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crickets. The new chemistry is fantastic and it helped reduce our overall spraying for crickets. When some hot spots develop, we use Orthene in a mix we call Sara Bay Lemonade. We have some lemon trees on the property and we squeeze the juice of about 20 lemons into the mix and it really helps attract the crickets to the pesticide and make it more effective so there is less follow-up spraying needed. Any grub problems are handled by carefully monitoring thin areas and spot treating with Turcam.”

With chemical applications done only as needed, the key is to grow healthy turf year round. To accomplish that goal Sara Bay has an annual aerification plan to stimulate the turf.

“With all the attention focused on greens and tees, fairways often get overlooked,” Gwodz says. “We deep-tine our fairways and greens every summer and top dress the fairways as well. The first time we did it we called the process ‘The Pipe Finder.’ we found all those irriga-

tion lines the hard way. The greens are cored three or four times during the warm months with a CoreMaster aerifier and in the cool season we Hydroject the greens monthly.”

Gwodz also monitors nutritional levels closely with an eye to an overall reduction in use over the years. “I experimented with one fairway and did not fertilize it with granular for almost a year to see how the turf would compare to the rest of the course. It did surprisingly well, making me think we could get by with less in general. We make three granular applications a year on our fairways using slow-release material. On the greens, we apply about a pound of nitrogen every three to four weeks. If we need to supplement between granular applications we do foliar feeding through our fertigation system.”

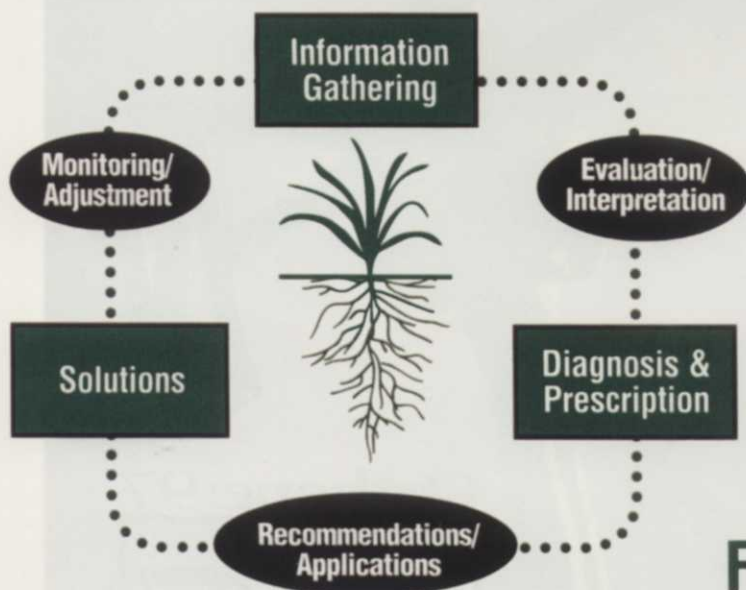
With an adequate but modest budget, Gwodz and staff must be inventive and do as much work as possible in-house, which includes all the tree trimming work

on the course. They fabricated a platform that attaches to the front end loader tractor thus saving the club \$3,000 monthly rental fees for a high-reach unit. Old Toro Groundsmasters no longer capable of rigorous mowing schedules are retrofitted with 25-gallon electric spray tanks and make great herbicide spot treatment spray rigs able to do a perfect circle around trees. Rather than landscape the course with expensive specimen trees, more than 400 3-gallon size oaks have been planted with special attention to future growth and shade impact. In three years 15-foot high trees are filling in the open out of play areas.

All the trees means lots of leaves, trimmings and storm debris. Gwodz used to do a controlled burn of the woody material, but tighter air quality laws in Manatee County mandated physical removal only. To avoid costly fees, Gwodz purchased a chipper and recycles the desirable material into

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The par-4 fifth hole at only 336 yards still ranks as the number-one handicap hole at Sara Bay.
Photo by Daniel Zelazek.

mulch and compost for use on the course and clubhouse grounds and puts the rest in the dumpster for hauling.

