



PRESS RELEASE
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Rokbak RA30 delivers on all fronts for Skene Group

Down the road from Rokbak's Motherwell HQ, a renowned family-owned Scottish construction materials business has shopped local and adopted the RA30 into the fold.

While [Rokbak](#) continues to build a global reputation for robust and reliable articulated haulers, just 50 miles directly east of the company's headquarters in Motherwell, Scotland, [Skene Group Construction Services Ltd](#) has put the [RA30](#) to work.

Skene Group is a proud family business with a core group of long-term employees which was started in 1968 by the now-retired Donald Skene, with his son Neil later taking over as Chairman and daughter Jill as a Director. Today, it operates a 100-person workforce, with employees valued for the individual expertise they possess. For Skene, it's always about bringing in the best people, and best equipment, to each aspect of its operations.

"Our partnerships are dictated first and foremost by attitudes and relationships – it's all about the people that we deal with," says Skene Group Managing Director [Darren Forrester](#), who has been with the company for a quarter of a century. "And, as a self-proclaimed people business, Skene operates fundamentally through good service and quality. It's a difficult industry to keep everybody happy in, but it matters to us to get things right.

"Our customers know that we deliver. And, manufacturing in the outdoors, whether it's rain, hail, sleet or snow, our product quality must remain consistently high."

Well-known around the local area for having its own weather-system, Soutra Mains Quarry in Pathhead, Midlothian, has provided the conditions to demonstrate the best of the Rokbak RA30. Skene Group operates this site, extracting material for a concrete plant through on-site wash plants and crushing trains – primarily as fill materials and the coarse recycled aggregate of crushed concrete stone. As one of the leading independent quarry operators, Skene currently supplies pre-cast concrete blocks to around 50% of Scotland's housing market.

Loaded with pride

"The RA30 has been a very good, strong asset to Soutra Mains," says Quarry Operations Director [Kevin Hill](#). "It's rugged and robust, it can stand up to the conditions it's subjected to, and it suits the type of rock we've got here."

The RA30 arrived on site in late September 2022 to replace an old hauler, with Skene Group having worked once again in collaboration with long-time dealer [Molson Group](#).

“When we needed to find an articulated hauler manufacturer, we were already attracted by Rokbak’s proximity to us,” explains Darren. “Initially we were speaking to our contact at Molson, but we soon discovered that we would also have close contact with Rokbak throughout the process, which helped us to fine-tune the product to our specific needs.

“It was great to have that touch-and-feel of the Motherwell factory, to be able to jump in the car and see the hauler in its manufacturing stage and meet the guys that were building it.

“We have been able to see the passion from the assemblers and machinists to product management – you can tell the Rokbak products mean something to them.

“But what most impressed me about Rokbak as a manufacturer is that they allowed us to try both the RA30 and RA40 to see what would suit us personally on-site. Rokbak actually invested in Skene Group before we had even placed an order.”

The RA30 at work

At Soutra Mains, the RA30 is utilised predominantly in the lower benches of the quarry for load and haul, from the bottom level up to the concrete aggregate wash plant. The loading shovel fills the hauler in three passes before the RA30 sets off on an 800-metre round trip across different site levels to the plant and back.

“They’re generally dirty conditions for a dumper,” explains Skene Group Services and Quarry Manager Alex Brodie. “The Rokbak is running on compacted Type 1 sub-base with a few ruts here and there, but it’s nothing the machine can’t cope with. We’ve had no issues – the RA30 goes everywhere and does everything we’ve asked it to do.”

Tailored to your needs

Skene Group’s RA30 customisation involves the popular tailgate and a green beacon which is activated when the cab seatbelts are engaged to ensure operator safety. Side extensions on the truck maximise payload and help prevent spillage while travelling on the haul roads. An auto-lube system ensures everything is greased at the right times, saving operation time and providing safe maintenance. Heated mirror arrangements offer greater visibility down the side of the machine, and an additional mirror on the bonnet as per Skene Group’s request grants even greater safety while manoeuvring.

