

Exploring Equipment

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the right reel mower. The 350D, he says, was the most maneuverable of the five-gang reel mowers he tested.

The reels are backlapped every 30 hours to keep them sharp for the fine cutting the fields demand. "The reverse reel drive feature is really a time-saver," says Kurcab. "I can sharpen blades in about 15 minutes with it. That's a lot better than having to take off reels and hook them up to a backlapping unit, then put them back on the mower. That can take a half-day or more."

To further enhance fine cutting, the unit features floating cutter heads. Also, the hydraulic reel cutting drive is independent of ground speed. The ability to adjust reel speed independent of ground speed, says Kurcab, enables him to get a precision cut despite fluctuating mowing conditions. Being able to make an adjustment to apply more "down" pressure to the cutting reels is also helpful, he notes, because it minimizes reel "bouncing" and maintains a more even cut.

"The maneuverability and quality of cut were the main reasons we went with the 350D," Kurcab concludes. "The practice fields are definitely 'high wear, high maintenance' turf. But with a good mower, you can make even an average field look good." □

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