Utilizing common sense, modern technology and the teamwork of a dedicated staff Gwodz and company have proved that even the older golf courses

can be as efficient and environmentally friendly as the new ones with all the latest design bells and whistles. Gwodz and Hoppe and the crew deserve a lot of credit for their role in helping to preserve one of golf's legendary links.

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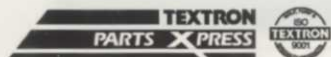
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Martin Downs CC in Stuart celebrates the diversity of its multicultural staff by displaying the national flags representing their countries of origin over the entrance to the crew operations room in the maintenance facility. From left: Haiti, Canada, United States, Guatemala and Mexico.

Understanding Our Newest Employees...

The Hispanic Workforce

Editors Note: We all know that the Hispanic workforce is already playing a big role in golf course maintenance in Florida. Superintendents are taking Spanish classes and workers are taking English classes. But how well do we understand the work ethic, culture and dynamics of this ever-expanding source of labor? If managing a non-English-speaking workforce is new to you, this article may give you some insights on improving communications and performance in your operation.

BY STEVE VALDEZ

The Hispanic population in the United States is growing every year, and Hispanic labor is beginning to play a big role in the American workforce.

More and more businesses are hiring non-English-speaking Hispanics, but there are still many employers who are afraid to hire them because of the communication gap.

There are some interesting facts that need to be taken into account in determining if hiring Hispanics is the right step for your business.

As many employers have found, Hispanics consistently have great work ethics. The majority of Hispanics who come to the United States from Mexico and places in Central and South America like

El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras are here to try to make a better life for themselves and their families. They are not necessarily planning to live here forever.

They want to come to the U.S. to work hard and earn good money to send back to their families.

As we all know, the U.S. dollar is worth from seven to twelve times more in their countries. An Hispanic working

here and sending \$1,000 U.S. to Mexico is sending 7,000–12,000 pesos to their families.

Depending on the exchange rate. This kind of money goes a long way in Latin American countries.

These Hispanics generally come from small towns and farm areas where jobs are scarce, the economy is bad, and farming isn't profitable.

Most Hispanics coming to work here

Secret to Successful Supervising

I will always be grateful to Dominic Ferro my former boss, co-worker and friend at Boca Grove for sharing his secret to successful supervising with me. It was, "Keep the workers happy!" Sounds pretty simple doesn't it?

All jobs, no matter what the pay scale, can become routine and boring if we don't keep the workers involved in a meaningful way. We are responsible for seeing that stagnation and boredom don't set in. With monetary constraints at many courses, supervisors must substitute pride in a job well done and recognition for the effort when extra dollars aren't always available in the paycheck.

Happy workers do better work more efficiently, which is exactly what supervisors are supposed to achieve. When employees work this way, the boss looks good and whole operation benefits. We work as a team.

A happy, positive workplace has a snowball effect which makes the power to achieve goals almost effortless. It is much more effective than a manipulating or fearful atmosphere, which makes a crew member wonder if this is really a good way to make a buck.

Thanks again, Dominic for showing me a better way to work with people.

JEFFREY J. ROTH
Senior Spray Tech
Polo Trace G. & T.C.

in the U.S. will stay here anywhere from eight months to two years. Some go through hardships getting to the U.S. Therefore, they will stay long enough to make the trip worthwhile. Others will come and go every year, working in seasonal jobs from spring to fall and then go back home for the winter.

During their stay in the U.S., they will take advantage of the time and work from dawn to sundown seven days per week to make as much money as they can within that time period.

Some of these Hispanics possess skills such brick laying, carpentry plumbing, electrical and equipment operator, which can be extremely useful in the golf course industry.

Although I was born and raised in the United States, as were my parents and grandparents, I grew up speaking both English and Spanish. I have worked with non-English-speaking Hispanics for many years.

