

# Harvestimes

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**CLAAS**

# New quartet of triple mowers



*The new DISCO 9100 and 8400 CONTOUR need a minimum of just 170hp and 150hp respectively.*

**The addition of four new triple mower combinations based on the CLAAS DISCO Contour range means that CLAAS now offer a range of eight triple mower models.**

Included in the latest additions is a new 9.10m wide model, the DISCO 9300 C CONTOUR, which is the widest triple mower on the market.

The new models comprise two mower conditioner versions, the DISCO 9300 C CONTOUR and DISCO 8600 C CONTOUR, with working widths of 9.10m and 8.30m respectively, and two straight mower units - the DISCO 9100 CONTOUR and the DISCO 8400 CONTOUR with working widths of 8.90m and 8.10m.

Both the DISCO 9300 C CONTOUR and the DISCO 8600 C CONTOUR can be used either as a single front-mounted unit on a reverse drive tractor or in a front and rear 'butterfly' format.

In order to minimise compaction and weight loading, the new wider DISCO 9300 C CONTOUR is designed so that it is mounted as close to the tractor as possible. In addition, modern high-strength materials have been used in the mower's construction, helping to reduce the rear axle load on the tractor.

The DISCO 9100 CONTOUR and DISCO 8400 CONTOUR use a 'butterfly' arrangement, but a specific feature is their low power requirement, with them needing a minimum of just 170hp and 150hp respectively.

All four mowers use the new CLAAS CONTOUR centrally pivoting 3.40m or 3.00m mowing units. The outer units feature an automatic breakback system which due to the 15 degree mounting of the pivot arm, means that when an obstruction is hit, the whole mower unit swings back and lifts to avoid potential damage.

Both the DISCO 9300 C CONTOUR and DISCO 8600 C CONTOUR utilise the well proven CLAAS conditioner unit fitted with rubber mounted steel tines. A full width spreading hood is also available so that the crop can be spread across the full width of the mower.

With the exception of the 8600C and 9300C, the mowers are operated using the CLAAS STANDARD terminal which allows the operator to pre-select the lifting sequence and then activate that sequence at the press of a single button, or for short work each unit can be lifted individually. The DISCO 8600C and 9300C are equipped with load sensing hydraulics, and all functions can be controlled at the touch of the button, or via the tractor spool valve if preferred. Optionally, these two models can be controlled using the CLAAS COMMUNICATOR ISOBUS terminal or the tractor's existing ISOBUS terminal.



*With a working width of 9-10m the DISCO 9300C CONTOUR is the widest triple mower on the market.*

## P-CUT cutterbar

All the new mowers are fitted with the new CLAAS P-CUT cutterbar which is designed to provide an extremely even and clean cut. Drive to the discs is through a smooth running, low-wear transmission with an individual drive to each cutting disc.

The mowers also feature the CLAAS ACTIVE FLOAT hydro-pneumatic system that allows the ground pressure to be quickly and easily changed from the cab according to conditions.

The P-CUT cutterbar itself is manufactured from high-strength steel and incorporates robust cutterbar skids with Hardox inserts between each skid. The underside of the cutterbar also incorporates a series of grooves that funnel away any build-up of soil for a cleaner cut.

Each cutting disc is protected by the unique SAFETY LINK drive protection system where in the event of an obstacle being struck, defined shear points will protect damage to the blade and drive system. In addition, the cutting discs also use the CLAAS QKC (Quick Knife Change) system that allows blades to be quickly changed without using tools.

## Mowing flexibility with new centre pivot mowers

The new DISCO 3100 TC and 3500 TC centre pivot mowers have working widths of 3.00m and 3.40m respectively and feature a drawbar that pivots centrally in order to provide a seamless transition between working on the right or left hand side of the tractor.

Unlike other centre pivot mowers which use a double-acting ram, on the new DISCO 3100 TC and 3500TC two single acting hydraulic rams are fitted either side of the drawbar.

The main benefit of this arrangement is that it then allows the mower to be exactly set-up to the track width of the tractor. Where each ram connects to the mower, a series of mounting holes enable the ram extension length to be shortened or lengthened, thereby altering the pivot angle of the mower. This therefore alters the working width so that it matches the tractor's track width, something that is not possible with a single double-acting ram.

