

Pöttinger Impress 155VC Pro baler wrapper:

# Set to impress

Pöttinger's Impress baler range has several interesting features, such as its pull-out knife bank and upward spinning rotor. To find out if these and other items make a difference, we've been operating a variable-chamber Impress 155VC Pro

**W**hen it comes to variable-chamber balers, Pöttinger has two sizes to pick from: the aptly named Impress 155VC, which produces a 0.80m to 1.55m diameter bale; and the 185VC that goes up to 1.85m. Both models are offered in two spec levels – the Master versions are aimed at farmers, whilst Pro spec will appeal to those with a larger workload. Our test machine was an Impress 155VC Pro

baler wrapper combination. Attachment to the tractor was via a K80 ball hitch, but ring hitches are also available. Pöttinger has even brought across some forage wagon features, such as its hydraulic height control for the drawbar with integrated suspension (£2,174). This increases ground clearance and is really useful when picking up large-volume swaths. On the whole, the area around the drawbar is tidy and free of clutter. The storage point

## KEY POINTS

- ▶ A film binding option is coming.
- ▶ The pull-out knife drawer is a unique feature on round balers.
- ▶ Dispenser arm is easily adjusted to current bale diameter, making the combination very versatile.

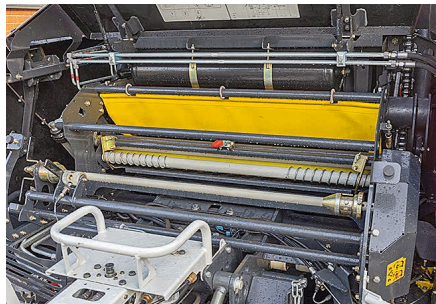
*Pöttinger's Impress 155VC Pro boasts many innovative details and performs with good results. Photos: Stefan Tovornik and Christian Brüse.*







The intake consists of a pick-up, crop press roller, dual feed augers and the top-feeding rotor. They all put in a trouble-free performance during our test season.



The netting system is simple and easy to fathom. Film-on-film binding is being added.

for the hoses is OK, and the pipework is marked to ease plugging into the right spool. There is a good bracket for the Bondioli and Pavesi driveshaft. In fact, the only detail that spoils the overall impression is the folding parking stand, which is operated by a clumsy crank handle.

The net wrapping unit is easily accessed and conveniently restocked from a platform with safe steps leading up to it. Durable decals give instructions on how to thread the net into the chamber.

The spring-loaded pick-up (Pöttinger claims it applies just 100kg of ground pressure) measures 1.98m from tine to tine – not the biggest width on the market but still OK. Five rows of tines are controlled from both ends. The steered gauge wheels give excellent height control and do not need removing for transport.

By suspending the pick-up from the middle, it can pivot 120mm to the sides, making it better at adapting to ground contours. It can be fixed in straw, so it is suspended and still able to move upwards. The Impress pick-up

is automatically raised up while net is being applied to the bale.

An adjustable crop press roller with deflector tines supports the crop flow. Two augers on each side ensure an optimum flow.

Unlike nearly every other baler, the rotor with single and transposed tines rotates upwards,

