

SCORPION flexibility

Early March saw EDG Matthews take delivery of two new SCORPION 741 VARIPOWER telescopic handlers, making these the fourth pair of SCORPION machines to be run by the company over the past 12 years.

Farming 1,200ha spread over six main holdings in what Laurence Matthews describes as prime commuter belt near Dorking in Surrey, having the two SCORPION handlers reduces the need to move machines around on what are often very busy and congested roads.

“The SCORPION handlers are on the go constantly and I work on the basis that each machine will do at least 1,000 hours a year. We have around 500 cattle spread over the six farms, plus three grain store sites, so there is no way that we could run just one telehandler.

A DEDICATED MACHINE FOR EACH JOB

“We have a large number of attachments which for both efficiency and safety when on the road, are left at each farm. Also during the autumn when we are handling grain but also muck spreading, it means that we can have a dedicated machine for each job. Some of the attachments date back to when we ran Matbros so each SCORPION is always specified with a Matbro headstock, which I still think is a very simple and brilliant system.”

In addition to the cattle, which includes a suckler herd of Belted Galloways that are used for conservation grazing on the North Downs, the farm, which is within the Surrey Hills AONB, also



Laurence Matthews



The 500 cattle on the farm include a suckler herd of Belted Galloways for conservation grazing



grows a wide range of cereal and forage crops, plus a large area is managed under stewardship and HLS schemes.

NEW MACHINES EVERY THREE YEARS

The policy is to renew the handlers, which are contract hired through OLIVERS at Petworth, every three years. The two new SCORPION 741s, which have a maximum lift capacity of 4.1 tonnes with a lift height of 6.93 and are powered by a 143hp Deutz engine, replaced a pair of 736s, which in turn superseded two 7035s.

“Because of the amount of work they do, I need a machine that is both reliable and will do what it is supposed to do. But allied to that is the knowledge that if there is a problem that there is the service and reliable back-up to ensure that we are not left in the lurch,” states Laurence. “By contract hiring, this means I know exactly what each machine is costing me and the only additional costs are insurance and fuel, which is also monitored so I have an accurate running cost.

“In these days of dealer consolidation it is important to me that I have the confidence and reassurance that the support and service will be there when I need it. That is the reason we have run CLAAS combines for so many years, and have a new TRION MONTANA arriving for this year, but also now buy all our tractors

and the handlers from OLIVERS and Southern Harvesters before them. It’s all about the relationship we have with the dealership. But having said that if I wasn’t happy with the SCORPION they wouldn’t be here.

“Physically the SCORPION 741 is the ideal size as we have a complete range of buildings and size, and by replacing them on a regular basis this ensures that they are kept new and fresh, and keeps everyone happy.”

CLAAS |||

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Laurence Matthews