

SJ Bargh looks outside road haulage for increased profits

MILK AND GENERAL haulage contractor SJ Bargh boosted its pre-tax profits by 25%, from £1.6m to £2m, in the year ending 30 April 2006. But it reports that the growth was driven by warehousing and property – not transport.

The company, based in Caton, near Lancaster, also boosted its operating profit from £1.5m to £1.9m over the year.

Managing director Stewart Cornthwaite confirms that the company's interests outside haulage helped improve profits.

"The business environment continues to be challenging in relation to haulage," says Cornthwaite. "Increasing fuel prices are having a direct impact on our gross margins and continue to be a major concern.

"However, warehousing, prop-

erty and other investments have significantly affected our overall results," he adds.

The company says it is the largest independent milk haulier in the North-West, with 53 vehicles on the road. Starting out in milk haulage in 1935, the company subsequently moved into general haulage.

Customers include Arla Foods, Hydro Chemicals and Tate & Lyle.

Plimsoll lists most profitable UK hauliers

INDUSTRY ANALYST Plimsoll Publishing has named some of the UK's most successful road haulage companies based on financial performance, productivity and sales.

However, one of the firms that makes the list of top performers – GW Sissons – has recently downsized considerably and now looks likely to quit the industry.

Among other firms on the list are Loughborough's Fred Sherwood & Sons; Scotland's Maxi Group; RDL Distribution (recently bought by Wincanton); and G Sweeney of Stockton-on-Tees.

Senior analyst David Pattison says: "The rest of the industry should be falling over themselves to do business with these companies. For me, profits are the key to a successful company."

Bryan Sissons, MD of GW Sissons, says it has taken a "hell of a lot of hard work" to keep the company successful since his great grandmother set up the business.

However, he says next year's financial results will tell a different story; he's downsized and plans to retire: "We've gone from 60 vehicles to 14. I have decided there's more to life than running a haulage company. I'll get out while I am on top."

Rob Masters expands with trio of Volvos

WELLINGBOROUGH machinery and plant haulier Rob Masters is expanding its fleet with the order of three new top-spec Volvos.

The 6x2 FH13 rigids with Globetrotter cabs will be equipped with Hiab cranes rated at 42 tonnes; they will be on the road early next year.

The new vehicles, which will take the fleet to 27 trucks, are the firm's first at Euro-4.

Proprietor Rob Masters explains: "We've gone for the dreaded Ad-Blue. I've never known a product to cause so much controversy, but it's not as much of a bug-bear as people think."



▲ Rob Masters has chosen to use Ad-Blue



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