## MEASUREMENTS

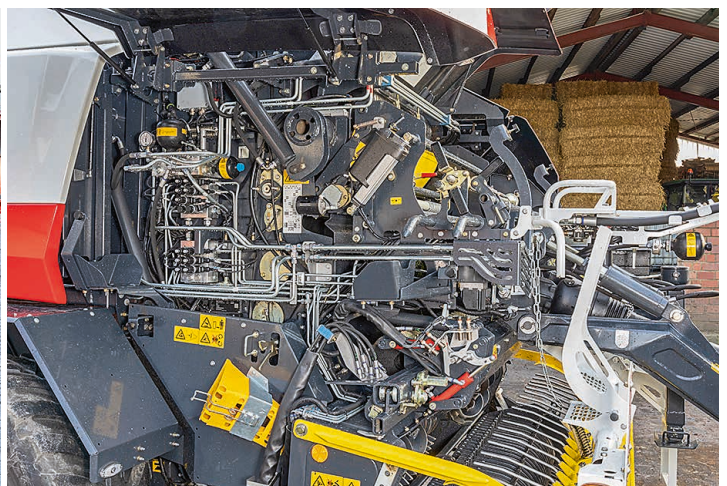
### Pöttinger Impress 155VC Pro

Length/width/height	<b>7.45/2.86/2.80m</b>
Operating weight	<b>7.76t</b>
Drawbar load	<b>1.30t</b>
Ground clearance	<b>28cm</b>
Pick-up width <sup>1)</sup>	<b>1.98m (DIN 2.20m)</b>
Pick-up tyres	<b>16 x 6.50-8</b>
No. of tine rows	<b>Five controlled</b>
Tine spacing	<b>60mm</b>
Tine thickness/length	<b>6mm/105mm</b>
Rotor width	<b>1.15m</b>
Rotor diameter <sup>2)</sup>	<b>650mm</b>
No. of knives	<b>32</b>
Knife spacing	<b>36mm</b>
No. of compression rollers	<b>Four</b>
No. of belts	<b>Three</b>
Belt width	<b>365mm</b>
Bale width	<b>1.20m</b>
Bale diameter	<b>0.80 to 1.55m</b>
Maximum width net	<b>1.30m</b>
Film supply	<b>12 + 2</b>
Net supply	<b>2 + 1</b>
Tyre size	<b>520/55 R22.5</b>
Base price	<b>£108,953</b>
Test spec price	<b>£115,659</b>

<sup>1)</sup> Tine-to-tine distance;

<sup>2)</sup> Manufacturer information

feeding the material over it and into the bale chamber. This type of crop feed has two benefits. Firstly, the crop no longer follows a curved path but flows more directly into the chamber, which we found gave the baler a reasonable intake and high throughput; it takes a sizeable lump to stop the Impress. The



On the left are the oil and grease applicators as well as the chain driveline. The hydraulic components live on the right-hand side of the machine.





The knife drawer is released manually and can then be pulled out to the right.



The baler relies on four rollers and three belts that can create a very small chamber, so the material is compressed right from the start.

## TEST ASSESSMENT

### Impress 155VC Pro

#### Technical

Tractor attachment	+
Parking stand	□
Pick-up unit	+
Rotor	++
Chopping system	++
Overload protection	+
Net/film supply	+/++
Control unit	+

#### In-field performance

Pick-up intake	++
Pick-up in straw	++
Throughput	++
Chopping quality <sup>1)</sup>	++
Net wrap system	++
Tractor power	+

#### Wrapper performance

Bale transfer	++
Winding device	++
Film change	++
Bale unloading	++

#### General

Build quality	++
Handling	++
Maintenance	++
Operator's manual	++

<sup>1)</sup>Assessment in field conditions

Grading: ++ = very good; + = good; □ = average; - = below average; -- = poor

second advantage is the fact that the knives reach into the rotor from above, producing clean cuts. More than that, this arrangement prevents the slots from collecting debris, so that the knives always extend fully into the crop flow.

A unique point on the Pöttinger balers is the 'Easy Move' pull-out knife drawer. Once you release the knife bank from the terminal, you remove the two rams, disengage the drawer with the supplied lever and then pull the complete unit out to the side. It is mounted on rollers to make it a doddle to move. Once out to the side, all of the spring-loaded knives are safely accessed and, as on the forage wagons, are each released using a lever. Not only does this mean you no longer have to climb into the bale chamber, but you are not handling the sharp, finger-slicing blades by their cutting edge.

The Pro machines have up to 32 blades, which are selected in groups of 0-16, 16, 16 or 32. The number is selected from the terminal, and the knives are then moved hydraulically into the crop flow. This is the £2,232 spec option; otherwise it's a manual operation. With all the knives engaged, the chop length is a nominal 36mm.

