

NEW PRODUCTS

CORE COLLECTOR

Charterhouse Turf Machinery's CC3000HL Core Collector made its debut at Harrogate Week. Designed for speedy clear-up after greens aeration work, the pedestrian operated unit has a spacious 1 cu m capacity hopper that tips hydraulically to a height of 1.3m (51in).

For more information visit: www.charterhouseturfmachinery.com

GRASS GRAB-ER

Hydrotech Solutions Ltd has launched the Grass Grab-er. The Grass Grab-er is a low cost, highly effective and robust waste water treatment system designed to treat machinery wash down water and allow it to be re-used or disposed of in a responsible and legal manner. The Grass Grab-er which is an American designed system is widely in use across the United States has a unique system to remove the contaminants which cause golf clubs concern with ground water legislation. For further information contact us on: 01925 758099 or visit: www.hydrotechsolutionsltd.co.uk



SOIL MOVER

Campey introduced the new Dakota D606 Soil Mover/Box Scraper, which enables a perfectly level finish to be achieved on surfaces such as tees. Weighing 750kg and 1.8m wide, it has a capacity of 1.5 cu m and can be powered by tractors of 30hp-60hp. Featuring very heavy-duty construction, the height of the blades can be adjusted quickly and precisely. Options include laser controls to ensure that precise levels are constantly achieved.

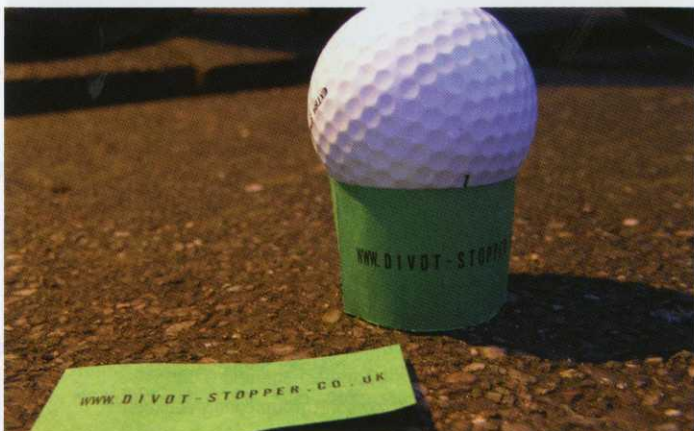
For more information visit: www.campeyturfcare.com

DIVOT STOPPER

Green Tee have just launched the Divot-Stopper. The product avoids wrist ache after shots, and also simulates playing off the perfect lie. It's also great for using off winter mats so as not to compromise the players optimised shot capabilities.

Not only does this pack have the potential to prevent an average 700 Divots from ever even happening, it is also beneficial to the player for ease of use and reducing the likelihood of club damage and dirt or mud splats hitting clothing, face and eyes.

For more information email: NGreenTee@aol.com



WATER SAVING WETTING AGENT

Headland have launched TriCure Ad (Aqua Dynamics), their new, advanced successor to TriCure wetting agent.

Designed for increased effectiveness in preventing and controlling hydrophobic conditions and dry patch, TriCure Ad combines improved soil treatment capabilities with additional soil surface dry-down characteristics for a faster return to play in adverse conditions.

For further information Tel: 01223 597834 or visit: www.headlandamenity.com



THE PRESSURE'S OFF

Terrain Aeration launched Spin Spray, their new-to-the-UK hand held sprayer that is gravity fed and operates without continuous pressure. Portable and compact, with a total weight of just under one kilogram, Spin Spray comes with three different nozzles producing three different volumes of spray.

For further information Tel: 01449 636783, or visit: www.terrainaeration.co.uk

THE PERFECT STORM

Sand Storm made its debut at BTME 2007. The Sand Storm is an innovative, simple, but effective means to recycle sand and other materials. The original Sand Storm was only launched in the UK in September 2006 – but a modified version was already on the drawing board at that time, with the UK market specifically in mind.

