

✓ Field Test Report



Tanaka TBL 7800R Backpack Blower

Sue and Tracy Cole, T.C.'s Lawn Service, Butler, N.J.

After using the Tanaka TBL7800R backpack blower for the past several weeks, we have a lot of good things to say about it.

The Tanaka was easy to assemble right out of the box. Right away, my husband noticed three features he liked on the blower. The first was the carrying handle on the top of the fan itself. This makes the unit easier to carry by centering the weight in your hand. The second was the netting. He really liked the netting on the blower to help keep the leaves out. This was a very nice touch. The third feature that he liked right away was the gas opening. The opening is positioned out away from the unit, making it much easier to fill than other blowers.

The padding on the back looked good. It seems like a waterproof material that will not get damp with sweat in the summer. We are not sure, though, if it will rip over time. So far, after several solid seven-day work weeks, it is holding up fine.

One negative aspect we noticed was that there were wires hanging out from the bottom of the unit. We tucked them back up in the unit, but perhaps its bottom could be enclosed somehow to avoid the wires slipping down.

Using the Tanaka is easy, it starts right up. Though I must note, we noticed that the on/off switch is backwards compared with other brands. On other manufacturers' models, the up position is usually on

and down is usually off, but on the Tanaka, the down position is on and up position is off. It was frustrating in the beginning for some of the workers who use different blowers each day, to be pulling and pulling and choking the unit to try and get it started only to realize that they have the switch in the wrong position. Not a huge deal now that we know; we check the switch before trying to start it. One feature that Tanaka may want to consider is a spring-loaded on/off switch. Once the blower is turned off and you let go of the button, the button automatically slides back to the on position, so it is always in the correct position to be started again.

Most of our head-to-head comparing was against a brand-new Shindaiwa EB8510RT, which our crew had available to use. While the Shindaiwa did have a little more blowing power than the Tanaka, the Tanaka really held its own and moved a lot of leaves. The Tanaka is lighter in weight. After using the Shindaiwa for an hour, my shoulders were really bothering me. I switched to the Tanaka and was able to keep going with much less shoulder and back fatigue. I assumed this was due to the fact that the Tanaka weighs less, which I am sure did factor in, but I just read on the Tanaka Web site that the Tanaka has a "four-point anti-vibration system, which reduces shoulder and back fatigue for

maximum operator comfort." This system works well because I experienced much less fatigue using the Tanaka.

The Tanaka must have a larger gas tank than the Shindaiwa, or be more fuel efficient, because the Shindaiwa needed to be refilled before the Tanaka. The Tanaka consistently ran 15 to 30 minutes longer than the Shindaiwa did before needing to be refilled.

The noise volume level of the Tanaka seemed the same as other manufacturers' blowers, but the Tanaka has a unique sound similar to that of a dirt bike.

After using the Tanaka throughout this leaf season, we would recommend it. 🌿

Think you've got what it takes to put some new gear through its paces? Can you write a complete sentence and craft a piece like this? Contact Publisher Jim Kendrick at jkendrick@mrpllc.com to get your name on our list of Turf magazine Field Test Experts!

Reprinted with permission from:

Turf
for Turf Care Professionals

Turf - for Turf Care Professionals
© 2007 Moose River Publishing
P.O. Box 449
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
www.mrpllc.com