rip, and they take up a LOT of workshop. I wasn't anticipating such large rails, but can't bring myself to cut them shorter, although it would be an easy job if required. It took about half a day to assemble everything properly, but then I had to wait five days for an electrician to wire a dedicated circuit for the saw.

The cabinet is made of 3mm steel, nicely welded and sprayed light grey. The castings are of a high standard, machined flat with a high polish to them. The fence is a Biesemeyer type, which locks with a single cam lever at the front. There's a scale along the front rail with crosshairs on the fence. The system works really well as does the mitre gauge which is also of heavy duty construction. The table is huge, solid and vibration free and inspires confidence and good work. In use the saw is very quiet.

This will be the last table saw I ever buy and I'm not an old man. So far I haven't missed a sliding table; mind you, they do offer one as an option. In my opinion it's fantastic value for money and I haven't even mentioned the word dado...

Well, now I mention it; to use a dado head, obviously the standard throat insert is of no use. I made a replacement from some scrap hardwood, by sticking it to the original and routing around it with a bearing-guided cutter. The insert was fitted and clamped in place while the saw was slowly raised through it to provide a zero clearance insert. In use the Freud stacked dado set I bought cuts a very clean rebate with no noticeable strain to the motor.