

BUCKEY PRIDE

OVER 20 YEARS OLD, THIS 80ZII CONQUERS WEATHER
EXTREMES AND TOUGH WORKING ENVIRONMENTS



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If a piece of equipment can symbolize a company, this 1990 Kawasaki 80ZII, with its amazing 40,000+ hours under the hood, is a prime example. The wheel loader, like its owner, has managed to weather the changing seasons with grace — whether it's temperature or business climate.

The machine's proud owner is Buckeye Ready-Mix, located in central Ohio. The company was formed in 1999, but thanks to past mergers, its roots actually go back to the 1920s. Partly owned by Oldcastle but majority-owned by Anderson Concrete, Buckeye enjoys the buying power of a big corporation and the independence of a family-run company.

WEATHERING THE CHANGES

Today, Buckeye covers a 50-mile radius with 14 facilities, 80 trucks, and 140 employees. But in a way, they are a shadow of their former selves. Anticipating the economic downturn, they cut expenses, sold off trucks, reduced personnel, and slashed over a thousand non-core products.

And it was a good thing they did. Work fell by over 30 percent. What was a 50/50 split between commercial and residential greatly skewed toward commercial.

But the good news is the company has been able to ride the downturn, and stands ready to expand when the time is right. As it turns out, some new warehouses are going up, and new businesses are moving into their area. Sensing a freshening change in the economic wind, Buckeye has just bought two 85ZV-2 wheel loaders, which will boost their Kawasaki fleet to over a dozen.

"We keep buying Kawasaki because they don't let us down," says Larry Randles, Vice-President, Operations. "They are very dependable; we've had minimal problems. We have enough challenges with the weather, keeping our plants operational, and keeping our other equipment running."

John Wells, plant manager of the Delaware Plant, agrees. "I'm on my fourth generation of Kawasaki wheel loaders. We run the 80ZII here and we've never had any major issues with it, just normal wear and tear. It's 19 degrees outside and it started right up with the first crank.

"We're not easy on equipment; they get abuse every day. But all the Kawasaki loaders have been good for us. They are high quality. I drove a Case loader for awhile, and I wouldn't go back. And we've sometimes had to put inexperienced people on it, so the ease of operation of Kawasaki wheel loaders is important to us too.

"I also love the technology on the machines we're using now. We use the MODM to track fuel usage. And when we got our 90ZV-2, we had the factory rep come out and give us a class on maintaining the loader, since we do our own maintenance."

Here at FOCUS magazine, we're certainly not superstitious. But the fact that their 80ZII is still going strong and has emerged as the Grand Prize Winner of Kawasaki's Loader Legend Contest, certainly has to mean something positive for the future of Buckeye Ready-Mix.

Buckeye Ready-Mix is serviced by RECO Equipment, Columbus, Ohio.



Rob Barnett is the RECO sales representative serving Buckeye Ready-Mix. This is Rob's first year selling construction equipment, and he has already earned Kawasaki's MVP 2010.



When Buckeye Ready Mix got their 90ZV-2 in 2007, it was the first loader in the state of Ohio with electronic/computer controls.