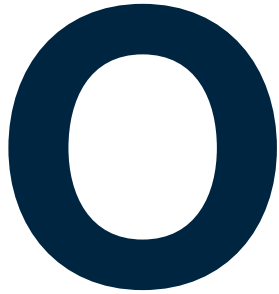


CLAAS CMATIC – Geared for Growth



operating from its base just outside of Dumfries, GTR Contracts offers a wide array of services, covering agriculture, forestry and construction.

Established in 2006 by husband-and-wife team Garry and Tanya Russell,

the firm now operates nationwide, with work taking them across the UK. On the agricultural contracting side the business offers a full forage harvesting service as well as grass re-seeding and slurry application. As such, it is an operation which demands a lot from its machinery, which in many cases has to cope with a year-round workload.

The machinery fleet features a growing line-up of CLAAS tractors sourced from local dealer GORDONS. Among this are six ARION 600 models, two AXION 800-series machines and one AXION 960. Over half of these are specified with the CLAAS CMATIC continuously variable transmission option.

Why CLAAS tractors?

“It was the great backup of our forage kit by local CLAAS dealer, GORDONS, which gave us the confidence to try out CLAAS tractors,” explains Garry. “Our first – an ARION 620 – arrived in 2013, was quickly followed by another 620 and an AXION 920 in 2015.

“Now, with a predominantly CLAAS fleet, it allows our operators to easily switch between tractors. Most machines are equipped with CLAAS’ top-spec CEBIS control package which includes the touchscreen terminal and CMOTION control lever. This enables greater fine-tuning of the tractor, enabling our drivers to really get the most out of them.”

“It is the move to CMATIC gearboxes that has improved our work-rates and efficiency, which for us as contractors is a huge bonus.”





Garry Russell

AXION 960, 800s and ARION 600s CMATIC

Near Dumfries, South West Scotland, May 2022

Why stepless CMATIC transmissions?

“We’ve now got five tractors fitted with the CMATIC CVT box. From a productivity point of view they are much more efficient, allowing the operators to concentrate on the job at hand, rather than having to worry about managing the engine and gears.”

The latest CMATIC tractor to join the fleet is a special edition CLAAS AXION 870, complete with gun-metal grey metallic paint job. Piloted by operator Rory McKinnon, it scores particularly highly for the ease of set-up.

“For each job I do with the tractor, I will create a profile through the CEBIS terminal, which I can save and then recall each time I do that task, saving a lot of time.”

Settings can include hitch position, spool-valve flow rates and timings, plus engine and transmission settings – it’s these last two that are critical in boosting productivity while maintaining a high standard of work.”

“When mowing, for example, I set engine ‘droop’ so that the PTO will not drop below 900 rpm,” says Rory.

“When the revs do start to drop, it is the CMATIC transmission which automatically ‘backs off’, to maintain PTO speed and therefore the quality of work. This enables me to simply set a cruise speed and just leave the tractor to sort itself out.”

The transmission control page also provides several operating modes which can be tailored to each job.

“You can pretty much drive the transmission how you like – on the pedal, via the CMOTION lever, or simply set a cruise speed. You can also tweak the upper limit of each of the three virtual ranges, allowing you to match the transmission to the job you are doing.

“Compared to a powershift transmission, CMATIC is much more controllable and easier to use. With a powershift, for the likes of mowing, you’re on the clutch pedal quite a lot at headlands. With the

CMATIC, you can just back off smoothly and then pick the speed back up again.

“Similarly, for umbilical slurry work, reeling pipes in and out requires slow speeds. For this, CMATIC gives you that controllability. Even for the likes of hitching up to implements, it makes inching so much easier.”

Dealer Back Up

As well as the tractors themselves, it is CLAAS’ customer service which impresses, says Garry.

“Over the nine years we’ve been running CLAAS tractors, the backup from GORDONS has been second to none.

“Due to the varied workload, all of our tractors work most days and will typically clock up about 2,000 to 2,500 hours per year. With that, dealer service is massively important to us.

“As well as our local dealer, the reliability of the CLAAS network means we are backed up wherever we go in the country. And, should we need any specialist help we have a good relationship with CLAAS UK.

“Any issues we’ve had over the years have been dealt with promptly. And if the problem cannot be solved straight away, there’s always a machine on hand to keep us going, which for us as contractors, and also our customers, is tremendous service.”

What makes you keep buying CLAAS tractors?

“Over the last nine years with CLAAS tractors, we’ve been really impressed with them. With every new purchase, you can always see an improvement, whether it’s new features, software developments or greater comfort.

“One example is CLAAS TELEMATICS which proved a really useful tool in managing the fleet. You can simply access it via a smart phone app, allowing us to easily

track machines, monitor work-rates and check fuel use. Especially for field work, it really helps us plan our jobs.”

“Over and above these small features, it is the move to CMATIC gearboxes that has improved our work-rates and efficiency, which for us as contractors is a huge bonus.”



Farm Facts

GTR Contracts near Dumfries, South West Scotland

Work undertaken

Silage, slurry and grass re-seeding, civil engineering, plant and machinery hire, haulage, concrete and ground works

Machinery

AXION 960	ARION 660
AXION 870	ARION 620 and
AXION 830	ARION 650 x 4

Staff

Garry and Tanya Russell, plus 65 others incl. management and administration staff, peaking at about 80 people during busy periods.



Dealership
GORDONS

CLAAS



“For each job I do with the tractor, I will create a profile through the CEBIS terminal, which I can save and then recall each time I do that task.”

Rory McKinnon, Operator at GTR, May 2022