The mowing units are suspended on a parallelogram linkage system whereby the unit is then pulled, rather than pushed, by the trailed chassis for a cleaner cut.



*The new DISCO 3100 and 3500 TC pivot mowers feature two hydraulic rams and a series of mounting holes so the drawbar can be accurately set to match the tractor track width.*





"As far as possible I will never mow when there is dew on the grass and will wait until the sugars are up, so by operating triple mowers the output gives me the ability to do something else in the morning, knowing that if I start mowing at lunchtime I will still be able to get the acres down," he explains.

"The attraction of the wider DISCO 9300 was the ability it would provide to increase output but fully utilise the tractor's power and reduce forward speed."

Comparing his old mower with the new DISCO 9300, George has been extremely impressed with the difference that the CONTOUR mounting system makes.

"The suspension system is superb and the ability to alter the pressure from the cab makes it far easier to keep up with differing ground conditions. The improved suspension, combined with the tractor suspension means we are still travelling at about 14kph, but the stress and fatigue on the driver has been reduced. The mower units seem to float over the ground far better and the way that the breakback lifts the units up when you hit an obstacle or gully is very good and helps reduce damage."

"Whilst we don't mow everything, the mower will cover about 1,800ha (4,500 acres) a year so are worked hard, but with the improved suspension and float, wear and tear should be far less."

Based near Shaftesbury, the bulk of George's work is for dairy farmers within a 15 mile radius, working in fields that typically average 6.0ha (15 acres) and at most 12ha (30 acres).

Despite this, whilst output can vary considerably depending on field size and moves, when everything works right George found he could comfortably cut 80ha (200 acres) in a good day.

Completing George's foraging team is a LINER 3000 rake and new for this year is a JAGUAR 970 to replace a smaller JAGUAR 890, all of which are bought through Vaughan Agri at Frome.

"Overall I have been very pleased with the new DISCO 9300. It worked well, left a clean finish and was extremely reliable. However I would still like something even wider!"

## Floats like a butterfly ..

Having said to CLAAS for a few years that he could do with a bigger mower, contractor George Mogridge's wish came true last year when he was offered a pre-production 9.1m wide DISCO 9300 C CONTOUR.

George was one of the first in the UK to buy a triple mower back in 1994 and has been running CLAAS triple DISCOs for the past 10 years, the most recent of which was a DISCO 8550 C.

*Simon and Cecil Bell*





Lyn and Huw Davies

Based near St Clears in Carmarthenshire, the Davies' run two self-propelled forage harvesters covering a large area along the south Wales coastline.

## Spreading it wide

**The 13m wide VOLTO 1320 tedder has provided Davies Bros with the reliability and spread they were seeking.**

Having had problems with their previous make of tedder, after a demonstration of the CLAAS VOLTO, Lyn and Huw Davies bought a new 10-rotor VOLTO 1320 for last season.

Not only have they been very impressed with the reliability and even, lump-free spread it leaves, but they have even had customers phoning up commenting on how good the spreader was.

"The first time it happened and the farmer asked what spreader we had used, I braced myself ready for him to complain. But instead he went on to say what a good job it had done and how lump-free the swath was," says Lyn. "We had a lot of trouble with the other tedders, culminating in having to wait six days for a part. I know we have had two difficult seasons but there is no excuse for not having parts. Apart from that the evenness of the spread was not nearly as good."

"Its 13m wide working width means that the VOLTO 1320 covers a lot of ground quickly, so has increased output. Not only does it spread better, but there are not so many grease nipples making it far easier to maintain."

Supporting both these and the Davies' round and big square balers are three sets of DISCO 8550 triple mowers fitted with spreader hoods, one of which is also fitted with groupers that are mainly used in whole crop.

Virtually everything is spread, so after mowing and initially spreading using the spreader hood, the crop is spread within 24 hours and due to its width, Lyn estimates that in good conditions the VOLTO 1320 will comfortably cover 6ha (15 acres) per hour.

For raking, the Davies' have four CLAAS LINER rakes in all. The two larger four-rotor LINER 3000s work mainly ahead of the foragers, whilst a new two-rotor LINER 2900 is used for baling, leaving an old LINER 880 as back-up if needed.

