

get loose and floppy before the other side, which remained tight. After about a year, or 2,500 bales, chains would have to be replaced. I'm hoping belts on the 644 solve this problem because, otherwise, the 848 was a pretty respectable baler. I'm also looking forward to experimenting with some of the new features on the 644. It's equipped with 'Bale Command Plus', making it possible to electronically change the size of the bale as well as to change from twine to net wrap with the push of a button."

Herbert C. Schreiner, Raleigh, N. Dak.: Although he says it has trouble baling short, dry straw, Herbert likes his 1988 Vermeer 605 J big round baler. "It starts bales easily and its air pressure control offers a choice between hard or soft center bales," he says.

Vernon Reichert, Sheboygan Falls, Wis.: Vernon's pleased with his Gehl SB3250 small square baler. "It's got big capacity, ties bales perfectly, and allows me to switch between natural or plastic twine," he says. "What's more, the company stood behind the baler when I had a small problem with welds while it was still under warranty."

Carroll C. Crum, Littlestown, Pa.: "Improper chain lubrication is a problem with older 850 New Holland balers," says Carroll. "So I mounted oil reservoirs made out of a 6-in. piece of well casing on each side at the top of the baler. A small copper tube drips oil on the chains."

Bill Sickle, St. George, Ontario: Bill recently traded a 1991 Vicon 1211 baler he used to make 3,500 4 by 5-ft. soft center bales for a new Deere 435.

"You could make nice, uniform bales with the Vicon if you were an experienced baler operator but not if you were a rookie. Making soft center bales allows tough hay to cure a little in the bale and I like that," he says. "But the baler needed more steel. The pickup frame broke after making only 100 bales, then again after 3,000 bales even though I'd reinforced the frame with steel

"The pickup frame broke after making only 100 bales."

plate and put on bigger 13.5 by 15 tires after it broke the first time. Side-to-side indicators didn't work right, even when properly calibrated. And the single twine arm took a minute to tie a straw bale."

Steven W. Bowman, DeWitt, Iowa: A "smooth operator" is what Steven calls his 1990 International 8240 small square baler. "There's no plunger rocking motion as there is on a lot of balers I've seen. All you have to do is straddle the windrow and drive," he says. "It's built strong, it's easy to maintain, and it handles all types of material well. Two people on a rack have a hard time keeping up with it."

Julie M. Pearce, Stanwood, Wash.: "We've had little trouble with our 1982 New Holland 311 small square baler," reports Julie. "It performs reliably, makes consistently nice bales, and parts are always available. Our dealership also has an excellent service department."

Richard E. Edgar, Deatsville, Ala.: Richard's reasonably happy with his 1989 Hesston 560 automatic round baler. "It makes tight bales and the automatic control feature works well," he says. "However, there are some problems when hay is not completely dry. Wet hay collects in belts outside the bale wrapping rollers, plugging the machine. They need to stagger or twist the belts, as we did, to allow the material to escape rather than wrap in the rollers."

Laurence E. Sanderson, McLouth, Kan.: "It has required little in the way of repairs over the years," says Laurence about his 1978 Vermeer 605F big round baler. "I've only replaced two bearings and one drive chain."

Ken Ottensmeier, Highland, Ill.: "We just bought a new Gehl 1875 round baler, our third Gehl since 1981. We've always been well pleased," says Ken.

James Randall, Fort Defiance, Va.: "My 1950's vintage New Holland 66 baler was cheap,

is easy to fix, and makes tight, uniform small square bales."

Steve Thompson, Ogden, Utah: Steve owns both a Hesston 4600 and a Case-IH A590 small square baler. "They're fast balers that don't pull your tractor off the windrow," he says. "They make uniform bales with minimal leaf loss."

Wayne Barricklow, Waverly, Kan.: Wayne's happy with the performance of his Deere 535 big round baler. "It has the ability to handle both hay and straw easily," he says.

