

the out-front deck that makes it easier to see and the wheels don't mash down the grass before it's cut," says Mrs. Junior Hartung, Macon, Mo.

Richard Folkmann, Newhall, Iowa, likes his 1983 Deere 318 mower. "We like the twin cylinder engine, hydrostatic drive, hydraulic lift, and power steering. It sure takes the work out of mowing grass and does a nice job without scalping. We like the reserve fuel tank. We would like the mower to turn shorter and be easier to service. The oil plug is hard to reach - the filter fits through the air shield with very little sticking out to get a wrench on. It's also difficult and time-consuming to grease universal joints on the driveshaft because they're hard to reach."

Keith W. Kettering, Mellette, S. Dak., has had good luck with his 1963 IH Cub Cadet. "This was one of the first generations of IH riding mowers. I replaced the original 7-hp. motor with an 8-hp. 12 years ago and since then I have not touched the engine other than for routine maintenance."

"I'm the one who uses our 1990 Deere RX95 most often. I'm happy with it," says Patti Hickman, Waelder, Tex. "All controls are located so they're easy to reach and operate. It runs well and cuts good. One of the reasons we chose Deere is because we have a good dealer in our area for service. No complaints except that the grass catcher is fairly large and the top somewhat difficult to open and close."

Herb Lewis, Escondido, Calif., is satisfied with his 3-year-old Toro 11-32. "It cuts evenly, cuts heavy grass readily and turns sharp. I like the kill switch - if you fall off the seat it automatically kills the engine. The only bad feature is the 11-hp. Briggs & Stratton engine, which is hard to start."

"I mow 1 1/2 acres per week with my 1986 Deere 214 with a 46-in. deck and in 5 years the only repairs have been belts. My only complaint is the difficulty of removing or mounting the mower deck. You have to

## "My only complaint is the difficulty of removing or mounting the mower deck."

remove the right side panel by the engine to put on or take off the drive belt. One modification I made was to have the dealer install grease fittings on the deck bearings, which were originally greaseless. I don't know if it did any good but I've never had to replace a bearing," says Sam Holmes, Howell, Mich.

"Our 1988 Grasshopper 1212 runs well, handles well and there's no lost motion at all because it maneuvers so well. I like having a driveshaft rather than a belt drive. My only suggestion would be to add an adjustable arm rest," says Larry Bonnell, Hope, Ind.

"I modified the brake linkage to have individual brake control. Helps steer when pulling a heavy load such as a rotary tiller," says Paul Probert, Seville, Ohio, who owns a 1969 IH Cub Cadet 154 fitted with a 3-pt. hitch and "creeper drive" for running a 4-ft. rotary tiller.

"My 1986 Woods 1850 has cut my mowing time in half. The zero turning radius lets me mow around objects quickly, thus eliminating a lot of trimming. Also, it's all-hydro so there's no shifting. Parts have

been easy to get. We liked it so much we've purchased another one just like it with a grass bagger, so now we mow our 3-acre lawn in 2 to 2 1/2 hrs.," says Keith Lain, Mystic, Iowa. "One modification we made was to remove the side discharge chute. It should be on for safety reasons but it wind-rowed heavy grass. It should be hinged to release clippings more easily."

"Our 1989 Deere 316 seems well-built and should last for years. Handling is good but they could improve the mounting of mower deck. Also, it would be better if it had tilt steering. We put a guard on front of tractor to keep from damaging it," says Keith C. Karg, Harbor Beach, Mich.

Richard Jackson, Circleville, Ohio, mounts a Woods rear-mount mower on a Kubota L185DT tractor. "We bought them 12 years ago and have mowed 2 acres of lawn every year and also trim along fencerows. All we've replaced in 12 years is one mower belt. We couldn't have bought anything better. Like being able to dismount mower quickly to use tractor for other chores."

"Of all the self-propelled equipment I own, this is without a doubt the worst," says Walter Viste, Hanna, Alberta, about his 1980 Deere 317. "For every hour of use, two hours of repair are necessary. The only part that hasn't been worked on is the Kohler motor and that's probably only because the rest is always broken down and the engine doesn't have many hours on it."

Elmer Leschinsky, St. Libory, Neb., says his "best buy" mower is a New Idea R36 electric-powered rider with a 36-in. mower. "Everyone should own one of these battery-powered mowers because there's no smoke, no gas, no oil and not much noise. Just push a button and mow. I bought it second hand 5 years ago and have had no trouble with it. It's not designed for tall weeds, though."

"My 1987 Rally Roper is the biggest piece of junk I ever bought. It takes 1/2 acre of land to turn around, the motor vibrates loose, second gear has gone out twice, and both blade bearings have failed. Leaves a strip of grass where blades meet," says Wendy Parrish, Kingston, Okla.

"It's the best mower I've ever owned," says Wayne V. Munsch, Beason, Ill., about his 1989 Deutz-Allis 1918. "It's satisfactory in every way except that it's light on the rear wheels. It loses traction when turning or mowing on slopes. Company-designed weights are expensive so I made a bracket to fit the rear end that holds two concrete blocks. I also installed an oil filter on the engine."

A.J. Evans, Kilgore, Tex., likes his 10-hp. Murray with a rear-mount engine but has a suggestion for improvement. "They could lower the center of gravity. You sit too high compared to other mowers. I bought the tractor primarily because of the low price."

