



Elec-Trak[®]

Tractor

PRODUCT SERVICE BULLETIN NO. 9

May 28, 1971

MOWING TIPS*

With another mowing season underway this bulletin is intended to help owners of Elec-Trak tractors and mowers get the best service and performance from the equipment. These suggestions come from experience and reports during the past year, and represent owners' and our test group's reports of mowing under all conditions of terrain, grass, and weather.

Mower

All owners should now have the full rear roller and the mower guide bar addition, which greatly improves the operation of the mower. Anyone who does not have these two items should contact his dealer to obtain them at no charge. The rear discharge mower should have a deflector flap of proper size for the roller. The side discharge mower does not require the flap, but it may be left on if installed. Check all bolts and nuts for tightness before mowing after the winter storage.

Cutting

Always mow with sharp blades. The blades can be sharpened in place on the Elec-Trak mower. Always disconnect the power cord before working on the mower. After several sharpenings the blades should be checked for balance. Unbalanced blades can shorten the life of the mower motor bearings.

For good appearance of the mowed lawn, it is important to have the mower adjusted correctly for height of cut. Unequal adjustments can affect the cutting appearance because the blades will not be level. Each front caster wheel should be set by locating the desired number of spacers under the caster support. Then the rear roller must be adjusted at each end at the rear of the mower. The number of holes on the roller adjuster should correspond to the number of spacers under the caster support. If there are no spacers below (all five spacers on top), the roller adjuster should be set in the upper hole. If one spacer is below, the roller adjuster should be set in the second hole from the top, and so on.

After determining that the mower is set for level mowing as described above, each owner should determine the best height of cut. It is suggested that the use of two spacers below the caster support be tried first. Closer cutting can be obtained with fewer spacers, but care must be used not to scalp uneven parts of the lawn. As the cutting height is increased to more than 2 spacers, some types of grass and turf may begin to show the tire tracks where the grass is long enough to be rolled down and not spring back up.

Tractors are shipped with high pressure in the tires. The dealer must reduce the pressure to that recommended on the hang tag or the Use & Care Manual. If the tractor is tracking the lawn or gives a bumpy ride, reduce the rear tire pressure to 8-10 psi.

The rear discharge mower is best suited to a regularly cut lawn, the use of a sweeper to pick up clippings, and it offers obvious safety advantages with discharge down and under the tractor. The side discharge mower is best suited to long, limp or wet grass, and leaving the clippings on the lawn. On the side discharge mower the large space between the mower front and the blades, and the rear baffle, act to cut the grass clippings into smaller pieces. This action, combined with a broader scattering of the discharge, gives the cleanest appearance.

If a patch of grass is uncut because one blade has stopped turning and then resumes cutting after 10-30 feet of travel, the circuit breaker on that motor interrupted power because of over current, which could damage the motor if power were not removed. The circuit breaker recloses automatically when the motor has cooled, and the motor resumes running. High grass or obstructions or mowing at too

*This has been sent to owners.

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high a tractor speed for the mower to cut and discharge the grass encountered, can cause this tripping. The user should try cutting at a slower speed, or at a higher level of cut.

After each mowing clean grass from underside of mower, either by scraping or hosing. Avoid direct hosing of motors as much as possible.

Driving

The front caster wheels must swivel easily for good performance in driving the mower, especially when trimming. Be sure to keep the caster spindles clean and free from rust. If necessary clean with emery cloth and reassemble with a light coating of oil. Any spindle which does not turn freely should be polished down using emery cloth and oiled or greased.

The two long lift assist springs are used to transfer some of the mower weight to the front wheels of the tractor. On some kinds of terrain this additional weight improves the tracking of the tractor during turns. These lift springs should be attached at all times for best performance. If they come loose at the upper end from the lift spool shaft, bend the spring end into a smaller loop and/or use a larger washer next to the clip to hold on to the shaft.

The maximum motor torque and most efficient use of power occurs when the speed control lever is at full forward in the E-12, in the "drive" position for the E-15, or cruise control position for the E-20 model. Advancing the speed control lever on the E-15 or foot pedal on the E-20 increases the speed on normal terrain, but may cause decreased speed when going uphill, because the motor torque is reduced. The D1 range is best for average to heavy mowing, and D2 may be used for lighter duty, faster mowing.

When mowing on steep hillsides, the travel should be up and down. Care should be exercised to avoid sudden starts and stops, which may cause loss of control. The tractor will offer braking action by the motor provided the speed control is not returned to neutral. Maximum braking is obtained with the speed control in the drive position, or cruise control. Whenever operation on hillsides is required, the rear tractor wheels should be assembled in the "wide-tread" position for increased stability. (Refer to your tractor Use and Care Manual.)

Lift strap breaking can occur by fraying or rubbing of the strap on metal edges. A free lift strap guard for your tractor is being sent to your dealer to provide protection for the strap. (Available by June 1.) In the absence of this guard, do not continue to run the lift down for more than 2 seconds after the mower is on the ground. The large loop in the strap thus formed will sometimes rewind outside of the takeup washers and cause cutting of the strap by the washers. A slight amount of slack in the strap is necessary to permit the mower to follow rough terrain without lifting.

Another tip for smoother operation: Do not use throttle reversing to stop the tractor except at very low speeds. At higher speeds the tractor must be braked to a stop or the control will not allow reverse to pickup and the tractor will simply coast until braked. This is due to a protective circuit which protects the control from the high voltage and current caused by such reversal.

We hope these tips will prove useful to you. We know they will be beneficial to a longer trouble-free life for your Elec-Trak tractor.