For the last seven years, I have had the opportunity and privilege to work with, manage, interpret and train Hispanics at premier golf courses in Tennessee. With a background in counseling and minor in psychology, I found myself focusing on getting to know them and better understand their situations so that I could improve working relationships. Through this process, I learned a great deal about non-English-speaking Hispanics and developed a great respect for their work ethics.

Many businesses that have not hired non-English speaking Hispanics, but would like to hire them, are apprehensive to do so because of the obvious potential communication gaps.

There are ways to bridge those gaps and make it possible for a smooth flow of business.


First, videotapes in Spanish on operating and servicing their equipment are available from your equipment re-

tailers. You can also obtain Spanish-translated videotapes explaining golf course maintenance by contacting the GCSAA. Also, there are consultants now available that can give hands-on training on equipment operation, golf course maintenance methods, and interpreting, along with seminars on working with a multicultural workforce.

The American workforce is going through a change and we in the golf course and lawn care industries need to appreciate and take advantage of the resources available to us.

If you employ non-English speaking Hispanics or would like to employ them and have any questions, please send your questions to me in care of this magazine or telephone me.

Steve Valdez is owner/instructor, Carpe Diem Consulting Services, Nashville, Tenn. He may be reached at 615-330-0193.



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Got Wheels!

On Today's Golf Courses, There's a Set for Every Purpose

When I first set foot on a golf course as a construction laborer in 1959, the rolling stock consisted of two tractors and a pickup truck. The pickup truck was used to haul two walking mowers around and they were walked up and down a plank to load and unload them at each green.

Seems like they added a Jacobsen G-10 to pull a fairway gang mower when the course opened. The bunker-raking crew (all four of us) shouldered those big aluminum rakes and walked the nine-hole course.

Fifteen years later at Walt Disney World, we were riding three-wheeled Minute Misers, Red Ryders and Cushmans and Toro Sand Pros raked the bunkers. Since then utility vehicles have evolved into multi-use workhorses with heavy-duty chassis, or light-duty modified golf cars with an array of options. There are all-terrain-type vehicles and mini-trucks. Something to fit every need and every budget. Read on to see what some of your peers have to say about utility vehicles.

JOEL JACKSON, CGCS

THOUGHTS ON UTILITY VEHICLES

Sales Reps Can Help You Find the Vehicle to Fit Your Need

The very first time I rode on a golf course utility vehicle I was a passenger. It was a 3-wheeled Cushman Truckster and the driver was going like a bat-out-of-hell. I was sitting on the bed next to the driver who was occupying the only seat. I had my feet propped on the



Today's golf course utility vehicles come in all shapes and sizes and have a variety of uses. Photo by Steve Pearson.

deflector on the side, one hand on the back rest of the seat and the other hand holding on (for dear life) to the bed. We flew around a corner heading towards the tee of a par three.

There was a ball in the center of the path.

This guy, skillfully and obviously well practiced, slammed on the brakes, grabbed the ball and threw it at a fleeing coot hitting him in the head, killing him instantly!

There were two problems with his plan: The lady who hit the ball to the path was still on the tee only 20 yards away and the dead coot was floating on the lake that now contained her ball. The following day, at 15 years old in 1972, my second day as a golf course maintenance employee, I was no longer the crew member with the least seniority! I quickly came to the conclusion that these stout little vehicles offered a considerable potential for abuse.

The possibility for abusing the attributes of the utility vehicle is only one consideration that should be given when assessing your needs in this area. There are many and I will attempt to cover some of them in this article.

One thing I would like to point out before proceeding is that you already have the very best people available to help you with this. These are your equip-

ment sales people who represent distributors and manufacturers who have spent, and continue to spend, considerable amounts of time and money analyzing your equipment needs.

I would also like to say that, in my opinion, small pick-up trucks and all-terrain vehicles have no place on the golf course. They were not designed for the work we do, and talk about the possibility of abuse! It is pretty hard to sneak up to the corner store for lottery tickets in a golf course utility vehicle.

