

New Orleans '09 – Technology

Even though attendance was down and the economy is in a rut, new technology shined brightly at the 2009 New Orleans Trade Show.

Precise Path

Precise Path unveiled the first robotic greensmower in the industry. Currently coupled with a Toro DPA triplex head, its HOC (Height of cut) is .062 to .297, width of cut is 21 inches, and weight is 650 pounds. The batteries last 3 hours and recharge in 8 by plugging the machine into a standard 120V AC outlet.



The 36V lead-acid battery supply is segregated; 24V for the mower operation and 12V for the software. The software is loaded onto your computer at work. You set the mowing schedule (days of week), parameters (single or double cut), direction, cleanup, and the distance it goes **after** it leaves the green before it makes its turn. Cleanup is accurate to within ½ inch.

It uses LPS (Local Positioning System) with 4 beacons that are attached to magnets that are permanently installed around the green. It has adjustable sensitivity for collision avoidance for objects on the green. Optional for owners is the programming of audible verbal warnings.

You can sign up for a demo or view one at a course near you on their website (www.precisepath.com).

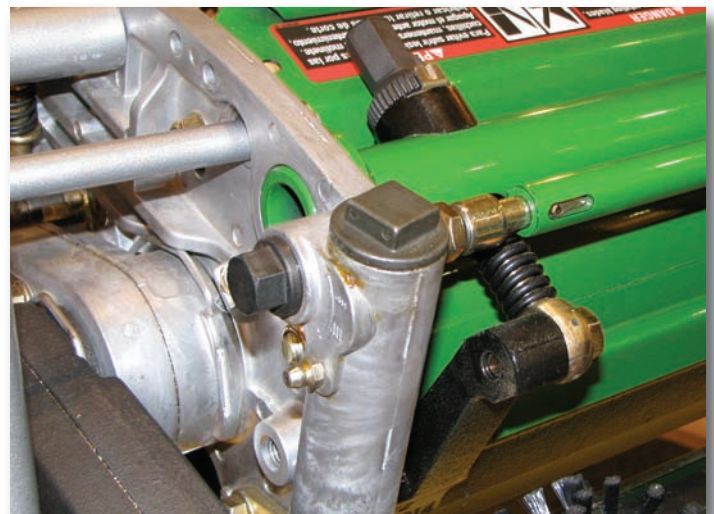
Smithco

Smithco is always tinkering with electricity and equipment. This year they brought a sprayer with the spray pump being driven by a BIG electric motor.

John Deere

John Deere wins the prize this year for bringing the most new toys to the show and all new reels for everything.

Dubbed the QA5 (Quick Adjust 5 inch Reel) and QA7 (Quick Adjust 7" Reel), these reels are the culmination of a redesign project that began at the Reel Cell in Horicon a few years ago. The QA5 reels come with 1-click bedknife to reel adjustment and quick adjust HOC that can be performed at the rear of the reel on either side using a 5/8 inch or 16mm socket or wrench. A shaft and worm gear adjusts both sides of the rear roller equally at the same time.



Also new are the cast aluminum side frames. The QA5 comes in 18 inch width for the 8000E fairway mower and 22 inch width for the 220E walker, 2500B, and 2500E triplex greensmowers. The 7500, 7500E, 8500 and 8500E fairway units also contain a 22 inch width. Seven and 11 blades are available.

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The QA7 has 1-click reel to bedknife adjustment as well as the new HOC adjustment. The 22 inch reel comes with 8 or 10 blades and is for the 7700 and 8700 fairway units. The 26 and 30 inch come with 5 or 8 blades and are available on the 7200 and 2653B trim/surrounds units.

Three new fairway mowers debuted; all using electric reel motors powered by a 48 volt alternator (the same one used on the 2500E triplex mower). The 7500E and 8500E are a remake of the 2 mowers introduced last year. The 8000E is a completely different animal. Based on a triplex platform (3 wheels), it carries 5 QA5 18 inch reels with electric motors. All three tires are 24x12x12 slicks and the GRIP traction system is standard.



