

CUTTING THE FUEL BILLS AND THE GRASS

K. R. Buckeldee

Product Training Manager Ransomes Sims and Jefferies Ltd.

Although the immediate threat of petrol rationing has receded much higher fuel prices now seem certain, and fuel saving in all spheres becomes increasingly important.

Golf clubs must be wondering how they can cut their fuel bills as much as possible and still keep their grass in good trim.

Ransomes of Ipswich have suggested some answers.

There is not much that can be done immediately at manufacturer level to increase economy, but a great deal can be achieved at the customer/operator/service level. Fuel economy is affected by the state of the machine, and its engine, and its usage.

Most motorists are seeing lower petrol consumption since the introduction of the maximum speed limit of 50 mph.

A similar saving can be made with a mower by reducing speed, using less h.p. and less r.p.m. In the case of governed engines, a reduced load can be achieved by cutting in a lower gear. The removal of trailing seats is another obvious way to save excess power and therefore fuel.

Cylinder cutters are more efficient users of fuel than rotary or flail cutters, which put higher loads on the engine.

Frequency of cut can be reduced. Increasing the interval between cuts from say seven to ten days would save fuel. Leaving grass uncut for as long

as 14 days would not, as the extra growth would demand a higher power output and more fuel than two easier cuts.

Fuel can be saved by a slightly higher height of cut, which keeps the blades out of the 'mat', and prevents soil scalping, which demands more work from the engine and therefore more fuel.

Keeping out of the 'mat' and stopping scalping will also have the effect of keeping blades sharper longer, an important factor in fuel saving when the efficiency of the machine itself is considered.

Correct adjustment of chains and belts to prevent slip, and lubrication to keep bearings free, all have their place in keeping fuel consumption down.

Correct cylinder adjustment with only a slight rubbing contact between the two cutting surfaces is also of prime importance. The idea is to make the motor mower as easy to push as a hand mower, that it so demands the least possible power from the engine.

The final area for fuel saving is the engine. Here attention to detail can bring considerable savings. Cleanliness is important. Making sure there are no leaks in taps and pipes and careful filling with no spillage may seem obvious precautions, but savings can be made this way.

The carburettor must be checked for cleanliness in the filter and float chamber and absence of leaks.

If the air cleaner element is dirty, it has the same effect as running the motor with the choke out, starving it of air, and wasting fuel. Evidence of this is thick black smoke from the exhaust. Excessive use of the choke should also be avoided.

The ignition system is very important. Spark plugs should be clean and gaps correct. Ignition cable and suppressor caps should be checked for cracks, contact breaker points checked for cleanliness and correct gaps, and the ignition timing should be correctly set.

It is not recommended to fit the fuel economisers on sale as no benefits have been found from these when subjected to controlled tests.

Diesel engines have a more precise fuel system, but attention must be paid to fuel injector pumps, injectors, air cleaners and pipework.

The same attention to usage and the efficiency of the rest of the machine as in the case of petrol engines will result in the same fuel saving.

Although rotary and flail mowers are less efficient users of fuel over large areas than cylinder mowers, in small areas where appearance is unimportant, fuel may be saved by leaving grass to grow over a longer period of time and then cutting it down with a mower of one of these types.

If a rotary is used, keeping the blades sharp will save fuel, as will making sure flail shafts are balanced and the flails sharp.

But to maintain an acceptable finish and a proper standard of hygiene in areas of grass used by the public, cylinder mowers are most efficient and the best means of conserving fuel.

There is no single way to cut bills but close attention to detail in the care and maintenance of the machine and its engine, and thoughtful usage will in many cases result in considerable savings.

May

ANDREWS POWER FORCE

Professionals, like you, need fast reliable power. The sort of performance that Andrews guarantee with every machine they sell. If you want the best—here they are.

PORTABLE POWER



Take your power with you. An Andrews generator gives you instant, economical power at the pull of a cord. These portable generators come in no less than 7 different sizes to answer your power needs. Every unit is built to the same sturdy specification for trouble-free performance anywhere, anytime.

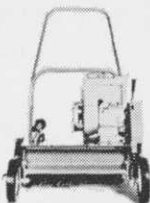
'CYCLONE' SPREADING POWER

The most powerful spreader on turf now comes in three sizes. The 'Standard' covers 120 sq yards in one minute. The 'Compact' is ideal for larger lawns. Designed for easy towing behind any ride-on mower. The 'Major' is the really big one—its giant 10 ft. swath gives you a two acre per hour performance!



FLAIL-SAFE WITH BLUEBIRD

'Bluebird' is the most powerful scarifier on turf. Its strong, almost maintenance-free, 5 h.p. engine flails out grass cuttings, twigs, leaves and lawn-stifling thatch. The result—an immaculate sward. It's certain to be our 'Best Buy' in '74.



BILLY GOAT EATS RUBBISH PROBLEMS

'Billy Goat' has an insatiable appetite for rubbish. No special diet, this machine picks up leaves and grass cuttings, plastic cups, newspapers, cans and even bottles . . . then reduces all to a mere fraction of its original size and holds it in a huge dust-free bag ready for disposal!



Get the facts NOW. Pin this page to your letterhead and post to:

ANDREWS LAWN EDGERS LTD.,
The Garden Machine Centre, Sunningdale,
Berks. SL5 0JJ. Telephone: Ascot 21960.