Principally aimed at the renovation of golf course bunkers, the sand storm can also handle other materials that may benefit from a screening process. Vibrating screens on the Sand Storm work to remove debris such as leaves, twigs, needles, weeds, stone and clay particles. The screens will also trap silt deposits on their surface, allowing for wash off and removal. The process remixes the sand particles and 'fluffs' it to a like new condition.

For more information contact JSM Distribution on: 0845 026 0064.

SAVING WATER AND MONEY

Vitax introduce the Dispatch application kit, a liquid surfactant, which comes with its own injection pump specifically designed for irrigation systems. Formulated by Aquatrols and available in America for a number of years, Dispatch has proved its worth by saving up to 30% on water bills.

The injection pump, which is provided with all necessary connectors and easily installed by the customer's irrigation engineer, ensures that the surfactant/water solution is always applied at the correct strength and is neither diluted nor capable of scorch. An application rate of 0.9 of a litre per hectare means that Dispatch is economical to use as well as an important water/money saving tool.

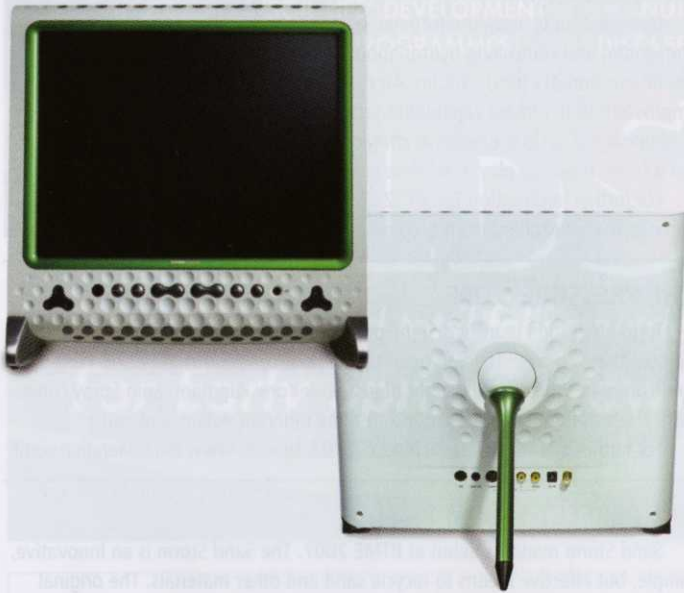
For further information contact Vitax on Tel: 01530 510060 or visit: www.vitax.co.uk



GOLF FANATICS

Want to watch next years Open in style? Never miss a swing with the new HANNsgolf 15" LCD TV. No detail of the game has been missed in the design; a pristine white golf ball dimple surround inspired by the traditional golf ball houses the 1024x768 XGA screen, two precisely balanced iron club heads make up the LCD TVs base, while a novel, oversized green golf tee acts as the HANNsgolf's stand. The fairway is just a button away!

For more information visit www.hannspree.com the range is available from: www.misco.co.uk



GOLF GRASS MAT



Rubberplas Ltd has launched the Golf Grass Mat: (22mm thick, tough, reusable rubber matting) used to install permanent or temporary walkways around Golf Courses.

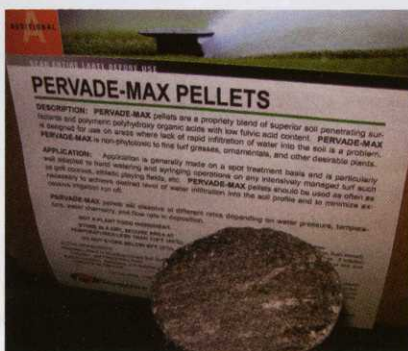
For further information contact Paul Buxton at Rubberplas Ltd on: 07765 625508 or: 01676 535600.

REVOLUTIONARY PENETRANT AIMS TO TROUBLE SHOOT

Floratine introduce their extremely effective soil penetrant Pervade in pelleted form, specifically designed for spot treatment on undulating greens, bunkers, slopes or any difficult to reach areas prone to water logging.

Pervade-Max comes in the form of a large pellet, perfectly proportioned to fit standard spray guns. Hand watering via a hosepipe with spray applicator attached, dissolves the penetrant's active ingredients, which are then aimed directly at the trouble spot.

