

PURCHASING EQUIPMENT

Many of you have been attending the various turf conferences and trade shows during this winter — some of you with the intention of seeing and maybe purchasing a new piece of equipment.

Purchasing equipment is always a difficult and demanding task. Yet, you, as a turf manager, have the responsibility of purchasing, maintaining, and protecting thousands of dollars worth of mowers, tractors, and other turf maintenance equipment.

Let's assume you need a new piece of equipment. How do you go about obtaining it? The first and main thing you should remember is that you want a piece of equipment which best fits your situation. That means it should meet your job requirements and your financial situation.

You should define the job you want done and determine the specific job requirements. Compare how long it takes to do this job with whatever method or machine you are now using to how long it will take with the new piece of equipment. At the rate minimum wages are going up, it might be cheaper to buy a new and better piece of equipment.

Now you need to figure out the approximate amount you can spend on a new piece of equipment. Remember, you can't buy a Cadillac on a Volkswagon budget. Although most new equipment carries a high initial cost, the long-term savings and better looking turf area from timely maintenance will make the purchase worthwhile.

Expensive equipment does not mean it's the best. You can buy a \$200 mower to trim the grass around a sand trap, or you can buy a \$75 mower to do the same job. No matter which mower you buy, the housing will be severely eaten by the sand. It may be wiser to buy the cheaper mower and replace it as it wears out than to buy a more expensive mower which will require a larger initial cash outlay and still need the same maintenance as a cheaper mower.

The time has now come for you to go looking for that new piece of equipment. Trade shows are probably the best place to go looking first. They will generally have a wide selection from different manufacturers. You will also find less pressure to make a sale than at your local equipment dealer. You should also make sure to read all the professional literature you can about the various pieces of equipment in which you are interested. Talk to others who may own the piece of equipment in which you are interested. What I'm telling you is to look around. Ask questions to learn about a machine's drawbacks as well as its potentials. Always ask for a demonstration; don't just kick the tires. Keeping up with the latest equipment is a must for the conscientious turf manager.

If you now have made up your mind on the piece of equipment you want to buy, the next step is to shop around for the best deal. Be sure to find out what services will be performed by the seller and the details of your guarantee. When you do finally make your purchase, you should make sure you get a service manual which lists all parts and has instructions on how to make repairs. It is also a good idea to make up a 3-inch by 5-inch index card on which you can record the equipment's identification number, date and location of purchase, cost, and maintenance to be performed on the machine in later months. This card can be a valuable, ready reference for the turf manager, especially as it applies to insurance, depreciation schedules, and maintenance schedules.

Remember, shop around to determine what fits your need and your budget before buying that new piece of equipment. from **Fore Front** (May, 1977)

TURFGRASS INDUSTRY PREPARES FOR ST. LOUIS SHOW

The world's largest display of turfgrass maintenance equipment will be exhibited in the Cervantes Convention and Exhibition Center, St. Louis, Feb. 19-21, 1980.

This trade show, sponsored by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, will bring turf industry representatives from all parts of the world to St. Louis to display their equipment and supplies.

The exhibition will feature millions of dollars worth of maintenance equipment and supplies for the entire turfgrass management industry. These exhibits, in conjunction with the GCSAA conference educational program, are designed to familiarize turfgrass specialists, with new methods, products and equipment that can contribute to more efficient maintenance practices. Many manufacturers also introduce their new products to the industry at this show.

Monday, Feb. 18 is designated as Distributor's Day, and dealers will have an opportunity to preview the show before it is opened to the public. The ribbon cutting ceremony which officially opens the show is scheduled for 9 a.m. Tuesday.

The exhibits are open Tuesday and Wednesday, Feb. 19 and 20, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Thursday, Feb. 21 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Daily show passes may be purchased for \$10.

This year the exhibits will occupy nearly 70,000 net square feet of space in the new Cervantes Convention and Exhibition Center in St. Louis. As a result of a recent downtown construction and renovation effort, St. Louis has become one of the most attractive convention cities in the nation.

The 51st International Turfgrass Conference and Show is expected to draw more than 6,500 visitors, including golf course superintendents, architects and builders; city park and recreation personnel, cemetery and lawn care industry personnel; school facility supervisors and turfgrass managers from all over the world.

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SUMMARY

Despite current economic and energy situations, there is opportunity for each of us to continue providing the public with fine turf areas for recreation of all sorts. We should anticipate a strong increase in the use of green areas in and near our heavily populated areas. We should also expect some changes in our life styles. Some, I believe, are already apparent.

We are a people in love with travel and movement, in fact, some states in this great country depend on the mobility of Americans for their economic well being; and if our access to free wheeling cars and a sky full of planes is diminished. I believe we will have a renaissance of hiking and hosteling, cross-country skiing and similar outdoor activity. Look also for more lawn games and perhaps the return or development of lawn bowling to our towns.

We are truly fortunate to have in the United States more than 11,000 golf courses and vast acreages devoted to lawns, parks, school grounds, highways, airports and other types of turfgrass. That network is, in my opinion, a national treasure; one that will increase in importance to the people of this country as we move further into the new age of shortages.

As the demands on these facilities grow, we will have to keep pace with new turf management techniques and with new products. Certainly the economical use of motorized equipment will play a major role!