

# Bale quality is top priority



A pre-series ROLLANT 540 roller baler is helping a Devon-based contractor to deliver the dense, high quality bales its customers require.

By its own admission, Millman Contracting, is not the cheapest operator in its area around Rattery in Devon. It does, however, strive to deliver the highest quality of work.

Started nearly 35 years ago by John Millman, who has since been joined by his son Paul, the business now operates a formidable forage harvesting fleet of 16 CLAAS machines. This currently includes JAGUAR 870 and 850 self-propelled, which work in grass, maize and whole crop, a pair of QUADRANT balers – a 2200 and 5300 - as well as a range of DISCO mowers and LINER rakes.

Last year the CLAAS line-up was joined by one of the first ROLLANT 540RC fixed chamber balers, which makes 1.25m diameter x 1.2m wide bales. “We were using another make, but were looking to change,” explains Paul. “At the time CLAAS offered us a pre-

series ROLLANT 540RC. We thought it was a good opportunity and, because we have a good relationship with our dealer, HAMBLYS up in Honiton, we knew we could rely on good support and back-up,” says Paul.

Round baling is a relatively new service for Millman Contractors – which only started offering this in about 2012. But a change in local circumstances saw them enter this highly competitive area - and they now make about 15-20,000 round bales/year.

## **BETTER QUALITY SILAGE – CHEAPER FOR EVERYONE**

“We’re probably one of the most expensive in the area, but we aim to make the best dense, heavy bales we can,” explains Paul. “This produces better quality silage and it’s actually cheaper for everyone. Making fewer bales saves on net, wrap and storage space as well as reducing handling.”

With the ROLLANT 540RC predominantly used for baling silage, Paul notes the strong roller set-up enables it to handle greener material more effectively. “Customers are looking to reduce the dry matter in bales, because this improves fermentation and the feed quality,” he adds. “We have found it makes great bales, whatever you put into it!”



**“The baler is well-built and reliable. It has good design features that make it easy to use and maintain.”**

**Paul Millman**

Paul Millman | **Millman Contracting** | Devon

## BIG IMPROVEMENTS

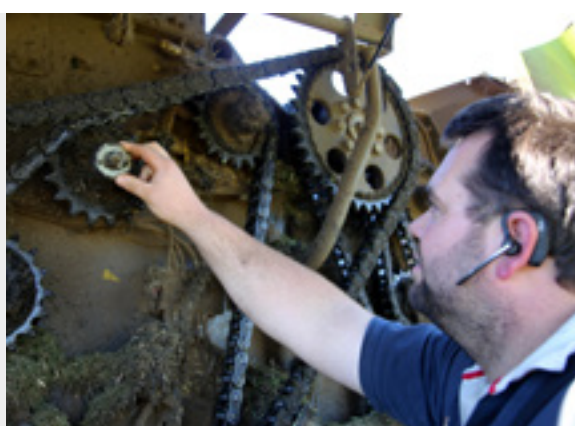
On a tour of the machine Paul points out where he sees big improvements on previous machines, starting with the pick-up wheels. “The simple system to fold these around within the width of the machine, instead of having to remove them, is really helpful,” he adds.

Millman Contracting’s baler is equipped with the 15-knife chopping mechanism option, which can be engaged hydraulically from cab and also lowered to quickly clear any blockages. About two thirds of the bales they make are chopped says Paul, who adds, he has also noticed the improved crop flow through the pick-up, which he feels helps make consistently well-shaped bales.

He’s also noted the heavy-duty drive to the rollers. “All 15 rollers are driven by a single chain on the left-hand side. These are now fitted with individual stub axles, mounted on large bearings in flanges, which will make it much easier to change. There is also a larger (6.3 litre) tank for the chain lube, with an adjustable pump,” he comments.

All around the machine he points out small, but what he considers, important features. “The net system is much the same, but works well and is easy to load with new rolls. The bale kicker works well, and is a big improvement on our previous ROLLANT 374,” he says.

Paul is pleased with his move back to using a CLAAS round baler. “We have made about 14,000 bales with this machine so far and not had a single problem. It’s well made, with good design features and is easy to use and maintain. Importantly, it makes well-shaped dense bales – delivering the quality we need to provide our customers,” he adds.



Millman Contracting, based at Rattery in Devon, has made about 14,000 round silage bales this season with its pre-series CLAAS ROLLANT 540RC.

The 50mm diameter stub axles are mounted in bearing flanges, which are not only stronger, but also make maintenance and replacement much easier.

Replacement net rolls are easily loaded from the ground using this loading ramp. Threading the net is also a quick and easy operation.

Changing between fields on narrow lanes, is made easier with simple, spring-loaded system, which enables operators to swing the pick-up wheels to within the width of the machine.