"Our 1990 Deere STX-38 has the power I need to mow my yard and then some. I only wish it turned a little easier and had a sharper turning radius," says Wayne Wilber, Hamshire, Tex. "Although I like my Deere, I sometimes wish I still had my dependable Snapper. I owned it for 11 years and did not spend over \$50 on it the whole time."

"I've had no problems with the performance of my 1986 Snapper 8-hp. Cuts even, starts easy. Would prefer wheel steering rather than the handle bar but it's not a problem. Don't like the tubeless tires - they leak," says Nick Lambeth, Clinton, Okla.

"I've had no failures whatsoever with my



## "Made It Myself" Zero Turn Mower

"I designed and built it myself," says Robert W. Hesse, Ann Arbor, Mich., about his professional-looking "zero turn" lawn tractor that he uses both for mowing - with a 50-in. deck - and moving snow - with a 48-in. Case snow thrower.

The 3-wheel hydrostatic-driven tractor is powered by a 16-hp. Kohler engine mounted on 3-point automotive rubber mounts that limit vibration. Front wheels are each chain-driven by a No. 7 Eaton hydrostatic motor. Roller drive chains are provided with constant lubrication and sealed ball bearings are used throughout the machine.

Steering levers return to neutral whenever hands are removed. Hesse notes that operators not familiar with operation of lever steer units often have trouble with jerking or surging on rough ground because it's hard to hold the levers steady. "I was able to overcome the surging problem common with lever-controlled mowers by placing fiberglass rods at right angles on

top of each control handle. All you have to do is place your forefinger across the top of them to hold them steady," says Hesse.

Attachments mount to a rock shaft with an adjustable spring-loaded counterbalance that allows only enough pressure on guide wheels to make ground contact. The mower deck can be easily tilted to a vertical position for cleaning or blade work. Also, the hood and seat tilt up for service on engine or tractor.

Attachments are driven by a simple arrangement of two belts and one jackshaft. No gearboxes, twists or sharp turns in belt, according to Hesse.

The cab, which is used with the snow thrower, attaches with one rod at back of seat. It pivots up and down at that point for getting on and off tractor.

"I've used it for 5 years with no problems at all," says Hesse.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Robert W. Hesse, 6060 E. Joy Rd., Ann Arbor, Mich. 48105.

1984 Kubota 7100 DT. I cut out a deflector in the discharge chute because it plugged up with wet grass too easily. I also installed a shroud in front of the radiator to draw air from above to retard plugging of radiator with dry grass and dust," says Lorne L. Miller, Claresholm, Alberta. "It's a great treat to operate because of the unending problems we had with our former Deere 110."

"We're very pleased with our 1989 Walker 11-hp. mower with a 42-in. deck. It's got a low profile and can cut on a 30 degree slope. Good maneuverability - no need for another mower to trim. I like the hydrostatic drive. I put on over 110 hrs. a year and this is the best mower I've ever owned," says Herbert G. Kiehl, Malta Bend, Mo.

"We have a cemetery mowing contract so we give our 1988 Dixon 501 a tough workout. It has plenty of power to operate the hydrostatic motors and 50-in. deck with its 18-hp., twin cylinder engine. Maneuverability and durability are excellent," says Steve Jacobsen, Marquette, Neb. "The oil drain plug could be more accessible and the battery cable needs to be heavier. I replaced it with a heavier cable and clamp end."

"It would be nice if my 1986 Deere 316 would turn sharper. Otherwise, I'm completely satisfied with it. I've had absolutely no trouble in 4 years," says Patrick Walsh, Elk Point, S. Dak.

David L. Steward, Kenney, Ill., owns a 1988 Snapper LT16. "It's an excellent mower with plenty of horsepower and a good heavy deck. It will mow tall wet grass and shoot it 3 to 4 ft. away. I have never

cleaned the bottom of the deck."

"Our 1990 Dixon ZTR has cut mowing time in half because it's now possible to mow close to everything. You can turn around on a dime," says Vicki Erickson, Platte, S. Dak.

"I shortened the discharge chute to make it easier to get close to objects. The only problem is that it makes the mower less safe," says John B. Urish, Green Valley, Ill., about his 1985 Case 448.

"It's the best machine I ever bought," says Randy Yockey, St. Charles, Ill., about his 1990 Deere 855 with a 72-in. deck and 4-WD. "I've done custom mowing for some time with a variety of makes and models and I've found that the 855 equipped with the 72-in. mid-mount deck handles all work and is a real pleasure to operate. They should relocate the exhaust pipe from the side to the top so fumes don't roll back into your face. Also, when the mower deck is raised or lowered, the 3-pt. is on the same hydraulic system so if you have a tiller or blade on back it goes up and down with the deck. Another problem is that I ordered the tractor with large turf tires which hit the deck on sharp turns. But Deere is working on a solution for me."

"I built my own grass catcher for it," says Herb H. Schwede, Donnybrook, N. Dak., who owns a 1970 Snapper mower.

"I'm satisfied with my 1989 Case/IH Cub Cadet 1211. It has plenty of power for the 44-in. deck and it's fairly stable when mowing road ditches. We also use it for

Continued on next page