The Impress blades also have a double edge, so you can just reverse them during the day rather than carrying a spare set. After raising the knife drawer by pushing a button on the terminal (float position or pressure), any blockages simply pass through.

On the variable-chamber machine there are four bale-forming rollers: one serving as the traditional starter roller and three endless belts. When the bale is starting there's so little room in the chamber that the bale starts to roll almost instantly (Pöttinger calls this a pre-chamber).



The wrapper gave trouble-free operation during our practical test. To work with different diameter bales, the Impress's dispensers move vertically in a parallelogram.



This design means that, even in difficult conditions such as very dry barley straw or in wet silage with very thin grass, the bale is started effectively. We certainly found this to be the case in brittle straw. The weather last season meant we did not get to assess the Pöttinger's performance in late-cut, wet grass.

**Baling pressure is selected on the terminal**, which offers three density zones; the size of each is customisable. The bales produced have exemplary straight edges. The net binding system has a plate that feeds the net to the bale. In auto mode, this plate feeds the net to the bale using the bale diameter settings. When the bale reaches the

## About the range

First shown at Agritechnica 2017, Pöttinger's Impress range comprises fixed- and variable-chamber balers in both standalone and combi variants. In the UK, the fixed-chamber Impress 125F, which makes a 1.30m diameter bale, has proved to be the most popular. Pöttinger Ireland will be running a 125FC with film binding this season. Although it's still early days, UK customers have predominantly opted for the 125F and 155V balers, closely followed by the 125FC Pro combi. Pöttinger UK says there is growing interest in the combi unit; it will be running a 125FC Pro baler wrapper and 155V solo variable-chamber baler demo units this season.

set diameter, the net feed into the chamber is triggered automatically. The delay at which this is done can also be set – either time or ISObus signal controlled. This is a time-saving feature. The actual net application cycle is very short. The process can also be triggered manually. We had no hiccups during our test. With the net on, the tailgate opens automatically and the bale drops directly onto the wrapping table, assisted by a lever. With the bale onboard the table moves into the wrapping position. This ensures a smooth and trouble-free transfer, even on slopes. As an option, operators can select 'slope mode' (£231) from the terminal. This controls an angle sensor that detects the current position of the baler in the terrain and automatically reduces the oil flow rates so the bale is safely transferred.

The wrapping table has three belts and two bobbins on either side to fix the bale in position. While most other makes have the drive motor for the film dispensing arms positioned above the table, Pöttinger mounts it underneath, and, in our view, this reduces the risk of the film breaking due to shock loadings and swaying arms. The two arms rotate at up to 36rpm for quick wrapping. The film pre-stretch is set to either 50% or 70% by refitting the chain.

**The wrapper unit can work with bales from 1.10m to 1.50m in diameter.** The vertical position of the dispenser arm is changed on a parallelogram frame, so it applies the film to the belly of the bale. Adjusting the position is a quick job that requires a 19mm socket. When wrapping bales 1.45m in diameter or more, we did have the occasional film break,



*The variable-chamber baler comes into its own in straw. The combi unit allows bales to be dropped in pairs – useful when gathering up.*

but smaller bales were wrapped without any problems. Bales are unloaded automatically or manually; a bale turner is a £2,707 option.

**Summary:** The Impress 155VC Pro is ISObus-compatible. We ran several tractors during the test, operating the baler through their terminal. No matter which tractor it was paired with, our test machine worked a treat. If you want a control box, Pöttinger's entry-level unit is PowerControl; there's also the new CCI-1200 ISObus display (£2,446) with split screen, which can be used to show the camera feed of the wrapping table.

The Impress can also be left in fully automatic, so all the operator has to worry about is stopping and starting the tractor. There's also a fully manual version of the Impress.

We particularly liked the mudguard-mounted hydraulic valve chest on the left of the machine. This allows you to control all of the functions manually after operating the safety switch – a convenient detail in the event of a malfunction or similar problem.

**Christian Brüse**