



John Warne (left) and operator Sean Frost.

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Changing to a QUADRANT 5300 with APC pressure control has enabled John Warne to confidently increase bale weights by up to 11%.

The vast majority of the straw John bales goes direct to the 44MW Snetterton Renewable Energy Plant, which he has been supplying since it opened three years ago. The plant has an annual straw requirement of around 250,000 tonnes.

Delivered by MANNES at the start of the season, the new QUADRANT 5300 replaced a four-year-old QUADRANT 3300. But such has been the increase in workload this year, it was soon joined by a second QUADRANT 5300. Both are run behind AXION 850 tractors, one also new this year and the second hired in for the newest baler.

“By the end of August the first QUADRANT had already baled over 7,000 bales and in just its first week the second did 2,500,” says John, who is based at Cockfield near Bury St Edmunds. “The new AUTOMATIC PRESSURE CONTROL (APC) system on the baler is absolutely fantastic. It means I can consistently maintain maximum bale size and specification, and confidently push bale weights to the limit, so benefiting from bale weight bonuses.”

APC ensures that the required bale density is maintained by automatically monitoring the knotters and the stress on the drive system, having entered the required density and the quality of the baling string used.

Working mainly behind 30-40ft cut combines, John bales over 500 bales in a good 12 hour day. Compared to his previous QUADRANT 3300 where bale weights would typically be in the range of 425 – 450kg, the QUADRANT 5300 provides bale weights between 450-500kg – an increase of between 6% and 11%.

For most of the season, John was using Cordex Xtreme twine, but changed to CLAAS QUADOTEX at the end of the season to see if he could push bale weights even further.

One of the QUADRANT's is fitted with the optional bale weigher, which John says has so far worked well. With an additional bonus available for moisture contents below 15%, an on-board moisture meter system is also fitted. He regularly spears bales to just double check.

“The new knotter design seems to work well so far. Its early days but we have not had any issues or breakages. However the new TURBO FAN system has done a very good job of keeping the knotters clean, and now having a seal around the twine box helps keep that clean, which is a great improvement.”

“The changes to the ejection system and the fact that you can now alter the height of the hooks means that bale ejection is far more positive. I also like how the pick-up wheels now simply fold in, which is far easier and simpler when moving around between fields.”

“Although I did originally look at a couple of other makes, realistically I don't think I would have got the back-up that I do with MANNES,” he says. “In addition the 120x90cm bale size is good for both livestock and the power station, and the ideal size for transport. If I can get a load of over 22-24 tonnes from 48 bales on a lorry I'm happy, and I have certainly had comments back from drivers on the weight and how well shaped the bales are.”

