



COMPRIMA BALER PUT THROUGH ITS PACES IN CHALLENGING SEASON

John Glendinning runs his farm and contracting business out of Hawick in the Scottish Borders assisted by his two sons, Andrew and Craig. About half of their 750 acres is down to malting barley production with the remainder used primarily by a flock of 1100 breeding ewes.

The contracting side of the business offers customers, among other services, a silage making operation - both in the clamp and as baled silage.

"We are pretty flexible in what we can offer," he explains. "It can be the whole job from mowing to clamping or to baling. We can also cart and wrap bales - it's whatever the customer wants. I would think we get over about 3000 acres each year."

Joining the baling division last year was a new baler - a Krone Comprima V150 XC round baler - the business was given the opportunity to operate the baler for a season as part of Krone testing program for the machine and there was the option to purchase it at the end of the season.

"With hind sight, you could argue that Krone picked a good year to put the Comprima through its paces," says Mr Glendinning. "The conditions were far from easy and if it managed to perform well, a more normal year should pose few problems."

In any event, the Comprima V150 XC, which produces bales with diameters from 1m to 1.5m and has an integral crop chopping unit on board, set about its first job in July - a month later than in previous years.

"There was no way we could get on the land any earlier," he says. "By the time we had mowed it we could really say good-bye to achieving any quality silage but having said that, the Comprima took it all in its stride and turned it into bales come rain or shine with no fuss at all."

The cam-free pick-up tines, which rotate at a significantly higher speed than conventional pick-ups, lifted the crop on board and presented it to the chopping unit. An even crop flow - important if an even shaped bale is to be created - was ensured through the action of the crop guard.

"I leave it to my customers to say if they want the silage chopping and if so to what length," he says. "This year about a third of them decided to chop - it's a job which makes the task of the mixer wagon easier and quicker."

Mr Glendinning highlights the smooth action of the NovoGrip bale feed system which combines the bale feed strength of chain and slat elevators with the quiet running of belt systems.

This endless belt and slat system - there are two of them in variable chamber versions - creates the bale and increases its density as it becomes larger so that the completed bale always has a constant density and an even, uniform shape.

"I was very impressed by the quality of the bales - if not so much by what was actually in them," he comments. "They were the sort of bales which you know are going to handle and stack well."

In a difficult year then, Mr Glendinning says he managed to put together over 13,000 bales of which about three quarters were silage and the rest straw.

"Fair to admit we worked the baler in some pretty horrid conditions baling some equally horrid grass but to its credit, it didn't flinch once but just carried on making the bales," he says. "I'm looking forward to seeing how it performs in more normal conditions."