

ON YOUR OWN

HELPING EQUIPMENT OWNERS OPERATE PROFITABLY

Volume 17 Number 2

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FIELD REPORT

COMPANY PROFILE

Miller & Miller Custom Services, Rockwall, TX
Principals: Bill and Jason Miller
Applications: New commercial and residential site development
Featured Cat Equipment:
D5G XL Track-Type Tractor, 939C Track-Type Loader, 312B L Track Excavator



The Miller's Cat 312B L Excavator features the time-saving Pin Grabber-Plus quick coupler system.

Miller and Miller Custom Services make Caterpillar their fleet of choice

MAKING the SWITCH

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At the top of the list of many reasons Bill Miller and his son, Jason, switched to an all Caterpillar fleet last year was name recognition. "The name is important because Cat equipment is respected," says Bill. "If you pull up with another brand, people just regard your business differently."

When Miller and Miller Custom Service, of Rockwall, TX, now pull up to a site, it is with a Cat 939C Track-Type Loader, a 312B L Track Excavator, and a D5G XL Track-Type Tractor. Not only did they switch to Cat equipment, but it's the first time they have invested in a completely brand-new fleet.

Colleagues and clients alike took notice. "They come up to us all the time and say, 'Wow, you've switched over to Cat, and it's all new equipment!' Everyone knows that this is premier equipment," says Bill.

When Miller refers to his Cat line as "premier," he is talking about the reliability and durability of the equipment. He's also talking about the quality of service and support Miller and Miller receives from their local Cat dealership.

"We traded up to a full Cat fleet because, after researching all the other equipment out there, nothing quite compares to Cat," Miller maintains. "It's better equipment overall, and the resale value of Cat equipment will always hold up better than other brands. I researched this issue long and hard with several sources, and Cat has earned that reputation in the market."

High Technology

Miller and Miller has built a solid reputation, too, with high tech "completely stakeless" grading for site preparations using Global Positioning Systems (GPS),



"I never realized that the Cat name would make such a big difference – but it does."
—Bill Miller

Total Positioning Systems (TPS) and laser grading. Their residential and commercial sites can range from 10,000 to 500,000 square feet.

The data for the entire job is obtained directly from the engineer in electronic format and transferred to the computer. The computer software compiles the data, and each point is read by the line-of-site TPS system to transfer existing elevations to the computer in real time.

Finally, that information is displayed in real time on the computer in the Cat D5G XL cab where the operator adjusts his work according to the readouts on the monitor. "If it tells me to cut a foot-and-a-half at a particular point, then I cut a foot-and-a-half," Miller explains. "We rough cut everything with GPS or TPS to get it to grade and use the laser to get perfectly flat building pads on the finish grade," Miller explains. "With this technology, 'Blue Topping' for paving is becoming a thing of the past!"

The technology is fast and accurate. "The laser on pads or large warehouse sites is accurate down to 1/4-inch the first time."

Easy Hydraulics

While the Cat 939C and the D5G XL move and rip dirt and make grade, the 312B L Track Excavator is put to work loading trucks and trenching underground utilities. The Millers opted to install the Pin Grabber-Plus quick coupler on the 312B L Excavator, which, with the push of a button in the cab, allows the operator to switch within seconds between a standard 36-inch bucket and a 24-inch rock bucket, or a hydraulic hammer and augers. The Millers also added bi-directional hydraulics on the 312B L to accommodate the hydraulic hammers and augers. "The hydraulics are quicker and smoother than anything I've used on other machines," says Miller.

Smoothness of controls applies to the ride and operation of the D5G XL Track-Type Tractor, as well, says Miller. "With the extra long tracks it operates smoother and is much more stable. Plus, you cannot stall the machine and the tracks never slip. We're moving a truckload of dirt with every pass with power to spare."

It also lets us do an accurate job on slopes in large parking lots or on streets, the first time. With this technology, we can do 40,000 square feet in a day and get it within 0.5- to 0.25-of-an-inch grade the first time, clear across the site."

"This technology has been a real selling point for us, especially now using the Cat D5G. We work faster and do it right the first time," says Miller.

When Miller first shopped around for equipment, he was pleased that local representatives from Cat Financial Corp. made an effort to visit him. "They came out to our site and were truly interested in what we were doing and our plans for the future," Miller says. "They saw that we had made a serious investment in the GPS, TPS and laser technology. After seeing how we did things, they knew we were in it for

the long haul."

As for service and support from their Cat dealer, Miller says, "It's much better than any we've received from our past dealers. It means a lot that our local Cat dealer better when Miller and Miller switched to Cat equipment. "Now the work is finding us," Miller laughs.

He relates the story of a recent client who scouted out their operation at four different sites before coming forward and offering them the opportunity to bid on a job.

"He hired us because he liked the way we worked and the speed at which we can accomplish a job. He said we were doing better work in less time than the crew he had working at the time."

"More and more, people drive by and see the equipment and then stop to talk. Our existing clients have been more impressed and happier with our work since we got Cat equipment."

"I think the Cat name is a big part of it. I never realized that the name would make such a big difference – but it does."



Moving dirt has never been easier with the 939C Track-Type Loader.

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Joystick Controls

When it comes to precision operation and ease-of-use, Miller says, "Hands down, it was the hydraulic joystick controls that sold us on this equipment."

From excavator to track loader to dozer, Miller and Miller operators can switch machines throughout the day and have similar familiarity with the controls.

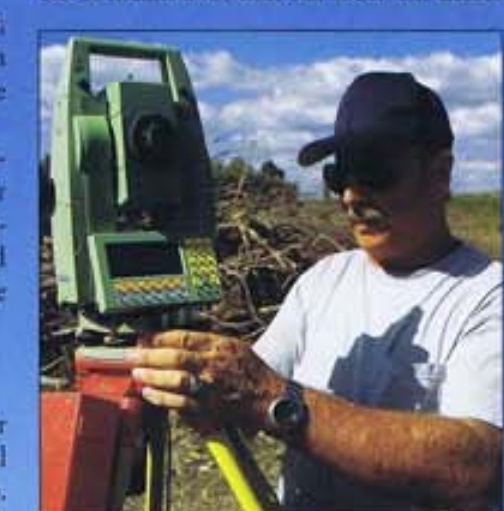
"The joystick controls are not only easier to use, they are more accurate," Miller says. "The 939C Loader is quicker at loading trucks than anything we've ever used because the operator has more accurate control."

Cat Finance

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Bill Miller inspecting a TPS machine.

returns our calls immediately. I'm a small owner-operator compared to some firms, yet, they have bent over backwards to help us out. Everyone is doing a great job."



Miller and Miller Custom Services established a fleet of Cat equipment including this D5G XL Track-Type Tractor for moving dirt, grading with the blade and ripping hard rock sites.

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