For further information contact David Snowden on Tel: 01765 658021; Email: dpsfpg@aol.com or visit: www.floratine.com



BSH INTRODUCES 'LEVEL PAR'

British Seed Houses launched its new Level Par velvet bent grass blend at Harrogate Week 2007.

Level Par is a unique blend of Avalon and new Vesper velvet bent grasses and is suitable for use on both soil-based and USGA greens. Avalon is renowned for its shoot density, fine leaf and superb wear tolerance and has been used successfully in the UK since 1997. Vesper is an exciting new addition to the STRI seed listings. It has the highest recorded score for shoot density (10.3), a very fine leaf and a dark, year-round colour.

Level Par produces a dense sward, requires minimal watering and is suitable for lower or more traditional maintenance regimes. Because it's a blend, the risk associated with sowing just a monoculture of bent grass is reduced.

For more information visit: www.britisseedhouses.co.uk

BUFFALO KB3 BLOWER

JK Inc, providers of niche turf technology products have introduced the new KB3 Turbine Blower to its range. The KB3 supersedes the KB2 and provides even more power with a 3900 rpm operating speed. The most exciting feature is the ergonomically designed, waterproof, wireless remote for easy throttle and nozzle control.

For more information call: 01763 208142



FINE TURF AERATOR

The new GXi is a compact fine turf aerator incorporating Wiedenmann's revolutionary ATC technology. Specially developed for fine turf and designed from the ground up, this compact machine incorporates a new chassis and new linkage and is ideal for 25hp compact tractors and above. The launch model is available with a 1.4 metre working width and has a selection of accessories including a turf retainer, core swath board and comprehensive range of solid and coring tines.

For more information visit: www.wiedenmanns.com

GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Korec launched their latest software system FastMap Greenkeeper - A powerful PC software system that allows the Golf Course Manager to visually manage the assets and infrastructure of the course - at this year's BIGGA exhibition.

Korec's team of surveyors will undertake a Land Survey of the golf course playing surfaces, providing an accurate plan, the data is then installed as part of the system and used to provide a single source of information producing reports and maps for all aspects of the course. The survey can be added to and updated by the greenkeeper using Trimble handheld GPS.

For more information visit: www.korecgroup.com/greenkeeper

SUPER CONCENTRATED SPRAY INDICATOR

Conventional
pattern indicator



Super Signal Blue

Headland have launched their new, non-toxic spray indicator Super Signal Blue.

As well as providing visual evidence of the whereabouts of spray applications, thereby eliminating waste due to overlap, Super Signal Blue indicates drift, and potential nozzle blocking – an important factor with the increasing use of shrouded booms. This money saving new product dissipates with sunlight or moisture and will not permanently stain vegetation, soil or human skin.

For further information contact Headland on Tel: 01223 597834 or visit: www.headlandamenity.co.uk

T3000 RANGE TAKES CENTRE STAGE

The T3000 series took centre stage on New Holland's stand at this year's BTME.

Making its debut at the three day event, the T3000 series is an upgrade of the TCE series. Designed to meet the expanding needs of greenkeepers and groundsman, the upgrade applies to the engine and means that the tractors will meet, and move beyond, the new emission levels set by the EU.

For more information visit: www.newholland.com



POWER BRUSH ATTACHMENT

The patented Rear Roller Power Brush Kit is the latest edition for the Turfworks product, which enables turf professionals to undertake a range of key maintenance tasks with their existing greens mowers and can be fitted to all Turfworks chassis, avoiding unsightly deposits of clippings.

For more information visit: www.campeyturfcare.co.uk

SUPA-COMPACT OVERSEEDERS

Among the latest launches from Campey Turf Care Systems is the range of Vredo supa-compact overseeders, designed to enable greenkeepers to renovate turf surfaces quickly and effectively.

Three Vredo supa-compact overseeders are available, with operating widths of 0.8m, 1.2m and 1.6m. Each can either be mounted on to the three-point linkage of a compact tractor, or used as a trailed machine.

