

Collectors Love These Multi-Colored Deere Tractors

What runs like a Deere, but doesn't look like a Deere?

Lawn and garden tractor collectors know the answer is the Deere Patio Series lawn and garden tractors, sold from about mid-1969 through early 1971.

Jim Lundell and his sons, Brad and Brian who farm near Kiron, Iowa, elected to drop their swine enterprise about four years ago in order to spend more time buying and selling used lawn and garden tractors and parts. Their specialty is Deere's Patio Series.

"In the late 1960s, marketing people at John Deere decided they might be able to sell more of their lawn and garden tractors to non-farming people if they were available in colors other than green," Lundell says.

Instead of green, tractors were painted Dogwood White, with hoods and seats available in the same color or the buyer's choice of Spruce Blue, Sunset Orange, Patio Red or April Yellow.

It happens that these colors were quite similar to colors used by some of Deere's competitors in the farm tractor business. To some, it appeared that Deere wanted to sell lawn and garden tractors to people whose favorite tractor color was something other than green.

The Patio Series colors were available first for Deere's model 110, 112, 140 tractors. Later, the 120 tractor was made available with these non-green color options.

"The effort flopped. It turns out that people who wanted to buy a Deere tractor actually wanted green paint rather than one that matched their car or their boat or house," Lundell says. "There are more people interested in them now than when they were new."

In total, the number of Patio Series tractors sold was small. He says you can't really call

them rare, but they are hard to find. Biggest sellers were Patio Red and Sunset Orange. If you see one that's April Yellow, you're probably looking at a rare machine, though.

The only difference between the regular green 110s, 112s, 120s, and 140s and the Patio Series was the color scheme.

"You can't just take a green one and paint it in the Patio Series colors and be authentic, though," Brad says. "The original color is identified in the serial number of the tractor. If you're looking at buying a 110, 112, 120 or 140 from that period, no matter what color it is when you look at it, you might want to check the serial numbers to find the original color."

It's likely that some of the Patio Series tractors were repainted green. And now that collectors are showing an interest in the Patio Series versions, some tractors that were originally green may get new paint.

When these tractors were new, there was no price difference between a green Deere lawn tractor and its Patio Series cousin of the same model.

Now, the Patio Series tractors are worth more to collectors, although how much more depends on the buyer.

In addition to tractors and parts, the Lundells have attachments for sale.

Lundell says Shelly Rowell, Cortland, Nebraska, has restored a number of the Patio Series tractors. At one time, she also sold parts, but recently sold her parts inventory to the Lundells. Another source of parts, decals and information is Historic American Parts Co. (HAPCO) at Evansville, Indiana. (Internet: www.hapco.com)

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Lundell Tractor, 6583 310th St., Kiron, IA 51448 (ph 712 675-4341; email: BL4440@netins.net).



Deere sold its Patio Series lawn and garden tractors in colors other than green from 1969 to 1971. The tractors were painted white, with hoods and seats available in blue, orange, red, or yellow.

Club For "Little Tractor" Collectors

Anyone interested in restoring or collecting lawn and garden tractors can get a wealth of information by joining Little G, a club for garden tractor collectors.

Rick and Mary Herbers, Dyersville, Iowa, along with their son Tim, founded the club and serve as its executives.

"We were restoring an old garden tractor and tried to find a club or organization where we could get information and advice," Mary Herbers tells. "When we didn't find one, we started our own."

We now have members all over the U.S. Our youngest member is 12 and our oldest one is in his 80's."

Little G dues are \$25 a year. For that, you get a monthly newsletter chock full of

information and ideas from other members, plus support from the Herbers and other members. In addition, the club sponsors an annual show for collectors, which features restored garden tractors, tractors, parts and attachments for sale, and related exhibitors. The show is held on the Herbers' 15 acres right next to the famed "Field of Dreams" movie site outside Dyersville. Their fourth annual show will be held the first weekend of August, 2001.

Call or write the Herbers for more information or a complimentary copy of the Little G newsletter.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Little G, 13306 Black Hills Road, Dyersville, Iowa 52040 (ph 319 875-7448).



Six high school friends drove to their high school prom - along with their dates - in these well-polished, spotless Deere tractors.

Teens "Tractored" To Senior Prom In Style

Six high school buddies lived out a dream last spring when they drove to their high school prom - together with their dates - in well-polished, spotless Deere tractors.

"It was a big event in our town. The guys were dressed in their tuxedos and the girls in beautiful evening gowns," says David Swartz, Edinburg, Va., father of one of the boys. "All the tractors were cleaned up for the parade through town. They even got a police escort for the ride from the school to the prom site and hundreds of people gathered to see them."

The tractors used ranged from a Deere 7700 to a 4240.

Needless to say, the boys went down in school history and there were stories in all the local newspapers. "The boys were overwhelmed with pride and amazement at



The guys were dressed in their tuxedos and the girls in beautiful evening gowns.

the success of the idea. It was a dream come true," says Swartz.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, David Swartz, 752 Coffman Rd., Edinburg, Va. 22824 (ph 540 984-9768).

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