"The secret to getting a good even swath starts with the tedding, because if you start creating lumps then, they will only get worse when raked up," says Lyn. "Again we have been very pleased with the LINER 3000s as they give us the high output we want. But they are also good on the road and fold so that the wheels are in the middle of the rake, not sticking out which has been a problem with other rakes we have used."

"Over the years we have tried a lot of tedders and rakes, but we have always been very pleased with CLAAS. In addition the back-up from Riverlea and CLAAS has always been extremely good. When we have had problems they have stood by us, you can't fault them."



## Clean cut for new mower

**Faced with some extremely wet and difficult crops, Cecil Bell has been extremely pleased with the performance from his pre-production DISCO 3100TC pivot mower.**

Based at Capheaton north of Newcastle-upon-Tyne the conditions were so bad that on some farms Cecil and his son Simon were not able to do 1st cut silage until October.

"We had some horrible crops to work in, some of which had been flattened and grown back up, only to be flattened again and grow back a second time. However, the new DISCO did a fantastic job and still got under the mat and shaved it off. I had customers who could not believe how good a job it was doing."

The new DISCO 3100TC pivot steer mower replaced a DISCO 3000TC. Used behind a 130hp tractor it was working ahead of the Bells two VARIANT 365 variable balers.

Aside from contract baling with some customers doing their own mowing, the Bells also make 1000 silage and 1200 straw bales for their own cattle. Bought in at 12-18 months old, they finish about 200 cattle a year, mainly supplying Marks & Spencer or heavier beasts going to McDonalds.

"The pivot concept is great and by being able to start one side of the field and just work across, I can't believe how much faster this is; I reckon we are gaining at least an extra acre an hour," states Cecil. "Also because the swaths are better matched, baling is faster."

"Due to the wet conditions, the fact that the frame 'pulls' the mower unit, plus the ability to hydraulically alter the downward pressure made a great difference. In general we had it set at about 70-80 but it certainly made a great difference in soft going and ensured a clean cut."

"For transport it sits directly behind the tractor which is better and because you can steer it either way, it is far easier to get through tight gateways."

Cecil first started round baling in 1984 and having run another make for the past 20 years, bought the CLAAS VARIANT from Rickerby two years ago after Simon saw it at World CLAAS.

"We were having too many problems and having seen the new VARIANT we ordered two," says Cecil. "The VARIANT produces a far better bale and we have had new customers who have commented on how good the silage is because the bale has such a hard centre and is so dense."

"Also the VARIANT is faster and the net tying is far neater. We definitely spend more time in the cab with the VARIANT working than we did with our old balers!"



door makes it really easy to just quickly check the blades. Overall I reckon maintenance now only takes about an hour each evening, which is a great improvement.”

Based near Cumnock in Ayrshire, the Mairs clear about 2,000ha (5,000 acres) of silage each year. This is also the first year that they have offered whole crop harvesting, using a DIRECT DISC header. This has proved a great success and resulted in a far cleaner finish compared to the combine reel type previously used by a sub-contractor.

Another contractor is also responsible for all the mowing, but after that the Mairs maintain control of tedding and raking, putting 9.0m into one swath.

“Although the JAGUAR 960 is roughly the same horsepower as our old forager it seems to be far more powerful, even when taking big heavy single cuts for beef farmers, mainly because with the belt drive there is not the power loss that there is through shafts and gearboxes. Also those farmers that closely monitor their fuel have commented how much less fuel the JAGUAR uses.”



*The new chopping cylinder makes maintenance far easier and quicker.*

## The best ever JAGUAR

**The first JAGUAR 960 in Scotland has been bought from Gordons by W & J Mair, who reckon it's the best forager they have ever had.**

The new 623hp JAGUAR is Jim Mair's 12th self-propelled forager. His first was a CLAAS SF80, which was subsequently changed for a JAGUAR 690. However, having run a different make for a number of years, the new JAGUAR 960 represents a change back to CLAAS.

“The reason for changing back to CLAAS was down to the machine itself and I can honestly say it's the best I have ever had.”

This is seconded by son James who drives the forager and had the final say in which machine he wanted.