Allen Fradette, Milaca, Minn.: Allen owns both a 1973 IHC 440 square and a 1991 504IS Vermeer round baler and he's most satisfied with the IHC because it makes good, solid bales. "The Vermeer also makes nice, tight solid hay and straw bales and it starts them easily," he says. "But I've had problems with the bearings, which should be greaseable, and axles, which are too small and weak. I'm still looking for all the 'beef' the company claims to build into their balers."

Mary Breit, Utica, Kan.: Mary has only one complaint with her 1980 Hesston 5800 round baler. "The pickup has just three bars of teeth and they're too lightweight. They break too easily," she says. "Fortunately, teeth aren't expensive. It's just a pain in the neck to replace them so often."

Neil Wirkler, Luana, Iowa: Neil likes his 1977 New Holland 273 small square baler equipped with bale thrower. "It's well constructed and has good capacity. The Super Sweep pickup is excellent for getting extra fine alfalfa without losing leaves," he says. "However, I would like to see them add a hydraulic cylinder to adjust the tongue from transport to field operation."

Richard W. Grube, Dobbin, Texas: Richard owns both a 1972 Vermeer 504 and 1979 Deere 347 square baler. "Both have served us well with minimum maintenance," he says.

Thomas Armstrong, Clarksville, Ohio: Thomas is unhappy with his 1990 New Holland 565 small square baler. "When hay volume in the windrow varies from heavy to light, it's almost impossible to make a solid bale," he says. "If you increase tying tension and the windrow becomes heavy again, bales get extremely heavy which requires another tension adjustment. Sometimes it requires an extra man just to keep tension adjusted. Also, the wagon hitch is under the bale chute making it very inconvenient to hitch and unhitch."

E.H. DeWault, Spring Hill, Kan.: An "out-standing machine" is how E.H. describes his 1985 Deere 535 big round baler. "It requires only routine maintenance for maximum performance," he says. "It's simple to operate and easy to repair."

Glenn R. Arlint, Jerico Springs, Mo.: "If I were to get another baler, it would probably be another Vermeer," says Glenn, well pleased with his Vermeer 605E round baler. "It bales hay in just about any condition. The only improvement I'd suggest is it should make a tighter bale, like newer models."

Roy Thompson, Marion, Mich.: Roy's generally well satisfied with his 1989 New Holland 565 small square baler equipped with thrower. "However, it does seem to pack a little more hay on one side of the bale than the other. The dealer adjusted it and that helped, but it's still not just right," he says. "Otherwise, it seems well-built and hasn't required any repairs."

Clayton Knipping, Chamberlain, S. Dak.: "I've made 20,000 bales weighing from 1,100 to 1,600 lbs. with it and have no complaints," says Clayton about his 1993 New Holland 660. "It makes nice bales, adjusts easily, and requires little maintenance. The minor problems I had early on have since been corrected by factory updates."

James M. Ludeke, Burkburnett, Texas: James' 1978 Hesston 5600 round baler is "reliable and fairly maintenance-free" but has one problem. "In short hay, outside belts tend to slip off the roll," he says. "It probably only needs to be equipped with wider belts on the outside."

John B. Roden, Jr., Thermopolis, Wyo.: John says his 1991 New Holland 855 big round baler is designed well and does a fair job baling in most cases. "However, they need to widen the turning radius so you don't turn tractor wheels into the machine when turning," he says. "The



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"We're the largest U.S. supplier of original belting for all round balers built between 1973 and 1996. In some cases, we can save farmers up to \$800 on a complete set of original belts," says Don Hammond about his company's vast stock and bargain basement prices of baler belts.

Hammond Equipment's inventory includes belts long since out-of-stock in

many places. For example, Hammond says he can fill 99 percent of Vermeer parts orders from inventory.

"We ship at no charge the same day an order is received," he adds.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Hammond Equipment, Rt. 1, Box 66, Faunsdale, Ala. 36738 (ph, fax 334 627-3348).

pickup also needs to be improved in two ways. It needs to be wider so you don't leave so much hay on the ground. It needs a variable speed pickup, too. The twine tying system also leaves something to be desired."

