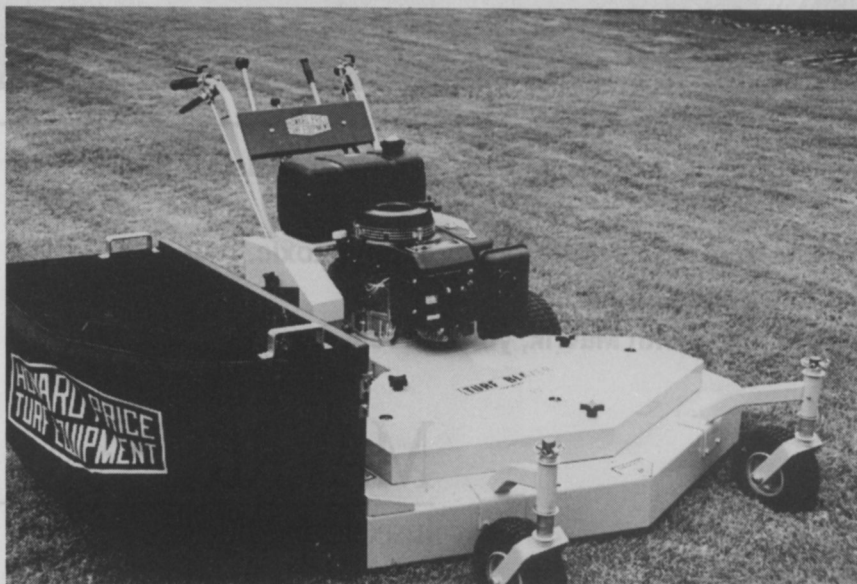




Jacobsen Crew King



Gravely Pro Series



Howard Price Turf Blazer

WALK OR RIDE?

The landscape manager must make that decision before purchasing the appropriate mowers for his or her immediate needs.

by Jack Simonds,
contributing editor

For lawn maintenance companies, it's decision time, as the rider vs. walk-behind mower purchase nears. Both have advantages and both have a niche in the mid-size lawn mower market.

"Walk-behinds give a good value for a lower price," says Howard Price of Howard Price Turf Equipment. Traditionally cheaper, and believed to be more maneuverable than riders, walk-behinds still offer situations where "certain people will want to step up to riders when the job gets bigger," Price admits. "But there's room in the market for both."

Encore Manufacturing's Dean Meyer agrees. The firm makes a line of walk-behinds and also two styles of sulkies which in some instances can provide the best of both worlds.

"A sulky can make it (a walk-behind) a pretty efficient rider," says Meyer. "But I think landscapers have a variety of different needs," he adds. For the price of one rider, in some instances, the smaller operator can pick up two walk-behinds, but other situations simply call for riders.

Here, then, is a sampler of some new walk-behinds and riders for 1991.

Jacobsen Turf Equipment boasts of its expanded Crew King line with sizes ranging from 32 to 60 inches and coming in floating deck and four fixed deck models.

Floating deck mowers, with 36- and 48-inch models available, have a suspended cutting deck which the company says floats over uneven surfaces, yielding a smooth finish. Two Crew King fixed deck models have been added to the line including a 32- and 60- inch mower. Jacobsen has 36- and 48- inch fixed deck models.

Gravely International's re-designed Pro Series commercial mowers are easier to operate and perform better,



John Deere mid-sized front loader



Walker rider



Toro walk-behind

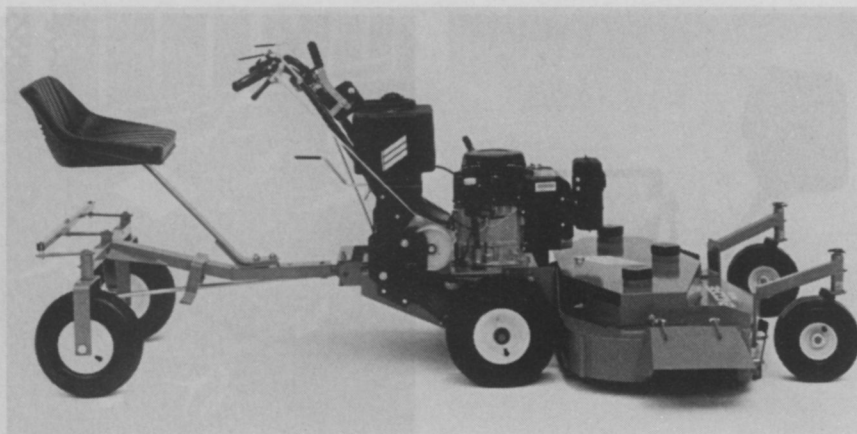
according to the company.