“The other manufacturer had also launched a new model, but looking at it I was not impressed; it just seemed too big and heavy,” states James. “By comparison the new JAGUAR is far more of an operator's machine. It's very nice to sit-in and drive, and there is far less maintenance.”

For James this is one of the biggest benefits of the JAGUAR, thanks partly to the simple Powerband drive but also the new V-MAX chopping cylinder with its curved blades.

“Whilst overall there is less maintenance involved, by having everything powered by a belt rather than shafts and gearboxes, all of which need greasing, this saves a lot of time. Also the chopping cylinder is a great improvement. In 450 hours I have not had to touch the blades, so not only does the life span of the curved blades seem to be far better, but not needing to re-bevel them is fantastic as you always end up having to do it late at night.”

“Also on the old forager I would have to adjust the sharpening stone about every three days, whereas with the JAGUAR I have only done it once. The ease with which the cylinder can be opened up is great and the hydraulically operated bottom

# New twin-engined JAGUAR impresses

**One of the first 730hp twin-engined JAGUAR 970's has been operated by Neil Clarkson, who is also the first in the UK to run the new, wider DIRECT DISC 610 whole crop header.**

Of the 3,600ha (9,000 acres) that Neil clears throughout Sussex and Surrey, whole crop only plays a small part, but as he says it is one of those services you have to provide.

"The area can change considerably depending on the year. In a good grass year it will drop but on the other hand in a poor grass or maize year the area will increase. Also the organic farmers like whole crop as they can undersow grass into whole crop spring barley or peas."

"Looking to the future we also have two bio-energy plants being planned that will use either maize or whole crop. But now that we have the wider unit, even though it will be slower, we may even use it for harvesting grass on some of the very flinty fields on the top of the Downs in order to protect the chopper blades."

"The new DIRECT DISC header is a great improvement, and because there is now a single coupling instead of the various belts and drives, it is so much easier to attach," says Neil. "It makes a very good job of thick heavy crops, and leaves a good clean finish with no striping. By having the wider unit it suits the power of the forager and keeps the forward speed down."

Having bought CLAAS JAGUARS from Southern Harvesters

for many years, the arrival of the new JAGUAR 970 marks a return after a couple of years with a different twin-engined machine.

"Having run two JAGUAR 890s, I wanted to change to one bigger machine, which at that stage CLAAS did not have. The new JAGUAR 970 is superb; it's far more technically advanced and better balanced. Also because the engines are linked by a belt, not only will this avoid reliability problems and make the machine lighter, but it also reduces machine width, making the JAGUAR far more manoeuvrable. Reliability has also been extremely good and throughout the whole of last season, we only had one breakdown that actually stopped us, but even then we were back working in under four hours."

"The new variable tyre pressure system is extremely useful. I have been very impressed with the traction and the ability to reduce the tyre pressure was a great benefit last autumn. If we had still got our other machine we would have been in a lot of trouble."

This is seconded by operator Derek Holland, who is also very impressed with the forager, finding it far easier to service and extremely comfortable to operate.

"CLAAS has definitely got the new JAGUAR right. I would especially recommend the variable tyre pressure system to anybody; it's certainly the way forward. In maize I was running at 0.8 bar to have as big a footprint as possible and when let right down like that, you can go virtually anywhere. Also by not wrecking the ground it makes it far better and easier for the trailers."

"I also like the new cylinder, as it is far easier to maintain, plus it is very easy and quick to split, even in the field which you could never do before. Also not needing to re-bevel the blades saves hours in the evening, which is when I would normally have to do that."



*Operator Derek Holland has found the variable tyre pressure system is invaluable.*





Roger and Hayden Jenkin

## European funded JAGUAR

**In 2002, like many dairy farmers faced with low milk and beef prices and an aging machinery fleet, Roger Jenkin sat down to look at the various options open to him in order to secure the future of his farm on the Lizard Peninsula in Cornwall.**

Like many arable farmers have done, his solution was to set up a machinery sharing syndicate between eight near neighbours. However, where this would be different and virtually unique in the UK is that they would apply for European Objective 1 grant funding from DEFRA in order to fund 40% of the cost of new machinery, which would then release income that could then be re-invested in their farms.