The 220E walker was shown at last year's show and made its official debut this time around. It has a 22 inch QA5 11 blade reel powered by an electric motor. It has a fully floating head, adjustable FOC (frequency of clip) and onboard backlapping.

Solar Drive

These guys came up with a solar panel that can be retrofitted to most electric golf cars and utility vehicles. It charges while the vehicle is outside.

Jacobsen

The fruits of Jacobsen's labor showed off in work done behind the scenes. A \$1.5 million investment in a special grinding process gives reels a total run-out of .0015 and puts 45° relief on each blade. Whether you prefer backlapping or grinding only, the relief will last much longer. All new reels made come with this new grinding process.

New aerating tines were also unveiled, the DuraTine™ XL and XLT Series. With special alloys, a proprietary heat treating process and special coating, Jacobsen says these tines last

4 times longer than their original ones and up to 75% longer than the competition.

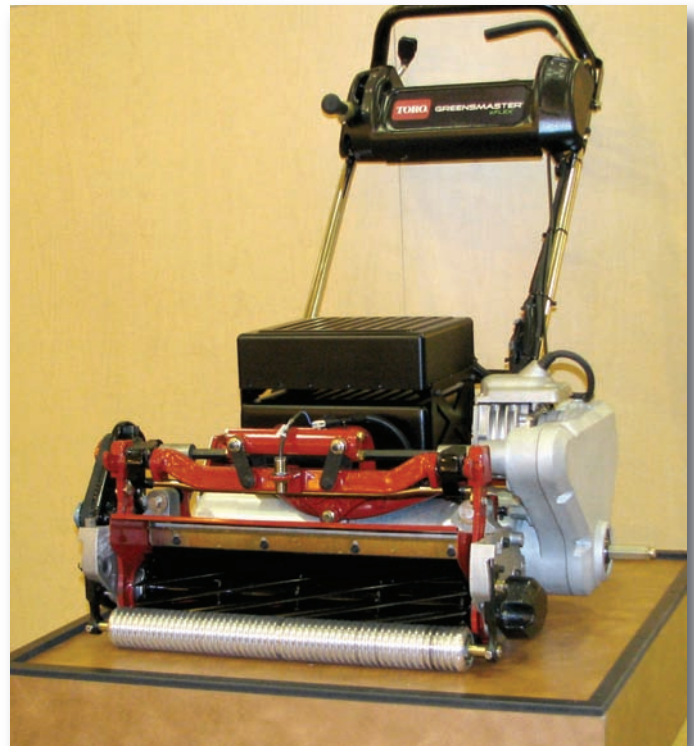
The Eclipse 322 triplex, which debuted last year, is now available for order.

Turfco

They introduced the 3-Point TriWave seeder last year; this year they brought a walker. Independent floating seeder heads. They also introduced a programmable topdresser, the Wide-Spin 1540.

Toro

The E-Flex made its debut. A lithium-ion battery powers the unit; giving it the capability to mow 6 greens with a single cut. A sensor on the front slows the unit down at the end of a pass for easier turning. It comes with the 14 blade reel. The projected release date is sometime in 2010.



The hybrid triplex was shown in a dimly lit room, no cameras allowed. Electric reel motors. A cast aluminum segmented floor that swings out of the way to gain easy access to the center unit. Cutting units are 5 inches off the ground in transport position, now making it easy to check the height of cut. The yoke assemblies and carrier pull frames that are a hallmark of Toro triplexes are gone. Now in place are new cast aluminum yokes attached to the reels by 2 quick release tabs. This will also come with the 14 blade reels. They currently plan on showing it to the public in San Diego next year, with a possible release date of late 2010.

Wireless hour meters are now available that sync with Toro's MyTurf equipment maintenance software. Used in conjunction with a base station, they can record the hours automatically.

Actioneco



The guys from Finland brought their mower, the "ONE". Lithium-ion battery pack that lasts 7-8 hours. Plug in the wall recharging. Auto HOC and FOC. Auto clipping dispersal. No steering wheel, no pedals. AC servo motor drives. One hand joystick operation. Programmable control systems via satellite antenna with Finland. A 4 wheel fairway unit with 5 or 7 cutting units and a walker are scheduled to be released later this year.

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