

I just finished working on one of my customer's saws. To my surprise it had a very severe bend at the collar line on the log side and then another severe bend in the body on the board side. I also noticed that the guideline was very shiny on both sides. What would have caused this saw to bend in two different directions?

Fortunately what you are describing is a pretty rare occurrence, but not so rare that I haven't run into the same situation a few times in my career. The simple answer is that the saw you are describing actually had at least 2 separate and fairly major accidents.

Most likely the first accident was that the sawyer got in a hurry and made a set while in the cut. That is what caused the severe bend at the collar line on the log side. We all make mistakes, especially when we get in too big a hurry. But once you make such a major mistake that does that much harm to your saw, the logical thing to do would be to take that saw off and get it repaired. Continuing to run that saw isn't going to do it any good. Saws don't generally heal themselves. All you do when you try to force that saw to keep going is to make matters worse. You are losing production, ruining some lumber and making it that much harder to fix the saw.

The more you try to run a saw with that severe bend in it, the more the bend will become part of the memory of the steel. When that happens it is not only that much harder to straighten, but at the first sign of heat, some of the memory will come back and the saw will try to revert back to its bent state.

My guess is that the second accident may have happened as a direct result of trying to force the saw to run after it had the first accident. It was probably a case of over compensation. After setting the saw while it was in the cut and creating a severe bend on the log side at the collar line, the saw would have had a very strong tendency to run out of the cut. In trying to compensate for that problem instead of doing the intelligent thing and getting the saw hammered properly, the sawyer most likely over-compensated by sharpening the bits high to the log side while also trying to steer the

saw with the guides.

If you follow that path long enough you will eventually have a situation where the saw gives up and dives into the log instead of following its natural tendency to run out of the log. That is how you get the second accident.

The evidence that the guide line was shiny on both sides tells me that even after the second accident, the sawyer continued to try to make the saw run by steering it with the guides, which of course would have heated the rim to the point that the saw would act like it has little or no tension. Of course due to the bends on both sides of the saw, it is a safe bet that the saw was also heating in the body while the guides were causing it to heat at the rim. Eventually the heat at the rim will overcome the heat in the body or vice versa. Either way you have a hot saw and everyone knows that won't work very well.

I am sure you had quite a challenge on your hands to get that saw back into proper shape and I assume you were forced to charge accordingly.

There are times when sawyers think they are saving the company money by continuing to run a saw that really needs to be taken out of service and hammered. Actually most saw doctors do charge extra for fixing saws that are in that extreme condition, so there wasn't any savings in that department. And then, how much do you think it cost the company in lower production and mis-cut lumber for the sawyer to unsuccessfully keep trying to force that saw to do something it couldn't do?

If you want to save your company some money, get that saw fixed as soon as it has a problem and get back to making accurate lumber at a good rate of production.

Questions about sawmills and their operation should be sent to Forum, The Northern Logger, P.O. Box 69, Old Forge, NY 13420, FAX #315-369-3736.

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