For more information visit: www.campeyturfcare.co.uk



NEW ADDITION

Rigby Taylor has added to their Mascot Grass Seed range for 2007, the new strong creeping red fescue cultivar Greenvie.

Already ranked number one on the STRI list, this cultivar produces a dense sward and is designed for use on golf tees and fairways.

For more information visit: www.rigbytaylor.com

SISTER MODEL MAKES DEBUT

Following the 2005 UK launch of the Pequea GT100 Top Dresser, its sister model, the SuperSpread, made its UK debut to the golf market at Harrogate Week. Exclusive distributors, Lloyds of Letchworth are delighted to offer the larger version for golf course and amenity maintenance.

For more information visit: www.lloydsandco.com

KEEP SPRAYS ON TARGET

Techneat Engineering has introduced a new shrouded boom for the company's renowned SPPS range of self-propelled pedestrian sprayers. The innovative boom design, available in widths of up to 3 meters, enables operators to safely and accurately target spray application, without fear of spray drift.

For more information visit: www.techneat.co.uk





AN INNOVATIVE SOLUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE



As climate changes lead to extremes of weather and even more unpredictable rain patterns for turf professionals to combat, Dennis offers the new mini Blotter as a solution.

The mini Blotter is ideal for the removal of surface water from football pitches, cricket grounds, sports stadia, golf courses and racecourses. It is equally at home on artificial turf, athletics tracks, tennis courts and hard surfaces like car parks. Its speedy results mean that facilities can be kept open after unexpected downpours, avoiding fixture cancellation.

For more information visit: www.dennisuk.com

BREAKER ADVANCE

Rigby Taylor has launched Breaker Advance, their latest wetting agent for treating Dry Patch and other water related problems.

The product still incorporates unique Complete Immersion Technology and contains three active components to prevent and cure Dry Patch – a Wetting and Spreading Agent, a Soil Penetrant and Re-wetting Agent.

For a free brochure call freephone: 0800 424 919. For more information visit: www.rigbytaylor.com

NEW TRACTORS AND GROUNDS CARE PRODUCTS

Massey Ferguson's all-new 3600 Series mid-range is suitable for a wide range of on- and off-road applications within the grounds care, landscaping and commercial horticulture sectors. Massey Ferguson's 3600 Series comprises the MF 3615, MF 3625, MF 3635 and MF 3645 tractors rated at 58hp, 68hp, 78hp and 91hp respectively. All are powered by three-cylinder turbocharged Sisu engines, the top model benefiting also from an intercooler.

For more information visit: www.masseyferguson.com

BIGGA SUPPORTS NEW COURSE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Golf course management software OnCourse, developed by Swedish company SYSteam Epani and endorsed by BIGGA, was re-launched with some new features during Harrogate Week.

The programme enables Course Managers to budget and track expenses; prepare personnel records and time sheets; record equipment and property maintenance records; stock control; list details of suppliers; write reports and keep a diary.

OnCourse was first launched in the UK seven years ago but since then several improvements have been added, including new improved user interface, which simplifies navigation around the software offering opportunities to link to websites and a unique web marketing enabling users to advertise second hand machinery between OnCourse golf clubs.

"Ultimately OnCourse saves you time and money and with record keeping and a detailed paper trail so important to the modern Course Manager we feel we offer an easy-to-use comprehensive solution," explained Daniel Henningsson of OnCourse Epani.

"We are delighted to receive the endorsement of BIGGA and we hope that the Association members benefit from OnCourse," he added.

OnCourse package costs £2,000 for a multi-user 12 month license with full training and aftercare, however there is a three year payment plan option which helps reduce the costs.

For more information contact Fliss Chaffer on: 01347 833800.

HOBBIES

Our new feature, finds out what greenkeepers get up to in their spare time. Here's something you didn't know about me...

Name: Steve Pope
Age: 75
Club: Tyneside GC
Position: Retired Member after 39 years
Hobby: Building Rocking Horses



When and how did you get introduced to the art of building rocking horses?