The front-mount walk-behind line sees a second drive belt added to prevent side slippage in wet conditions. Two belts spaced apart bar grass build up and heavy duty control linkage is also standard. The gas tank holds 3.5 gallons and handlebars have been widened. The line has a five-speed gear transmission, adjustable mower decks and instant forward and reverse. Powerplants include 12 and 12.5 hp gas engines. Thirty-two- and 36-inch decks are available. Heavy duty models come in 12.5, 14, 16, 17, and 18 hp motors and 36-, 40-, 50- and 60-inch mowing decks.

From **Howard Price Turf Equipment** comes 36- and 48-inch walk-behinds with both low and high gear, double-belt drive and a 9.5 bushel grass catcher. Equipped with a 3.5 gallon tank, both models come with reverse and easy height adjustment.

John Deere's two new offerings are 17.5 and 20 hp riders with the home and commercial market in mind.

A hydrostatic transmission operates by two foot pedals and cutting height is adjustable by a front crank system.



Encore sulky



Homelite mulching mower

Equipped with power steering, model F710 comes with a 48-inch mower; model F725 with a 54-inch mower.

Walker Manufacturing's GHS commercial rider model has a new blower system designed to reduce clogging and enhance vacuuming.

The model, designed for smaller landscaped areas, offers a Delco maintenance-free battery as standard equipment. Walker says the rider fits into today's landscaping plans for smaller green spots and the unit's maneuverability and running speed should make it competitive with walk-behind models.

A hydrostatic drive option has been introduced in **Toro's** 14 and 18 hp walk-behind Pro-Line, the company announces.

Hydrostatic drive, Toro says, should improve traction because with no belts involved in the drive system, slippage does not occur. Also, like other lines, Toro offers zero-radius turning and instant reverse.

Other new products and features from Toro include a 21-inch Recycler ProLine walk-behind a 48-inch recycler deck for both walk-behind and



Scag walk-behind

riding models and a recycling kit for 32-inch walk-behinds.

Toro's new 724-Z rider can cut up to 25 acres a day, the company says.

Encore Manufacturing announces a sulky to convert any size Pro-Line walk-behind into a rider. Encore says the sulky features an advanced tracking system which puts mower controls within easy reach. The attachment is independently adjustable and is equipped with pneumatic tires, spring suspension and a quick release hitch for conversion back to a walk-behind.

Scag Power Equipment introduces new 36- and 48-inch cutter decks for its zero-turn walk-behind. The line, winner in the overall excellence category at the 1990 International Lawn, Garden and Power Equipment Expo in Louisville, Ky., also includes 52-, 61- and 72-inch cutter decks.

From **Homelite** comes a new lightweight mulching mower designed for home use. With a 5 hp electric start engine, the model features a 20-inch mulching deck and twin multi-level blade design for a double cut.

Homelite already markets 4 and 5 hp mulching mowers with pull starting systems.

Also new to Homelite's line is a three-way convertible mower which comes as a side-discharge model. Kits



Ford Holland rider with hopper

are available for both mulching or addition of a 2.25 bushel rear bag collector.

Ford Holland's models CM224 and CM274, both commercial riders, may now be equipped with a 17-barrel capacity hopper which may be raised up to 73 inches for dumping. The hydraulic system is operated from the driver's seat and is designed to service trailers or pickup trucks. For on-site composting, the system can form two layers, making handling of materials easier, Ford Holland says.

The manufacturer also offers two new triple-bag grass collection systems. The 9.75 barrel capacity bushel



Excel rider with edger

bags is bolted to the tractor by a sub-frame and the hood flips forward for bag removal.

The **Grasshopper Co.** features a line of six riders, all with zero-radius turning and dual-hydrostatic direct drive. Models in the Gemini series range from 18 to 25 hp and are available in air- and liquid-cooled gas engines or diesel engines. Mowing deck sizes range from 44 to 72 inches.

Excel's Hustler Compact Series features an edger attachment, mulching capability and vacuuming collection systems which hold up to eight bushels of debris.

Designed with estates, apartment



Ariens mowing system

complexes, condominiums and other landscapes in mind, Excel compact riders are with 18 and 20 hp powerplants and 51- or 60-inch mowing decks.

From **Ariens** comes several walk-behind choices, notably the introduction of what the company calls a mowing system. Equipped with a 5 hp engine, the new offering mulches, recycles or collects trimmings depending on standard equipment used during mowing. Also an optional dethatcher and mulching enhancer are available. Ariens manufactures a full line including riders and accessory power lawn care gear. **LM**

RIDE A WALKER

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