

John Rowe

ARION 530 CMATIC

Kilmore, Co. Wexford, May 2022



Farm Facts

Ballycleary Farm, Kilmore,
Co. Wexford

Farmed area

200 ha supporting 230
cows plus followers

Staff

Lar, John and Mark Rowe
and Ciarán Busher

Cropping

Grassland 140 ha
Maize 12 ha
Cereals 48 ha

Machinery

2 x ARION 530 CMATIC
CLAAS SCOPION 741
CLAAS DISCO 4000
CLAAS LINER 2700

CLAAS CMATIC – Geared for Growth

Having bought one 145 hp ARION 530 with stepless CMATIC gearbox in 2016, the Wexford-based Rowe family subsequently added another of the same three years later.

Initially a switch to dairying seven years ago prompted a requirement for extra power and refinement – something the first tractor really impressed with. But the second has taken that a step further.

Why an ARION 530?

When initially looking at new tractors, Lar and Mark Rowe headed to the FTMTA Farm Machinery Show to create a shortlist. While there they got speaking to a salesman from CLAAS dealer KELLYS of Borris who put forward the ideal candidate – an ex-hire ARION 530 CMATIC. With their interest piqued, the family visited the dealership for a test drive and were impressed.

“I had read good reports on the ARION in the press and the level of specification was very high. Being a four-cylinder, the 530 is a tidy size for around the yard, but it is still heavy enough when you are in the field,” says John Rowe.

“I took it for a drive up a steep hill with an empty 20 tonnes trailer and it was just so quiet, I couldn’t believe it was doing 50 km/hr at just 1,300rpm.

Convinced by the 530’s performance and the fact that the 800-hour ex-demo unit was almost the same price as a HEXASHIFT powershift model with the same hours, a deal was done and the first ARION CMATIC tractor arrived at Ballycleary Farm in Wexford in 2016. It has since clocked around 1,000 hours a year.

“One of the key jobs for the 530 is to pull our 3,500 gallon slurry tanker. Spreading with a dribble bar it’ll comfortably run at 9 km/hr.

“And when it comes to heavier fieldwork it’s just as good. The front linkage makes it really easy to add weight when it is needed for jobs like discing.”

Why a CMATIC stepless gearbox?

“Setting up the dairy herd meant a greater requirement for baled silage. As well as more power, that meant we needed a tractor that was faster on the road as 80% of our grass is grown on an out-farm that is eight miles away,” explains John.

“The four-point cab springing and front axle suspension makes it really comfortable. It would be very hard to go back to a non-CMATIC tractor. Even on the diet feeder, it proves its worth. Our dry cow ration contains a lot of straw which means it doesn’t always feed out consistently so you have to vary the forward speed which you can do easily without having to ride the clutch.

“Since we bought the 530 we have switched to a contractor for the baling but do all of the rest of the work. Basically if it is a job one man can do that can save time and money then we will tackle it ourselves.

“No matter what the job, you don’t get out of the cab as tired, so hopefully we will get some extra years out of dad as he does most of the tractor work!”

Is the newer one better?

“CLAAS is improving the software all the time, and there was one big update done when the first tractor was nearly two years old. We always thought the 530 was a good tractor, but this new package transformed it inside out – it is brilliant.”

Off the back of the performance of the 2016 ARION, the Rowes purchased another 530 CMATIC in 2019. Again an ex-hire unit, the key difference is that it is on narrower tyres so it can be used for spraying and it is fitted with an FL120 front loader with the stepless transmission, getting a massive thumbs up for handling work.

“There is not much between the two tractors, just little improvements here and there. The newer one does have more low down grunt, but they are both really, really strong performers, clocking around 1,000 hours a year.

“The CEBIS screen is so easy to use – it is just like a big smart-phone so anyone can just jump on and go. That said, there’s heaps of information such as fuel use, etc.. at your fingertips.”

Why CLAAS tractors?

“Although we hadn’t dealt with them before we knew KELLYS had a reputation for good service, and it has since proved to be impeccable,” says John.

“In fact we have bought several other CLAAS machines from them since the first 530 including a SCORPION 741 telehandler. It is a brilliant machine and is that much quicker it is clocking up a lot less hours than the handler it replaced. We’ve also bought a DISCO 4000 which has really speeded up mowing.”



Dealership
KELLYS

CLAAS