

TOUGH & FAST



In the scrap business, when the demand is there, you gotta hustle — because time is money.

“Work is cyclical,” says Tyler Barker, of Barker’s Auto Salvage, owned by his dad Tony. “Right now we send out two to three loads a day because it is the end of the year and the mills are working through their inventory. After the first of the year, we’ll probably be back up to around four to five truckloads a day of sorted and crushed metal. The mills drive our business. When they need a lot, we work harder buying off the public. We also buy scrap from the county and we bid jobs where we drop off boxes to be filled.

“One month we sent out 500 tons, then we were asked to send even more. So we sent 800 tons, and that nearly shut us down for awhile as we replenished inventory.

We’re out there to make a dollar just like everyone else.”

Tony Barker started the company 15 years ago, buying cars and salvaging the parts — recycling radiators, batteries, engines, and tires. The company has grown to include steel and non-ferrous metals. They also salvage windshields plus buy new wholesale to resell to the public, as well as offer towing services and some light mechanic work. They buy a wide variety of recyclable items from the public like aluminum wheels, farm equipment, aluminum cans, and appliances. Scrap is either crushed or baled, depending on the material.

Although the company is small, it does have a second location where they buy pipe and other scrap. Plus they can arrange for pick-up of select items.

Right in the heart of the Barker scrap operation is a bustling Kawasaki 80ZV-2, outfitted with a quick attachment and foam-filled tires.

“Our production is up drastically due to the speed and flexibility of the Kawasaki,” says Tony. “So much so that our trucks at the scales don’t back up waiting to get loaded and unloaded.”

From ferrying autos to even semi tractors, son Tyler has nothing but praise for his hard-working wheel loader.

“I love it; it’s a good loader. There’s plenty of lifting power. You don’t feel nervous when lifting heavy loads. The forks are good because they are thicker and a little bit longer than the ones on the loader we had before. We don’t worry about them breaking like they did with the other loader we had.



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“I also like this loader because it’s big and bulky. It looks like a real machine and not a toy. And I love that Cummins engine. It’s got plenty of power. And when you need more, you just push a button. When you don’t, you use less fuel. That saves us money. It is a good all-around loader.”

And when it comes to maintenance, Tyler likes what he sees there too.

“The grease fittings are a lot easier to get to, so it’s easy to grease each day. When you’re ready to change the oil, there’s an easy drain so you don’t have to crawl under the machine. You unscrew it, turn a valve, and the oil drops right out. They did a wonderful job on that.

“And filters? You can get them right here in town at the parts store. We don’t have to go clear to Columbus to get them from the

dealer. When you can get them locally at a good price, that’s a big deal — no special ordering.”

OTHER FEATURES THAT IMPRESS TYLER INCLUDE:

- *The adjustable transmission declutch — allowing a choice as to whether the brake knocks the transmission out of gear.*
- *The ride with the air seat and stable feel.*
- *The cab with its nice size, great visibility, toasty heater, and powerful air conditioner.*
- *The brakes. Tyler finds they can be taken apart more easily than other models, so they are faster to service.*
- *The quick attachment. “It really works,” says Tyler. “Pretty much anybody can do it.”*



“Driving the 80ZV-2 is like driving my derby car — tough and fast.” Tyler Barker, son and operator, Barker’s Auto Salvage.

“Tyler sums up about everything except one more thing that I like — the big roomy cab and seat. It’s a pleasure to operate. Our rep at RECO, Rob Barnett, insisted on a demo of the 80ZV-2 with us. We did, and the rest, as they say, is history,” says Tony.

Barker’s Auto Salvage is serviced by RECO Equipment, Columbus Ohio.