



Meet the Bull Blaster!

Suited to specialist subcontractors and of interest to backhoe and wheel loader, and possibly telehandler owners, the Bull Blaster attachment is selling like hot scones in Europe, according to manufacturer Mike Visser of AP Machinecontrol BV in Holland.

"The Bull Blaster puts an end to the need for manual levelling," says Michael. "It reduces stake-out, considerably improves production speed, and delivers higher accuracy and better quality than is normally possible."

Typical applications include carparks, minor roads, building pads, sports venues and landscaping.

It's a variation upon levellers that are widely used in Europe with light wheel loaders, backhoes and tractors—sometimes towed, but usually pushed.



This 'Bull Blaster' variant owes its popularity over similar devices to its highly effective, smooth hydraulic valve arrangements, developed 'in house' by Mike Visser and his team.

As our pictures show, the blade set-up consists of two elements; a fixed blade (used when withdrawing to create the trimmed surface with the lifting arm of the wheel loader or backhoe in 'float' position) working in cooperation with a floating blade.

"Our hydraulic system offers truly proportional control, which means no more over- or under-shoots when controlling your blade to grade. Control is very smooth and accurate," says Mike. "The advantage of two blades over one is higher accuracy and smoothness, and better compaction. We find that our results are several times better than using a single blade."

Using a dual grade laser and automatic blade control, the Bull Blaster will produce a fine finish ready for concrete or asphalt which is, for example, level in one axis and has a slope in another.

The attachment is also very popular for creating the accurate bases needed under bricks and pavers.

Apart from accuracy, speed is the big benefit. We met an English user who claimed he'd done a normal week's work in one day. □

In Development by Trimble...

Coming soon from Trimble is the GCS400 system for height and slope control of scraper and dozer blades. It's still in the final stages of field testing, but is due to be released later in the year and was on show so that potential users could get a feel for its capabilities.

The GCS400 (an advancement of the earlier GCS-21 electronic control system) integrates the signals captured from two laser antennae installed on masts on the blade.

It will typically operate in conjunction with a dual grade laser such as the GL700 to establish a height above an RL in one plane and a slope in the other.

This set-up is particularly suited to creating a consistent fall on smaller jobs such as parking lots, sports venues, minor roadworks and building sites where no digital design has been produced, nor is warranted. As such, it supplies useful laser control at a lower financial outlay than would be involved in the employment of a total station.

In addition to simultaneously controlling a machine's lift and tilt functions from a single box, a key advantage of the GCS400 system is the option to select from two elevation control modes. One is "independent mode," which allows the operator to control the lift and tilt functions independently from each other. The other is "linked mode," which ties the lift and tilt functions together, allowing the operator to maintain the blade parallel to the laser beam.

With this unique feature, the system then treats the two masts as one, setting them at the same elevation and allowing the operator to simply adjust grade through the use of one switch. □