"I was first introduced to the craft when I decided to build a rocking horse for my grandson. I got tuition at Kirkley Hall College, Ponteland in a class of 10. At first I just made a small one but my grandson grew out if too quickly. I decided that a medium height rocking horse was best, measuring about 36-38 inches off the floor. I'm now on rocking horse number four. I got into this hobby as I thought they were nice gifts for children and I wanted something to do in the wintertime."

How long does it take to build a rocking horse?

"Well it's a lot of work. I do a couple of hours at a time and then keep coming back to it. I'll start one in June and be finished in time for Christmas."

What is it about the craft that appeals to you?

"I find it relaxing."

Where does the building take place?

"In my greenhouse. I use the greenhouse to store bedding plants for golf clubs and when they go I use the greenhouse as my workshop."

How long have you been building rocking horses?

"Five years. The last one I sold for £700 last Christmas and I'm just finishing one that is going to Kent shortly."

£700 sounds like a lot of money, do you make much of a profit?

"Well considering the the tac costs around £189 on it's own, I don't make much profit but I enjoy doing it."

Steve is happy to take orders for his handmade rocking horses, you can contact him on: 0191 4132662.

Do you or your fellow greenkeepers have an unusual hobby? If so, get in touch, email: melissa@bigga.co.uk or tel: 01347 833800



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A Hand on the Controls

With EU directives clamping down on the amount of chemicals we can use, how can greenkeepers continue to effectively combat pests and diseases? Nia Frost discusses new developments in controls and some highly effective alternative methods.

Over the past 10 years, many control products used regularly on golf courses and other amenity areas have been lost or removed for use by amenity managers. This has happened across the whole amenity area, although pesticides and fungicides have been particularly affected with the loss of, for example, Chlordane, Gamma HCH and Carbaryl. More recently, actives such as Thiabendazol and Diquat for aquatic use have also gone. One thing is for certain, more control products will be lost over the next few years.

WHY ARE PRODUCTS DISAPPEARING?

There are a number of reasons why there are fewer control products available:

- Ai (Active ingredient) not being supported through EU review by manufacturer
- PSD/HSE revoke product for safety, (human, flora or fauna)
- Non support of Data Submission Deadline (efficacy or storage)
- PSD/HSE revoke label (addition or deletion of statements)
- Manufacturer update/change of Ai
- Marketing decide to request label/name change.

THE EU REVIEW

The EU review of control products is probably the single most influential factor affecting the access to control product for turf and amenity managers. The review is officially known as EC Directive 91/414/EEC. Its aim is to ensure that all pesticides on the market before 1991 meet present-day safety standards.

The review has been initiated to:

- harmonise national arrangements for authorisation of PPP within EU
- ensure that all countries operate to a high standard
- be implemented in UK by Plant Protection Product Regulations (PPPR) 1995
- use European data for national registrations.

WHAT DOES THIS LEGISLATION MEAN FOR THE TURF OR AMENITY MANAGER?

Of the 834 actives which are subject to continual review, 50 per cent are not being supported. Although it is fair to say that most of these will affect agriculture and not necessarily amenity. However, there will be a significant proportion affected or lost to amenity and this will have an impact on how you manage your turf in the future.

NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

But it's not all doom and gloom! There will still be, and are, new control products coming onto the market. These new products have to meet stringent new guidelines laid down by the EU. A positive side to this is that any new products brought onto the market will be the most efficient and safest ever seen in the turf and amenity industry.

But further down the line it may be more difficult to provide new control products that conform to the new legislation, as the cost can be inhibiting. For example, to produce a specific control product just for the turf and amenity industry could cost as much as £200 million. In this situation it would simply not be economically viable to invest in product development. Hopefully in the future it will be possible to work more closely with all areas of the controls industry on a global basis to provide cost effective control products for part of the business.

Research and investment into new control products for the turf and amenity market is still at the forefront of our research programmes, however, we are also looking at all other alternative methods such as 'sustainable' and 'biological' programmes to provide turf and amenity managers with a means to control pests in the future.



Fusarium

WHAT ARE THESE ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS?

