

HIGH WORK-RATE EQUIPMENT IMPROVES STANDARDS

by D. B. Harrison

Introduction of high work-rate grass cutting equipment at Tyrrells Wood Golf Club this year has already resulted in a significant saving in man hours.

Head Greenkeeper, Mr Bert Watson, who has been with the club for 10 years has two assistant greenkeepers on the 120 acre golf course.

Mr Watson says that they only introduced high work-rate machinery in March this year. Improvement of fairways and greens has been such that members have made a special point of expressing appreciation. "We have never had so many compliments before," Mr Watson commented.

He added: "Although we are still hard at it every day of the week with a staff of only three we are producing better results more easily than would otherwise have been possible."

Describing the factors which contributed, Mr Watson explains that manoeuvrability of their Toro ride-on equipment makes it possible to cut steep slopes and banks that previously had to be cut by hand.

The biggest time saving using high work-rate equipment has been on the greens. The 18 greens can all be cut now by two men in a total of about 7 man-hours a task which once took three men up to 12 man-hours.

It used to take five men to maintain the course properly but with the new equipment the present staff of three can now complete the work more easily with better results.

After a detailed assessment of the grass cutting needs the Club agreed to go ahead and invest in a comprehensive range of new equipment for all grass cutting needs.

They purchased two high work-rate machines, the Toro 11ft. Super Pro and the Toro 70 in. Professional, both power driven gang mowers.

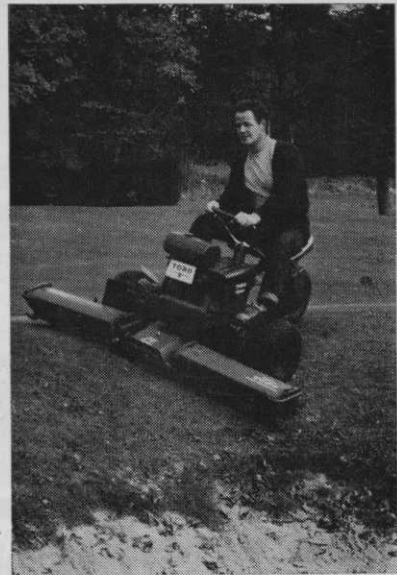
The Super Pro cuts 46 acres a day and handles all the fairways in less than two days and with 50 cuts a yard appears to have produced a denser turf.

The Toro 70 in. cuts aprons and approaches, sloping banks up to 1 in 4, and handles grass up to three inches high. The height of cut control allows for quick adjustment for fine cutting of approaches.

A Flymo 21 in. Contractor air-cushion mower cuts the more difficult banks and grass areas beyond the scope of the 70 in. Toro.

For greens the club uses two Toro high work-rate 21 in. "Greensmaster" models which have resulted in a 50 per cent saving in time and, with 147 cuts per yard, a better sward.

The Club was able to acquire all the machines under a leasing agreement through Flymo Limited of Watford, without a large capital expenditure.



Many Golf Clubs are now having to cope with far less staff than they had a few years ago putting a greater work load on existing staff who still have to get through the same amount of work.

Recent experience at Tyrrells Wood Golf Club shows that the proper utilisation of high work-rate equipment is not only economical but results in improved working conditions for greenkeepers and makes a high standard of professional turf care more easily attainable. Moreover, this type of equipment could help in attracting a high standard of trainee groundsmen, one of today's biggest problems.