Herb Schwede, Donnybrook, N. Dak.: "I bought a Vermeer 605F used 10 years ago and have used it every year since to make 700 to 1,000 bales," Herb says. "The only problem I had was when the bearing behind the triple sprocket on the main shaft went out. Newer models have a larger bearing there to correct the problem."

Lorne Schellenberg, Tyndall, Manitoba: Lorne is mostly "impressed" with his 1981 Deere 510 round baler. "We have run into very few crops that it won't bale. It just rolls up everything nicely whether it's wet, dry, straw, grass or alfalfa hay," he says. "Occasionally, in wet, heavy crops it will plug, but that's very seldom. It makes solid bales that are easy to handle."

"One complaint, however, is that wet material or twine has a tendency to wrap around the big feed-in roller right behind the pickup. The new open mouth system is a big improvement. Another problem is that the pickup is too small and teeth are far too short. Also, the pickup only has one gauge wheel, making it difficult at times to get close enough to the ground without hitting it."

Charles Jones, Mooresboro, N.C.: Charles' 1976 New Holland Hayliner 273 consistently ties every bale and rarely breaks down. "However, mine is a short-tongue version that doesn't sit far enough to the side of the tractor," he says. "In large windrows tractor tires run over part of the windrow."

Lloyd Lucas, Yankton, S. Dak.: "The back end needs to close so you wouldn't lose so many alfalfa leaves," says Lloyd about a New Holland 850 round baler he bought used. "It doesn't work if hay is too wet or dry, either."

Gene Nance, Chesapeake, Ohio: Gene had trouble with a 1984 Deere 430 big round baler. "I've had ongoing problems with the bale monitor," he says. "The bales it makes look like ice cream cones."

Ray Wettstein, Long Prairie, Minn.: Ray's pleased with his 1990 Vermeer 605J big round baler. "It bales both hay and corn stalks at any moisture even at high speeds. Makes a nice tight even bale every time," he says.

Gerald Snyder, Groten, S. Dak.: Gerald says his 855 New Holland big round baler has been trouble-free, even baling as many as 20 bales an hour in heavy hay. "I also like the bale alarm system that helps keep it from overloading," he says.

Stanley P. Waldie, Rostock, Ontario, Canada: "I've only had to have the service man look at it once," says Stanley about a New Holland 273 small square and 54A bale thrower he bought new in 1977. "But I have had to replace the bushing in the flywheel every three or four years because it wears enough to cause shear pins to break."

Mark L. Oberhansly, Neola, Utah: Mark's generally satisfied with his 1983 Vermeer big round baler, but says it clogs up if hay is too damp or wet.

Tim Shaw, Waterford, Miss.: "The only thing I don't like about it is the price," says Tim about his Deere 535 big round baler. "Otherwise, it makes a nice tight bale and bales twice as much hay in a day as my old Deere 510 did."

Roger Minnis, Riceville, Iowa: Roger's pleased with everything about his 1994 New Holland 855 big round baler except the twine tying set up. "It has twin needles and it's hard to watch both of them to see if they're tying at the same time," he says.

Fred Schwieder, Summers, Ark.: "I'm well pleased with my Vermeer 5041 silage baler," reports Fred. "But I think a pickup that's 6 in. wider would improve performance."

"It has twin needles and it's hard to watch both of them to see if they're tying at the same time."

Stanley Frehdrau, Buhler, Kan.: Stanley's owned Deere balers since 1960 and says his 1987 Deere 347 small square baler is the best one he's owned. "However, it doesn't pick up short milo stalks very well," he adds.

Eugene Benyshek, Cuba, Kan.: Eugene owns a 1973 New Holland 273 square baler and a 1980 New Holland 851 round baler, both of which he's pleased with. "They both have good pickups and make good bales when hay's in the right condition," he says. "One problem is that the square baler's tongue is too short and I either have to drive over the windrow or move the drawbar over. Since the pto shaft is already at an angle, turns are hard on U-joints."