Adjuvants can enhance the performance of pesticides by increasing its uptake by, for example, spreading on a waxy surface or by penetrating thick cuticles which results in increased control of difficult species. Another adjuvant benefit is reducing spray drift.

A future development could be using less pesticides and more adjuvant when formulating new products. Scotts is developing a new marker dye which has adopted this principle, with an added benefit of a pH buffer and spray drift reducer.

TANK MIXING

This option of combining actives could be very beneficial if lack of control is given by one product only. The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is trialling this method to eradicate the invasive aquatic weed water primrose (*Ludwigia grandiflora*) and results have been very positive. Their proposal was to compare the efficacy of a glyphosate-based herbicide and a glyphosate and 2,4-D amine mixture-based herbicide. Their report reads:

"The addition of 2,4-D amine to the mixture is anticipated to enhance translocation rates of glyphosate through the plant, thereby improving long-term control. While glyphosate is excellent for control of many aquatic plant species, the use of glyphosate for eradication on non-native aquatic plants has proved challenging. This approach is novel and will contribute to the management of such species and reduce pesticide use in the environment by improving efficacy of single applications."

According to Defra, the trial has achieved "considerable" success so far. They have reported that:

"The UK is almost free of the invasive aquatic weed water primrose (*Ludwigia grandiflora*), and complete eradication may be feasible."

BIOLOGICALS

Another exciting and potential growth area is the use of biologicals for managing problems in turf and amenity areas. Biologicals have been around for a long time, especially in the horticultural industry. They are currently being used very successfully in some areas of the turf and amenity industry, but scope for their use is potentially much bigger.

The term 'biological' covers a wide range of different products and approaches, from bacterial and fungal products, to soil fauna enhancement products.

Scotts' new biological product ProCrystal is a fast-acting aquatic algicide that controls swimming or floating unicellular and filamentous algae. It improves water clarity and reduces unpleasant odours within days of treatment, without affecting the balance of the environment.



ProCrystal



Grass

MODERN PESTICIDES

The new products that are entering the amenity market are developed to have a label that would ideally consist of the following characteristics:

- a low dose application that minimises the amount of active ingredient released into the environment during application
- covers all modes of action
- a high level of efficacy against a broad spectrum of diseases/pests
- no impact on the environment
- minimal risk to users and non-target species.

A good example of a new product with these characteristics is the turf fungicide Heritage, a unique disease control product from a new class of highly effective, low-use rate, broad-spectrum, environmentally-sound chemistry. The active ingredient, azoxystrobin, is synthetically derived from strobilurins, which are naturally occurring fungicides produced by various species of wood-decaying mushrooms.

CONCLUSION

There is more pressure than ever before on turf and amenity control products, which means that there will be increasing pressure on turf and amenity managers when trying to control pests and diseases.

The EU review process and other legislation will have a big impact on availability of control products for use on turf and other amenity areas. However, there are still high-quality products available now and new products coming onto the market. The impact of new legislation on the turf and amenity sector can be minimised if an integrated approach is used. We are also relying on R&D to provide new products for the future and Scotts is leading the way in this area.

Nia Frost is Scotts Technical Manager, Plant Protection Products

CHEMICAL ERROR

Question: What is the worst thing that could happen during a heatwave?

Answer: Chemical burns on the golf course.

Please check the wording of container labels thoroughly - accidents can and have happened.

BIGGA suggests coloured caps on containers as a good way of avoiding errors, ie:

- GREEN – Liquid Fertiliser
- BLUE – Wetting Agents
- RED – Total Weedkiller
- BLACK – Selective Weedkiller
- YELLOW – Pesticides
- WHITE – Fungicides... etc.

GI welcomes your thoughts on the subject



Pedestrian mowers:

Simple checks to maintain quality

By James de Havilland

Regardless of make or model, a pedestrian cylinder mower will only produce a decent cut if it has been both looked after and set up correctly. Although much of what follows should be well understood by course workshop personnel, it is easy to overlook some of the basic details. What follows are a few reminders.