“This customisation is specific to the demands of Skene Group and the Soutra Mains Quarry,” says [Kenny Price](#), Rokbak’s Regional Sales Manager for EMEA. “Winter conditions are always a challenge, particularly when the quarry endures a lot of rainfall, but the RA30’s capabilities make it more than adept at operating in adverse conditions. The high-performance engine balances controlled power with maximum fuel efficiency and the modulating transmission retarder is coupled with an efficient exhaust brake and fully enclosed oil-cooled multidisc brakes for total control – even on steep slopes.”

Operators praise the RA30

“I’ve been using the Rokbak since it arrived and it’s really nice to operate,” says Quarry Operative Robert Robertson. “When I first arrive on site in the morning, I check over the machine and do the initial checks with the oil, water and hydraulic levels. The layout makes everything quick and clear to see.

“The rear-view camera makes my life a lot easier when you’re reversing the hauler, and the large windows offer a lot of visibility. With any operation, comfort is very important, and it is a

very comfortable truck to drive. Personally, I like the amount of room the cabin offers, as well as the stereo of course!”

The RA30’s spacious ROPS/FOPS certified cabs have been designed to avoid fatigue – with low noise, air-conditioning, cushioned steering and tough suspension. Easy operation and service data extraction is gained through clear instrumentation and an LCD display for operational and service feedback, including fuel consumption, while smart data identifies any faults and damage before they cause downtime.

“One of the most important things is that the machine is consistently available and ready to be utilised,” says Kevin. “That goes a long way, in terms of having the right equipment and minimising the amount of downtime.

“My biggest things are that the guys are happy and that they’re comfortable using it, and that there’s a minimal amount of downtime and low fuel consumption. Obviously, we’re looking to make savings. Bringing the Rokbak in with its low fuel consumption is helping us to reduce the fuel usage in terms of average litres per hour and our overall operational costs.”

Rokbak delivers on customer needs

Skene Group’s hard rock operations are based throughout Central Scotland and the Borders region, with two quarries – the other being Lomond quarry in Fife – a block plant in Crossgates and the head office in Viewfield, offering ready-mix material and concrete blocks throughout these regions.

“When Skene Group was considering replacing an existing hauler, we were able to demonstrate how the RA30 met all of their requirements including safety, efficiency, productivity and operator acceptance,” says [Mark Proudfoot](#), Managing Director, Molson Group. “Feedback for the RA30 has been extremely positive in terms of performance, efficiency and reliability – customers including Skene Group like that it’s modern but down-to-earth.

“In Soutra Mains Quarry we now have a piece of heavy engineering made in Scotland, performing in Scotland and supported in Scotland. We very much see the relationship with Rokbak and Skene Group as a partnership. Working closely with our OEM partners allows us to ensure we meet the needs of the customer as smoothly as possible, and having the customer included in this relationship closes the cycle – common interest, common goals, with all sides pulling in the same direction of having equipment working efficiently on site as part of a profitable operation.

“We love the Rokbak brand, what it stands for and how it aligns with the Molson Group approach: a sustainable forward-thinking company providing the very best equipment as the smart choice for customers, and, importantly, the support required when called upon.”

Ends.

CONTACT:

Jacqueline Reid

Rokbak

Tel: int +44 (0) 7736117456

Email: press@rokbak.com

Charlie Williams

SE10

Tel: int +44 (0) 7891056421

Email: Charlie.williams@se10.com

ABOUT ROKBAK

Rokbak is a manufacturer of off-highway articulated haulers that are used in mining, quarrying, and construction applications around the world. A member of the Volvo Group and headquartered in Motherwell, Scotland, UK, Rokbak has two models of articulated haulers, with payloads ranging from 28 to 38 tonnes (30.9 to 41.9 US tons).

rokbak.com