



will be ordering machines again, except in ones and twos.
 "More hire companies are under pressure to say open never mind bring in new stock and the only real openings we have seen recently have been Bann Hire and Armagh Hire.
 "Most of our own sales this year have been for SV08, ViO 25 and ViO55s with single units forming most of the orders although we have taken a significant multiple order for delivery and announcement next month."

Yanmar Starts Year Strongest

IT turned out last year that the dealers who were predicting low figures on mini excavator sales were correct. The estimated figure of 130 units never materialised with actual sales coming in closer to the 100 mark, down to a third of the 2008 total. With fewer than 30 units sold to date this year, it doesn't look as if the buyers have returned as yet although there have been a few multiple deals for Kubota and Yanmar. By the end of this year, a few dealers may be showing increases and it is likely that the sector may even exceed last year's total but we are a long way from even starting to return to the 350 plus units that were common a few years ago.

With so few sales so far this year, any comparison seems pointless but at the time of interview, Yanmar, Kubota and Takeuchi appear to be ahead with Bobcat and Hitachi also having sold some units.

Yanmar distributor Keith Willis of Crumlin Plant Sales was one of those who predicted a 100 unit market - over 65% down on the previous year. "Last year we saw one single multiple sale to a hire company and this year it looks as if few



Top: Last month's sale to McDowell Contracts of three Kubota 2.5 tonne zero tail swing U25-3as and a five tonne Kubota KX161-3a
Left: A new Yanmar B25 for Eoin Sayers of NGS Landscaping in Bushmills