With the first tournament of the season looming and all the greens to prepare before an 8.30am inspection, the last thing anyone wants to worry about is the pedestrian greens and tees mowers. Some courses, however, will find the infrequent use of pedestrian machines can lead to the mowers effectively coming out of storage between usage, with faults going unnoticed and getting worse as a result.

To suggest a mower will deteriorate through lack of use is misleading, but it is fair to say any item of kit that is parked up needing the odd tweak will not emerge a few weeks later in tip-top condition. With this in mind, a few running checks a few days before the machine is to be used will never be wasted.

The checks can be divided into two. The first relates to the power unit and drive. Reminders are listed in the table but a key issue will be to also look for any oil or fuel leaks and to check that nothing has worked loose. Cables and controls will also need looking over and adjusting and lubricating as appropriate.

The second area will relate to the cutting unit itself. A well set-up and maintained machine should have been given a clean and then greased following its last use. But it is well worth re-greasing a mower that has not been used for a while - making sure any excess lubricant is wiped off to prevent it contaminating the turf.

Adding fresh grease is as much about driving out moisture as providing good lubrication. In storage, moisture can find its way into bearings, so it pays to re-lube even a kit that has been stored in a fully serviced condition.



Moving on the cylinder, groomer, rollers and, where fitted, brushes, their setting is critical. Where applicable, the bottom knife to cylinder clearance 'air gap' needs to be maintained as recommended by the mower manufacturer. An air gap can reduce bottom knife wear by up to 50% and improves clippings flow for a smoother discharge. A quick check with a feeler gauge is all that is needed.

Mowers that have been back lapped have altered characteristics between the knife and cylinder. It is important to realise this, and set the mower up accordingly, following the specific instructions relating to an individual machine. A common mistake when back lapping is to stop the process before it has finished. It is important that the cylinder runs silently against the bottom blade before all traces of lapping paste are removed and the bottom blade to cylinder clearance is checked and set accordingly.

TIP: Always re-grease the cylinder bearings following back lapping. This will help drive out any paste that may have got into the bearings.

Groomer settings are also often overlooked. A groomer is not a scarifier, and it should typically be set 1mm above the height of cut. Similarly, roller power brushes should be set so just the extreme tips of the bristles flick the roller. If the brush is set so the bristles bend over, they will not do their job properly and they will wear prematurely too.

A periodic check of the roller and cylinder bearings can help reduce the chance of wear going undetected. A good time to inspect the bearings is when the mower is set up for a cylinder grind. The key points to look for will include play, any noise when the roll or cylinder is spun and tight spots when turning. It is best to do these checks before adding fresh grease.

The final point is to ensure the mower is set to run parallel or level. This setting on a greens mower is critical as it ensures the bottom blade is presented at the optimum cutting angle to the turf. This setting is checked using a simple 'Setting Bar' on John Deere and other makes of mower, and should be checked EVERY time the height of cut or other adjustment is made.

With thanks to Chris Perkins, Workshop Technician with John Deere dealers Parks and Grounds Machinery, Bidford-on-Avon, Warwickshire.

PEDESTRIAN MOWER PREPARATION – BRIEF CHECKLIST

- Change the engine oil as per the manufacturers recommendations.
- Clean or change the air cleaner/filter.
- Keep the air intake grill clear of grass clippings to ensure proper cooling of the engine.
- Lubricate all recommended points and check oil levels in transmissions, if fitted. Do not over grease.
- Check belt or chain transmission systems. As the cylinder and bottom blade are adjusted to accommodate wear, drive tensions may also need to be adjusted to prevent over tight running.
- Belts can crack and break with age so check their condition.
- Consider the need for a cylinder regrind and replacement of the bottom blade depending on their condition. Back lapping may be required.
- Ensure cylinder bearings are not worn. Check for excessive free play. Taper roller bearings may be adjusted.
- Adjust the cylinder and bottom blade as per the manufacturers recommendations. Some use the "air gap" principle, while others rely on cylinder to blade contact. Always follow the manufacturers recommendations.
- Carry out cylinder/bottom blade adjustments before setting the height of cut. As either is adjusted, height of cut is also changed.
- Check for worn roller bearings. An accurate height of cut cannot be achieved if there is free play in the bearings of both front and rear rollers.
- If Turf Groomers are fitted check the drive mechanism, blades, rollers and required operational depth as required.
- Ensure that transport wheels are inflated correctly (if pneumatic) and also that they can be removed easily and are not seized on to the drive shafts or hubs.
- Check all operating cables for wear and also adjust to ensure correct operation.
- Make an operational check of all OPC systems to ensure correct functionality.
- Keep the machine clean - always clean off grass clippings with a brush, compressed air or low pressure water from a hose.

