

# Double the power?

James de Haviland gives us his verdict on the ATT INFiNiSystem™ with a little help from his friends at Heythrop Park



**Manufactured by Advanced Turf Technology, the ATT INFiNiSystem is sold and marketed through The Grass Group. This is a clever bit of kit, but what is it exactly?**

As the INFiNiSystem concept is keen to shout about both its versatility and choice of battery or hybrid power, the basic message may well get lost. So rather than go into all the various options and cassette choices it is best to focus one simple point. Is this system based around a good pedestrian greens mower?

The short answer is a qualified yes. If you just want a conventional

dedicated pedestrian 22" greens mower, and nothing else, you may go for a proven mower from the likes of Baroness, John Deere, Toro or Jacobsen instead. But with this machine you have both its cassette system and alternative power options to consider.

Let's look at the INFiNiSystem traction unit in its wholly battery powered mode. Taking power via a 30kg lead acid battery pack, it does without fancy lithium ion power cells.

The downside is that the power pack will run out of puff after completing up to seven typical greens. You would need to buy another battery pack or two to complete an 18 hole course, swapping over exhausted packs as they run out of juice.

For most golf courses, this will be too much of a hassle to consider. So ATT has another solution in the form of 1.5kW Power Module which simply slots in place of the battery pack. This two-power option could mean you can carry out hushed early morning mowing for some of the holes on the battery and then switch to day-long hybrid stamina as the rest of the world wakes up. Seems like a good compromise.

None of this is of any relevance unless the traction unit itself is mated to a mowing 'cassette' that delivers a top-notch finish. If you are blessed with the healthy dose of cynicism that protects you from spurious claims, the chances are you will need some convincing.

Greens mowers are precision tools, and a cassette mower element could suggest versatility over cut quality. Well - be prepared to be pleasantly surprised. During our all too brief run with the INFiNiSystem in its mower role the finish it achieved was top notch.

"The way in which the mower follows contours is good," says Dave Capes, mechanic at Heythrop Park. "From a mechanic's point of view the cassette system has the attraction of making it easy to swap the mower for one with different settings quickly too."

A key advantage of the cassette system developed by ATT is that it was developed as a mower first. The mounting system incorporates a flexible mount that allows the cassette chassis to move in the lateral plain. In work, the cutting cylinder's freedom to follow contours ensures a good cut over undulations with a reduced risk of scalping. An added

BELOW: Swapping the SMART cassettes



**INFiNiSystem™ list prices and cassette choices**

Traction unit and chassis

INFiNiSystem™ 22" traction unit with chassis .....£5,420

Petrol Power Module .....£1,500

Battery Power Module .....£720

**SMART Cassettes**

SMARTCut 7, 11 or 14 blades .....£990

SMARTHatchmaster .....£995

SMARTVibe .....£1,150

SMARTUltraGroomer .....£1,260

SMARTScarifier .....£950

SMARTSarel .....£795

SMARTSpiker .....£704

SMARTPowerBrush .....£720

SMARTBrush .....£650

**Complete mower guide price .....£8,646**

(To include Traction unit with Petrol Power Module, SMARTCut mower cassette, Rear roller power brush, Transport kit and Grass bucket.

tweak on the cylinder is the ability to adjust its angle to the bottom blade. As the latter is worn back and reground, the way in which it acts against the cylinder blades alters. This can be adjusted on the ATT cutting head, enabling more of the bottom blade to be used before it needs to be replaced, with no need to compromise the quality of cut.

The cassette chassis itself is engineered to allow the cylinder, of either 7, 11 or 14 blades, to be popped out and replaced with a choice of turfcare tools – see left. In itself, the cassette chassis is an interesting part of the system as it comprises front and rear rolls, with the choice of ribbed or smooth front unit and with a gear driven brush option for the smooth roll at the back.

In fact it is the detailing of the mower that impresses. All the bearings are sealed units of a standard design. If you need a new one you can buy a replacement from pretty much any decent bearing supplier. Even the batteries in the battery power pack are replaceable with types available from a motorcycle dealer.

“I think the mower feels a bit heavy with the battery in place but it is just fine with the engine power pack,” says Mark Davies, green-keeper at Heythrop. “We also ran the battery flat in just under seven greens. Even allowing for the quiet operation in battery mode, I would choose hybrid power.”

**Same cassettes fit ride-on triples**

The cassette chassis plus an adaptor kit will also fit John Deere, Toro, Jacobsen and Hustler Turf ride on-triples. The Grass Group has existing cassette users employing essentially the same units on their triples as used for the INFiNiSystem.

Of equal importance, a ride-on can be fitted with all-new cutting cylinders, so allowing triple users to keep an existing mower but economically rejuvenated with all-new cutting units.

Which brings us back to where we started.

The Grass Group has a lot to say about the ATT System and the INFiNiSystem pedestrian traction unit. So much so that the versatility almost gets in the way of the basics. Look at the INFiNiSystem traction unit as a mower that can be battery or hybrid powered first. Try it out as a greens mower.

In hybrid guise, the power unit will do what a ‘conventional’ greens

mower will do. It will also do the same on battery power, but will need a fresh power pack or recharge after seven holes.

If the unit impresses as a mower, then you can look at the full range of SMART cassette options that enable it to do more. Were we impressed? We did not have the machine long enough to come away with a concrete yes.

You can only give that when you have a machine for long enough to learn how to work with it and see how a swap to various SMART cassettes works on a repeated basis. Initial impressions suggest the INFiNiSystem is certainly a good mower and one those with an open mind should put on their demo list.

“I think we would need more time to really get to grips with what the INFiNiSystem offers,” says Course Manager Phil Helmn.

“The system is packed with some really good ideas and I can see the appeal of being able to swap cassettes and even use the same units on a ride-on triple. Electric drive and hybrid power is interesting but battery power is too short in our application”.

*Thanks to Phil Helmn, Dave Capes, Mark Davies, Heythrop Park Resort and Jon Proffitt at The Grass Group.*

