

Bale density upgrade

After eight years of good service, last summer David Meredith reluctantly took the decision to trade his old ROLLANT 340 in for a new ROLLANT 520, but it's not a decision he regrets.

"I was sorry to see it go," he says. "Over the eight years I had it, I never had to lay a spanner on it and it never missed a beat. But it was time to change and the deal RIVERLEA put together, along with the availability of zero percent finance, it was a 'no brainer' not to go for it, especially as the trade-in on the 340 was just about what I had originally paid for it."

Both the new ROLLANT 520 and the 540 have been completely redesigned and incorporate a heavy duty chassis, new thicker rollers with a ribbed profile and automatic lubrication. For maximum bale density, pressure is controlled by horizontally mounted tailgate closing rams, to which up to 180 bar of pressure can be applied. "There was nothing wrong with the old ROLLANT 340, which was a very good baler and I never had to spend a penny on it. But in comparison the new ROLLANT 520 is even better and there are definite differences between the two. For a basic baler and for what it is, it's excellent.

BALES ARE 20% HEAVIER

"The biggest difference is in the bale density and weight. The 340 made a good bale, but I have been very pleased with the bales from the ROLLANT 520 which I reckon are about 20% heavier. This has the benefit that there are fewer bales to clear and store, plus I need less net wrap and film. In fact, I have had to make a note to ease off on the density as the centres were too firm!"

The ROLLANT is a key machine for David, who aims to do as much as possible himself on the 152ha he farms. The farm is split between



David Meredith

two units, one a hill and common land farm near Merthyr Tydfil and the second a lowland farm 20 miles away near Cardiff.

The farms support a flock of 1020 mainly Welsh and Cheviot ewes and 20 suckler cattle. Between the two farms, David aims to make around 1000 hay or haylage bales a year, depending on the weather, all of which are for his own use.

A QUIETER MACHINE

"Apart from bale density, it is also noticeable how much quieter the ROLLANT 520 is. The fibreglass panels are lighter, but will also be less prone to damage so the baler will stay looking good, the hydraulics are quick and having adjustable auto lubrication for the chains makes maintenance very easy; it certainly uses a fair bit of oil so it must be doing some good! I also like that they have also put a bush in the towbar which will be better for towing and the net wrap system on ROLLANT's has always been extremely good and reliable."

David's old ROLLANT, along with an AXOS 340 tractor that he still has, were some of the first CLAAS machines that he bought from RIVERLEA. Since then, the AXOS has been joined by a second AXOS 340 and an ARION 420, all fitted with loader brackets so they can be used for loader work, plus he has also for this year traded in his original VOLTO tedder for a larger version.

"Over the eight years I have been running CLAAS machinery, I have never been let down and there is no-one that can touch RIVERLEA for their service and support, which is fantastic."