With thanks to Nigel Church, Ransomes Jacobsen.



Pedestrian mowers: Simple checks to maintain quality



1
Regardless of make or model, a pedestrian cylinder mower needs to be checked over before it is used. This will apply equally to a mower that has been un-used following a service.



2
A small bend in a blade at the edge of the cylinder may be eased out using a light hammer. If in doubt, leave it to a specialist. With the mower up-ended, check for play in all bearings.



3
Where the cylinder and bottom knife operate with an air gap, check it is even across the face of the mower using a feeler gauge. Check with the manufacturer how this gap needs to be altered following back lapping. There are differences between makes and models.



4
John Deere supplies its mowers with a simple setting bar that enables the rollers to be set so they run parallel to the bottom blade. This setting is critical on cylinder mowers.



5
Checking the oil in a mower engine is a routine job, but remember the engine needs to be level to get a true reading. A block of wood under the front roller will do the trick. If the oil is dirty, change it. Look for leaks and clean off any spills before mowing.



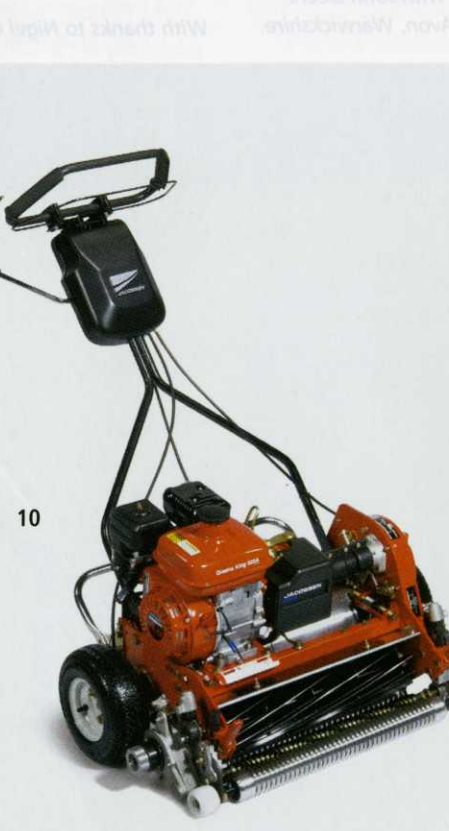
6
Ease out the starter cord, looking for damage particularly near the end. Any sign of fraying spells new cord time. It is easier to renew the cord than try to replace one that has snapped.



7
Belts need to be correctly tensioned to prevent slippage; an easy quarter of a turn on the belt is the typical maximum. If a belt drive machine is to be stored for an extended period, it can pay to remove the belts. If a belt shows signs of cracks or has been allowed to slip, it is best replaced.



9
Set the roller power brush so the bristles lightly touch the roller. If the bristles are bent over they will typically not do their job and the power brush may need renewing. This setting needs periodic checking.



10
Although it is never possible to keep a mower in showroom condition, a good clean before putting it away is a key maintenance task. It pays to grease the machine as it is put away and then again when it is next used. Wipe off surplus lubricant.



8
Transport wheels typically slide onto their shaft. To prevent them seizing, remove any corrosion with emery paper and apply a coat of copper grease. Check all fasteners, replacing any adjusters that are damaged or badly corroded.



11
Pedestrian mowers differ in many subtle ways, so do not assume knowledge with a particular make and model automatically applies to other designs. Well maintained kit will have lower whole life operating costs, be easier to operate and do a better job.