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Pink Tractors

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G.E. Elec-Trac Model E-20

by Dillon Honor



The G.E. Elec-Trac is still new to most collectors and we are slowly learning about the all-electric mower. I try to purchase Elec-Trac literature wherever I can, as it seems to be as scarce as the mowers.

From the information I have obtained, it appears that from 1970 through 1974 the tractors were produced under the name G.E. Elec-Trac and continued production under the Wheel Horse brand name through 1975 with models C-185, C-145, A-65, and A-60. Were it not for the bright red paint, you could really not tell them apart from the bright yellow Elec-Trac.



Elec-Trac came in various horsepower models up to 18 hp. The factory recommended that units be charged after each use, by way of the on-board charging system. If the batteries are completely discharged, it will take approximately five hours to re-charge them to operable condition.

I became the proud owner, purely by chance, of a mower I knew nothing about. In December of 2010 my dad purchased a very low mileage Ford Falcon from a retired doctor in Indiana. The doctor was 89 years old and although he was still a sharp, fast-moving gentleman, he wanted to see the car restored and running again as it was when new.

I returned to the doctor's home with my parents and he gave us a tour of his beautiful property. In the back of his old, weathered barn was a dusty yellow piece of metal peeking out from under a few piles of shingles. My mom, Donna, spotted what looked like a portion of a tractor and brought it to my attention. The doctor soon explained that it was an all-electric mower that he bought new back in the 1970s when the world was worried about gasoline and the lack of it.

He told us how he could mow his entire estate with it and it would hold a charge the whole time. It was a dependable machine in its prime and he got many good years of service out of it. However, it had been a long time since the machine had been in its prime. The good doctor explained that there came a time in the late 1980s or early '90s when he finally parked the machine due to the need for repairs and the lack of anyone who knew how to work on an all-electric lawn tractor.



ABOVE:
Dillon sits proudly on his Elec-Trac.

UPPER MIDDLE:
The Elec-Trac E-20 with its front mount mower deck.

LOWER MIDDLE:
The battery system on the E-20.

BELOW:
The dash on the E-20.

The doctor told me that I was welcome to take the mower if I wanted it. I couldn't say no to his offer and spent a good half an hour digging it out and dusting it off. I pulled it out and saw that the battery compartments were empty. I knew that buying the six batteries that it demanded would be a big expense, and I wasn't sure if that was all it needed to get it going. I decided not to spend too much time worrying about it, I just wanted to get it home.

Home it went and the adventure began...with cleaning! Fearful of investing in batteries right away, we instead borrowed three 12-volt batteries from our cars. We immediately mounted them to the tractor to see if the beast would come back to life and would this phoenix fly again! Indeed, it did...sort of. The dash lights came on and that was the end of the show.

We cleaned more and used a lot of contact cleaner on it, and low and behold it came alive! Gosh-awful slow at first, the other contacts finally kicked in and it became my fastest factory stock tractor!

The electric tractor, like an electric car, takes off rapidly and smoothly with no hesitation and no carburetor to mess with or delay you. It's fun

to the watch the amazement on people's faces when they see the tractor in action. GE's 1970s engineering made one fine, outstanding product which was made simply a little before it's time.

The mower deck works like a charm and the reason the doctor parked it is because it had a bad belt! He's a fine orthopedic surgeon, but admitted that he isn't good with mechanical repairs.

There were quite a number of support products you could buy for these mowers such as gang mowers, sickle bar, sweepers with optional electric drive, snow blowers and plow in 38- or 42-inch, V-plow, snow cab, tiller attachments, mold board plow, electric or manual rear lift, cultivator disc, dump cart, auxiliary heavy duty plug-in power, power sprayer (that plugs in to your tractor for electricity), platform lift, and many more items. G.E. truly did make good things for life. 🚧

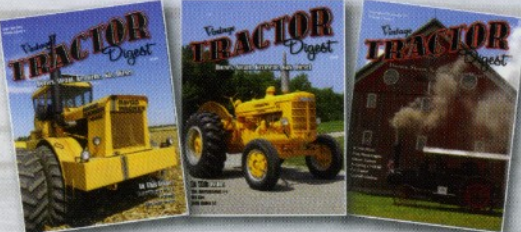


PHOTO:
Dillon's collection of GE
Elec-Trac literature.

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Restored E15
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