

# Readers rate the

**What's most important to you? Quality? Price? Serviceability? Here's what landscapers and golf superintendents think of today's mowing equipment.**

■ Scag is the favorite make of mowers in the landscape maintenance market, and Toro takes top honors among golf course superintendents, according to an exclusive survey commissioned by *LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT* magazine this summer.

In four of six categories, Scag was ranked by landscape contractors as being number one among 11 brands of commercial mowing equipment. Those four categories: quality, serviceability, dealer/distributor support and warranty.

"This is very gratifying to hear," says John Crowson, Scag's national sales manager. "Durability and serviceability are two attributes that we've worked very hard toward. For the professional lawn cutter, it's so critical to keep the machines out in the field and not have to deal with downtime."

Six hundred LM readers who identify themselves as landscape contractors were polled by an independent research firm. They were asked to rate each of the manufacturers on a scale of 1.0 (very good) to 5.0 (poor) in the six categories of quality, serviceability, parts availability, dealer/distributor support, warranty and price.

Scag's scores of 1.5 in quality, 1.4 in serviceability and 1.9 in warranty far exceeded any of the other manufacturers.

"For a little company in Wisconsin, we get out there pretty

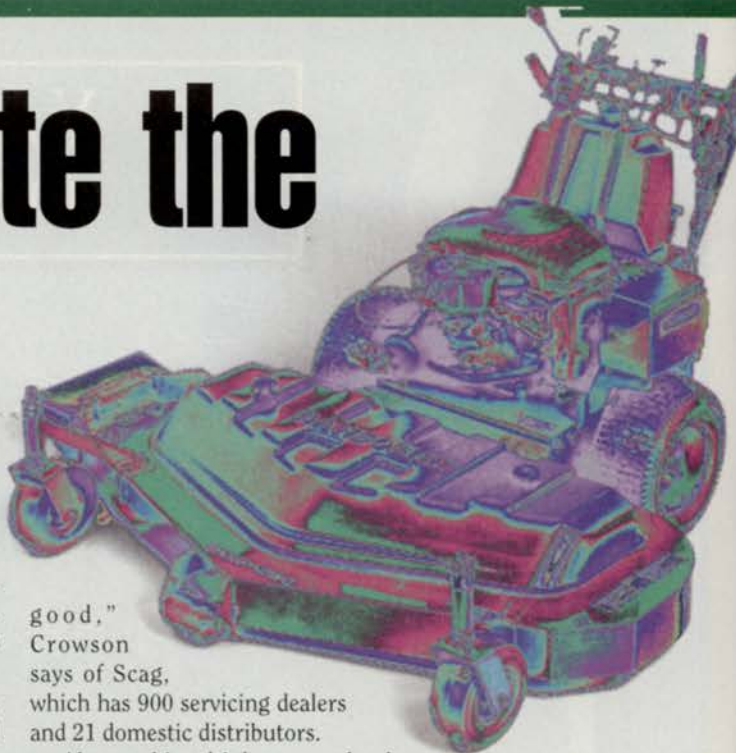
good," Crowson says of Scag, which has 900 servicing dealers and 21 domestic distributors.

Also ranking high among landscapers were John Deere (tied for first in parts availability with Scag, second in support, tied for second in warranty) and Lesco (first in price, tied for third in serviceability). Ransomes received four top-three mentions, Toro two and Encore one. (See charts below for results.)

The survey also noted that the average landscaper owns about four small walk-behinds, five midsize (30- to 60-inch) mowers and two large walk-behinds. Landscapers also reported owning an average of 1.9 riding rotaries smaller than 48 inches, 2.3 of 48-60 inches, 2.4 of 60-72 inches, and 1.9 larger than 72 inches.

Most landscapers expect their 30-inch and larger walk-behinds to last about 5.5 years. Small walk-behinds, the survey reported, last just over 3.5 years.

Golf course superintendents voted Toro best in quality, serviceability, parts availability and warranty among five mower



## LANDSCAPERS RATE...

### FOR QUALITY:

1. Scag .....	1.5
2. Toro .....	1.7
3. Ransomes .....	1.8

### FOR WARRANTY:

1. Scag .....	1.9
2. Encore .....	2.1
Deere .....	2.1

### FOR PARTS AVAILABILITY:

1. Deere .....	1.8
Scag .....	1.8
3. Toro .....	1.9

### FOR PRICE:

1. Lesco .....	2.1
2. Ransomes .....	2.2
3. Jacobsen .....	2.4
Scag .....	2.4

### FOR SERVICEABILITY:

1. Scag .....	1.4
2. Toro .....	1.8
3. Ransomes .....	1.9
Lesco .....	1.9

### FOR D/D SUPPORT:

1. Scag .....	2.0
2. Deere .....	2.1
3. Ransomes .....	2.3

# MOWERS

brands included in the golf portion of the survey. Toro's raw score of 1.5 in quality was best by far.

"When you put the whole package together, you're talking about a commitment to the customer by Toro and its distributors," says Toro director of marketing Denny Brown. "Our theme line is 'helping you put quality into play,' but [service, parts, warranty] are all important elements of our sales and marketing philosophy."

Jacobsen and Deere also received outstanding marks from the superintendents in most categories. (See charts at right for results.)

According to the survey, the average golf course owns about four walking greensmowers, three riding greensmowers, two or three triplexes and about two five-gang mowers. The survey also noted that superintendents expect most mowing equipment to last 7.5 to 8 years, with walking greensmowers lasting an average of nine years.

—Jerry Roche

## How important is?...

**Q**uality: that one word that means so many different things to so many different people, is the most influential factor in selecting mowing equipment, according to LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT's mowing equipment study.

Eighty-nine percent of all landscapers said quality is "very influential" in the buying decision; 84 percent of the golf course superintendents concurred.

Next most influential factor among landscapers is serviceability (69%) while parts availability is second-most important among superintendents (58.9%).

Interestingly, price was listed fifth of six factors influencing the buying decisions of landscapers. It was listed fifth of seven listed by superintendents.

Here are the number of respondents listing the following factors as being "very influential" in deciding which brand of mowers to purchase:

—J.R.

## LANDSCAPERS

## GOLF COURSE SUPERS

1. Quality (89%)	1. Quality (84%)
2. Serviceability (69%)	2. Parts availability (59%)
3. Parts availability (63%)	3. Serviceability (59%)
4. Dealer/distributor support (53%)	4. Dealer/distributor support (46%)
5. Price (31%)	5. Price (35%)
6. Warranty (27%)	6. Warranty (26%)
	7. Brand name (13%)

## GOLF SUPERS RATE...

### FOR QUALITY:

1. Toro .....	1.5
2. Jacobsen .....	1.8
3. Deere .....	2.1

### FOR PARTS AVAILABILITY:

1. Toro .....	1.9
2. Jacobsen .....	2.1
3. Deere .....	2.4

### FOR PRICE:

1. National .....	2.2
2. Lesco .....	2.3
3. Jacobsen .....	2.5

### FOR WARRANTY:

1. Toro .....	2.0
2. Jacobsen .....	2.2
3. Deere .....	2.3

### FOR SERVICEABILITY:

1. Toro .....	1.9
2. Jacobsen .....	2.1
3. Deere .....	2.3

### FOR D/D SUPPORT:

1. Jacobsen .....	2.0
2. Toro .....	2.2
3. Deere .....	2.5