

GRAMPA'S BROWNS CORNER

BLAB

5-25-20

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Samantha

Call her Mommy, Auntie Samantha, Dr.
Sweeney, whatever. She's the best!

MOWER DECK SPECIAL



You have no doubt wondered about Grampa's experience with the Radtech LM3560A mower deck installed on his LS XJ2025H tractor, delivered during Browns Corner Camp 2017. Overall, the experience has been AWESOME.

Mowing time for trimming the greens at Browns Corner has been cut in half as compared to the old John Deere tractor, partly due to a six inch wider mower and partly because the LS goes faster. Now, after three years, I decided it was time for some maintenance; the blades needed sharpening and i needed to replace the grease fitting expender tube for the center (drive) spindle.

I thought about calling the dealer to come pick it up and do the maintenance but decided to save about \$300 by doing it myself. After removing the mower deck and turning it upside down, I was immediately struck by what generally good condition it was in. I'm pretty hard on mowers, don't balk at driving over branches up to about 2 inches in diameter, and occasionally run over bricks and scrap iron. After three years the old John Deere deck was pretty beat up. Not so with this one. In the picture you can see at lower right a couple of bent places but generally good, clean and rust free. Must be a high copper steel.



I had no trouble replacing the grease fitting extender using some black iron plumbing fittings and some JB Weld epoxy putty. But sharpening the blades was a bit more trouble.

When I sharpen mower blades I always grease the threads of the mounting bolts with axle grease to be sure I'll be able to remove them easily next time. The underside of a mower deck is a hostile environment and things can get rusty.

This picture tells a story in guy language. Tim will get it immediately. Probably also Ed Truesdale and Dr. Tuttle.



I started with WD-40 and a very large 24" adjustable wrench. Could not turn the bolt on the center spindle. Then I went to a 24" breaker bar with a six-point socket. No good. I put a six-foot pipe on the breaker bar. Nothing.

I got out my Bernz-O-Matic torch, tried heat. Nope. I made a block of ice to cool the blade before heating the bolt. Pneumatic impact wrench set on max. No.

On the right you see the mini grinder with cut-off wheel. I simply cut the washer out from under the bolt. A little help with a cold chisel and I was home free.

I stopped at the hardware store for some *anti-seize compound* figuring that maybe my axle grease technique was no good. I also bought three new bolts and washers. Had to replace at least the one I cut out with the grinder.



While I was cleaning up the spindles for reassembly I discovered the root cause of my problem. Last time the blades were sharpened late summer of 2018, I had the dealer do it. Apparently the mechanic was confused because the threads and faying surfaces were coated with *thread lock compound*, intended to prevent threads from turning. Dummy.



I noticed several bolts which stuck down into the clipping flow by about an inch. Silly. I cut them back with the mini grinder, flush with the nuts. You can see I swabbed up the spindle bolts and washers with *anti-seize compound*.

I also fitted a wood block to fair the end of that grass barrier (behind the shadow of the blade at top of picture).

Straightened the couple bent places and good to go.

Noticeably better cut and less logging down in heavy growth. Another happy project.

That's it for this morning. Happy Birthday, Samantha! Love to all, 709