

## Why Pick on Lawnmowers?

You haven't by any chance been following the debate about the admission by the manufacturer that faulty replacement hips have been fitted to unwitting patients over the last few years and how these poor people are going to have to go through the pain and stress of having them removed and replaced?

Now you may be wondering what on earth I'm doing using your magazine to talk about hip replacements. I wouldn't blame you and, believe me, I wouldn't have chosen to open with such a subject if it hadn't been for something I read in a paper recently.

A health spokesman was quoted as saying that there was more quality assurance involved in the manufacture of a lawnmower than there was in the production of a new hip.

My first thought was to think what good publicity it was for all the makers of grass guzzlers among our friends in the industry - at long last a bit of recognition.

Then I thought a bit longer. Why were lawnmowers chosen to make such a comparison? Surely they could have said the same about television sets, or washing machines, or even bicycles.

Then it dawned on me. To the general public the comparison, "there is more quality assurance involved in the manufacture of a Rolls Royce than there is in the production of a new hip" would have carried no weight. "So what" would have been the cry. It needed to be something deemed frivolous to make the analogy work.

Why was a lawnmower used? Because, obviously by some, it is perceived to be a mundane, bog standard, piece of garden machinery with no real importance in the scheme of things whatever. That's why.

I'll put money on the fact that the person who brought lawnmowers into the debate about hip replacements knows nothing about what it takes to produce the machines which cut late 20th century grass. If he did, he would have chosen something else with which to make his perfectly valid health safety point.

The sophistication now employed in even the most basic of mowers would leave John Logie Baird and Isambard Kingdom Brunel gasping in admiration while, if the idea for hydrostatic drive had popped into Archimedes' brain while in the bath, he may have leapt out and charged through the town, dripping and naked, shouting "Eureka!" for a totally different reason. The lawns of Syracuse would have been the most manicured in Sicily. Who says I don't do any research!

Additionally, isn't the fact that you can have seven or eleven blade reels spinning at blurring speed on modern mowers reason enough to ensure that quality assurance and health and safety is uppermost in the production process?

The domestic and amenity machinery industry, a multi-million contributor to Britain's economy, deserves more than to be used as the stooge in an unrelated argument.

Pick on something really pointless next time, like roller blades or virtual reality games.

Editor: Scott MacCallum



# Greenkeeper

INTERNATIONAL

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