Introduced in 2000, the Objective 1 Programme was established by the EU with the aim to promote development within specific areas of Europe, of which Cornwall was one of three in England. The Objective 1 Programme incorporated four separate funds, one of which was specifically for agricultural projects.

"My objective was to look at how we could get grant funding out of Europe that could be used to benefit us as farmers," explains Roger, who co-ordinates the syndicate. "The aim of the Objective 1 Programme was that it should be used to create and secure jobs. A lot of the agricultural funding was being used for diversification projects, but little seemed to be used for grass-root farming, so we put in an initial wish-list of 13 machines never thinking that they would all be accepted, but they all went through."

Since then, between 2002 and 2007, the syndicate has used the funding to purchase over 50 machines costing around £900,000.

"By using this funding, aside from securing at least 10 jobs, this has released income that members can use to invest in their farms and move their businesses forward, which has helped create an additional seven jobs. In our case we have expanded from 100 to 200 cows, added a further 80ha and employed an additional person."

The funding has been used to purchase a wide range of machinery, but one of the largest investments was the purchase of a JAGUAR 820 in 2005 and supporting forage machinery, including front and rear mowers used on an ARES 657. The team harvests a total of 400ha of grass and 80ha of maize spread over the eight farms, which are all within a 5-mile radius of Manaccan.

"We chose the CLAAS JAGUAR partly because it is so well known, but also because the drive belt system is so simple. Nobody we spoke to had a bad word for it and the service from Hamblys has been very impressive. The technicians are very skilled, which ensures reliability. Last year we had no stops at all. There is nothing worse than a stopped forager with seven tractor drivers sat waiting for you to get going again!"

"Having a foraging team within the syndicate gives us control and makes it far easier to ensure high quality silage within the weather windows available. We can comfortably cover 40ha a day and I have certainly seen the benefit through a rise in milk yield to around 9000 litres."

In operation, Roger explains that whilst there is no financial charge made for using the machinery, all the running and maintenance costs are apportioned between members in a number of ways.

"Whilst everybody contributes tractors and labour, the costs for running and maintaining the foraging machinery are split according to acreage and who contributes what. By comparison the syndicate also owns four Slurry Guzzlers, which are apportioned on a cow headage basis."

"The key to the success of the syndicate has been to keep it small; we have all known each other for years and respect each other, which is important as you have to have trust in and be completely open with each other. The drawback is the amount of paperwork and the checks and audits that DEFRA make to keep tabs on all the machinery, but it has to be done."

# Stanadyne

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**Contact your CLAAS dealer today.**

# An ideal match

**Robert Gill has been extremely impressed with the performance and swath left by his new LINER 2600 rake.**

Working ahead of two ROLLANT 355 round balers, the new LINER 2600 has proved the ideal match for the balers, leaving a good even sized swath, but at the same time achieving high outputs in its own right.

The two balers, which replaced ROLLANT 255s, and the LINER were all bought new from Rickerby for last year and by the end of the season, despite the difficult conditions, the balers had made over 24,000 bales.

“Normally we would do around 15,000 conventional hay bales, but because it was so wet, we hardly made any hay at all and most of it ended up having to be round baled for silage,” explains Robert whose business, J & JG Gill & Son, is based at Cotherstone near Barnard Castle, and mainly works within Teesdale.

“We had previously run a twin rotor side discharge rake, but the new LINER is streets ahead. I initially thought that due to the high price of fertiliser, customers would be putting on less so we would need the bigger rake to get a better swath from the resulting lighter crops. As it was, due to the weather the crops were still heavy and dense, but the LINER worked really well. We had it set on the middle setting to leave a good, well shaped swath for baling, and were comfortably covering about 2.8ha (7.0 acres) an hour.”

Due to the nature of the area, farm and field size varies considerably and it is not unusual for both balers to visit up to 13 farms in a day.

“We are mainly baling for suckler herds and most of the farms will only have between 50 and 100 bales done, but on a good day if we plan it right even with so many moves, each baler will still do about 350 to 400 bales a day.”

“I have run CLAAS balers for about 10 years and one of the main selling points of the ROLLANT has been its reliability. But the ROLLANT also makes a very good well shaped, solid bale; in wheat straw it’s not unusual to get 4.5 bales per tonne.”