In my experience there are three common situations at a golf course when it comes to lightweight utility vehicles; (1) the correct number of properly utilized and maintained lightweight utility vehicles are present, (2) a crew member is heading out to repair a damaged cup riding a bunker rake, or (3) the superintendent is driving the only heavy-duty truckster on site and every other vehicle has tires rubbing against body moldings and no brakes.

How do you determine the right number for your course? The right number is 5!

Seriously, you will need to put a pencil to paper to determine the number of each type of vehicle that is right for your course. Looking at what the course has had historically is also helpful. Just as we have found it difficult to compare main-

tenance budgets, equipment inventories will vary with the demands and idiosyncrasies of each course. You do not need a heavy-duty vehicle for a string trimmer and you do not want a glorified golf cart to carry divot sand, particularly if the divot sand finds its way into the vehicle via that new loader you bought.

If you are going to make a mistake in any area of this business, I believe it is best to make it on the conservative side. I believe it is better to buy heavier duty vehicles if there is any question. At the very least, they will last longer, be safer and less likely to be damaged by your loader. We have many choices now over a wide variety of specifications and prices. As one esteemed colleague once said to me, "It is better to have too much capacity and not need it, than to have too little and overdo it."

The options that are available on today's utility vehicles are somewhat staggering. I suggest purchasing anything that will prolong the life of the frames and bodies. It has been my experience that most heavy-duty utility vehicles were taken out of service, bodies broken in half, with the engine still running.

Galvanizing, alternatives to steel, and utilizing more fiberglass have all prolonged the lives of this equipment. I would like to point out that when you do your long-term capital budget, do not get too carried away with this perception of prolonged life. Historically, I believe superintendents have overestimated the safe, useful life of their equipment. It is my impression that today's attorneys feel that brakes are much more important than the attorneys of days gone by. Did anyone ever use or even check the brakes on their Toro Workmasters 20 years ago?

Safety features are certainly an important consideration on any piece of equipment. If you do not have a plan in place to check your safety switches periodically and you have any assets at all, you're crazy. More and more equipment is coming with ROPS (roll-over protection systems) and guess what else? Seat belts. Having that big bar over your head and not wearing the seat belt is like playing Russian roulette — you may end up with a piece of metal coming at you that will not stop until it hits something harder than you. Anyway, tell your employees to use the seat belts in any

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vehicle equipped with ROPS. Some supervisors have told me their people would quit if they were required to wear the seat belts.

I have used a heavy-duty truckster as my transportation vehicle in the past. It had plenty of speed if I needed it, and many times I would exchange the bed for a spreader or sprayer in order to complete applications more efficiently. I found that it was easy to change attachments: "Hey Charlie, put the spreader on the Cushman, will you?"

I could fertilize all greens in less than an hour with the spreader attachment and the footprint of the unit was so light that I never saw tracking.

It is hard to beat the economy of sprayer with a centrifugal pump and poly tank, but I prefer a PTO-driven sprayer with mechanical agitation, diaphragm pump and repairable tank. Mechanical agitation helps assure that the chemicals stay mixed and help facilitate pumping the mixture to the last gallon. The diaphragm pump provides higher pressures for spraying trees and is

not likely to be affected by turf paints or silicon-based materials. The repairable tank is nice in case Charlie happens to drop it during a changeover!

Certainly there have been many innovations in golf course utility vehicles over the years. I would urge every superintendent to discuss these improvements and the needs of your course with every equipment sales representative who calls on you. Things are changing quickly and these people take the time to stay abreast of these changes. They know more about your operation and equipment needs than you probably realize.

The fact that they come to you, the manufacturers they represent create these innovations with you in mind and their companies support our industry shows that they are committed and deserving of your time. Education in this relationship goes both ways. If you listen to their recommendations, you will become better versed in this area of your operation even if you do not take their recommendations.



If you provide input, who knows? Maybe they will come out with a dependable safety switch or a unit that can be rinsed properly in less than 45 minutes!

SCOTT WAHLIN, CGCS
The Links At Boynton
Beach

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