

# South Florida Sunshine

## Two-Way Radios on the Golf Course

By: Robert Klitz

The two-way radio is one of the most beneficial pieces of equipment used in a golf course operation. For an 18 hole course, six hand held radios and one base station will maintain a thorough communications system that can assist the entire golf operation.

The hand-held radios prove most beneficial to the starter, ranger, pro shop, irrigation foreman, assistant superintendent, and superintendent. The base station can be set up in the maintenance facilities so the mechanics, employees, and guests can locate the superintendent and other key personnel.

At Inverrary Country Club two-way radios have received a great deal of use and have proven to be extremely beneficial over the years.

One of the two-way radios most important benefits is enabling problems to be more easily worked out throughout the day by communicating over the airways. Travel time between employees and supervisors is eliminated, thus creating an increase in productivity. Equipment down time is reduced when a mechanic is immediately made aware of a breakdown instead of receiving word of the problem through face to face communication. The mechanic can also be notified of the symptoms of the breakdown and possibly offer advice to repair the problem in the field, thus saving time for everyone involved.

The pro shop can also benefit by enabling the starter to fill in any openings on the schedule that occur from no shows, cancellations, or other scheduling changes. This in turn would benefit the golfer who is on a waiting list for a tee time or has had a time change. Golfers also benefit when information for a tournament ruling is needed from the pro shop or when a golfer must be located to be given an urgent message. Radios also save valuable time when an emergency arises, such as an injury or accident in which medical attention is needed immediately.

One of the greatest disadvantages of the two-way radios is their costly repair bills. Although these radios can withstand some abuse, several bounces off a maintenance vehicle can result in extensive repairs. Another disadvantage is the irritation that develops when communicators on similar frequencies or atmospheric conditions cause radio conversations to become disrupted, distorted, and filled with static. Frustration can also develop through improper use of the radio. An operator must understand how to physically operate the radio, how to pronounce and enunciate words properly, and to avoid interrupting other people who are engaged in a conversation.

At this time hand-held radios, are about the size of a pack of cigarettes, they cost approximately \$1500.00 including the charger. Multiply that figure by seven and the total cost is roughly \$10,000.

Although \$10,000 will initially take a healthy bite out of the budget of an 18 Hole operation, two-way radios are an investment that will pay for themselves throughout the years. Through proper care and handling they can increase the productivity and effectiveness of a golf course operation from the prop shop to the maintenance facility. ■

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