

Cub Cadet Commercial Tank S

TLC puts this zero-turn mower through a field test and discovers an innovative, intuitive machine.

With an overwhelming percentage of zero-turn riding mowers on the market equipped with steering lap bars and freely rotating front caster wheels, Cub Cadet Commercial's newly released Tank S with a steering wheel and full directional control of the front wheels tends to stand out.

The "S" in the Tank S mower stands for "Synchro Steer" technology. Released to the public in spring 2009, the Tank S possesses a more intuitive steering wheel and dual foot pedal speed control that come more naturally to first-time users than lap bar controls. We asked TLC subscriber and landscape contractor, Willie J. Lang, owner of Lang Landscape Company in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, to test the Tank S on several properties he maintains.

"The Tank S mower is a very advanced mower," Lang says. "I really like the ease of handling and the easy learning curve for my staff. The new steering system was excellent. The unit responded to all situations and conditions exceedingly well."

Keith Wainwright, commercial sales manager, Cub Cadet Commercial, says a lot of owners appreciate the reduced training time on the Tank S. "There is no learning curve with this mower," he says. "If you can drive a golf cart, you can drive this."

Wainwright says they loaned some of the units to the grounds crews at Disney World and Texas A&M University and received lots of positive feedback. "We eliminated the caster wheels you typically find at the front of a zero-turn mower," Wainwright says. "You essentially have a four-wheel steering unit you can drive like a car. You control the steering with the front and the speed comes from the rear wheels."

The Tank S is available with Kawasaki 31- and 37-horsepower V-twin options and can be spec'd with a 60- or



A pivoting front axle on the Tank S helps provide a uniform cut even when the terrain is slightly uneven.

72-inch deck. List price ranges from \$14,000 to \$15,000, depending on deck size and horsepower. Cub Cadet Commercial recently announced liquid propane and diesel versions of the Tank S would be released at the 2009 GIE+Expo. Lang, who tested a 31-horsepower gas unit, says, "The engine provided just the right amount of power for all conditions, and serviceable points were well-placed."

"Cutting hillsides, and even hills with curves in the turf, proved to be no problem for the unit," Lang says. "Even in wet conditions it was stable. The unit provided an excellent cut in a variety of types of grass and conditions. It had adjustments for the different types of turf conditions. In all conditions the cut was even and manicured." Ball wheels on the front of the deck prevent scalping and an adjustable striping roller at the back creates clean stripes for a manicured sports field appearance. A SmartJet deck wash system allows for easy cleanup at the day's end.

"The only part of the mower I did not like was the deck adjustment," Lang says. It proved to be a little tricky from the driver's seat. However, it would not be an issue to keep me from buying the mower." Lang says the air ride suspension seat was comfortable and leg room was spacious. "The operator could run the unit all day with little or no fatigue," he says.

Available attachments for the Tank S include a cab enclosure, light kit, mulching kit, ultra-traction tires, a 72-inch steel blade for light dozer work, a 10-bushel bagger, a spreader and a rear power-assisted dump hopper. **TLC**