# SCORPION becomes immobilised

**With the theft of agricultural machinery on the rise, and telescopic handlers being a particular favourite target, to help combat this problem CLAAS is to be one of the first to fit an immobiliser system as standard to its SCORPION range of telescopic handlers**

The immobiliser system will be fitted as standard across the range, from the smallest SCORPION 6030VP up to the top of the range SCORPION 9040VP+.

The immobiliser system works in much the same way as a car immobiliser, where typically a number of electrical circuits, such as the starter and fuel pump circuits, are isolated.

Each SCORPION will now have its own unique key, in which is embedded a chip that automatically de-activates the immobiliser two seconds after the key is inserted in the ignition. On turning the machine off and removing the key, the immobiliser will be automatically activated 30 seconds later.

In addition to this simple theft-beating initiative, CLAAS has also

taken the opportunity to do some minor changes in the cab to simplify operation. Here, the main change is that all the operational controls are now colour coded and all the switch gear has been updated. By colour coding the controls, this ensures that the appropriate control can be quickly and easily identified, which will be especially beneficial where infrequent users are operating the SCORPION.



# New Apprentice Graduates

The achievements of the latest students to complete the CLAAS Apprenticeship Scheme were recognised in a Graduation Ceremony held recently at the CLAAS UK headquarters at Saxham, Suffolk.

The four-year course was introduced by CLAAS UK seven years ago and this year the numbers joining the scheme have doubled following the introduction of a new course based at Barony College in Dumfries.

The five students, who have all qualified with an NVQ Level 3, received their graduation certificates from Clive Last, Chairman of CLAAS UK. During the four-year course, they each had the opportunity to train at the CLAAS Group headquarters at Harsewinkel in Germany, before travelling to New Zealand for three months to work in their final year.

The successful students are, from left to right: Ben Tarver (Mill Engineers, Bibury); James Gulliver (Southern Harvesters, Hampshire); Edward Farrow (Manns, Saxham); Joe Waldron (Southern Harvesters, Reading) and Adam Borrett (Manns, Saxham).



## CLAAS graduate award

**Thomas Andrews picked up a special award when he graduated from Harper Adams University College, Shropshire.**

Tom, 22, from Upperhulme, near Leek, was the recipient of the CLAAS (UK) Trophy 2008 which is awarded to the best student on the BSc honours agricultural engineering with marketing and management course.

At a prize-giving on graduation day, principal engineering lecturer Bill Rowley said: "It is an obvious indication of Tom's ability if I tell you that he will be receiving a first class honours degree this afternoon. But students on this course can also choose, in their final year, to undertake an engineering project or a marketing/management thesis."

"Tom chose the latter and obtained an 'A' grade – no mean feat for an engineering student in his secondary discipline."



## Open Farm Sunday - June 7th



Following the success of last year's Open Farm Sunday which saw in excess of 150,000 people visit over 400 Farm Sunday events around the UK, CLAAS UK will again be one of the major sponsors for this year's event, which is being held on Sunday June 7th.

With the assistance of its dealers throughout the UK, CLAAS will be supporting the event by loaning machinery initially for all the pre-event workshops, but will also be supplying machinery and support for the larger farm open days on June 7th.

The aim of the 19 workshops is to enable those who are opening their farms to meet other 'old hands' and learn from their experiences. There will also be advice from the organisers on a complete range of topics from how to publicise their event, questions and answers, event management, Health and Safety and insurance.

For further information on Open Farm Sunday or to register for the Workshops, visit either the Open Farm Sunday website at [www.farmsunday.org](http://www.farmsunday.org); telephone LEAF on 02476 413911 or email Carol Cartwright at [carol.cartwright@leafuk.org](mailto:carol.cartwright@leafuk.org).



Look out for the summer issue of KidsTimes which will be out at the beginning of the school summer holidays and will contain details of our latest competition for CLAAS Kids members, plus a free gift!





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**CLAAS**

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CLAAS UK Ltd, Saxham, Bury St Edmunds  
Suffolk IP28 6QZ  
Tel: 01284 763100  
www.claas.co.uk



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