

MAINTENANCE

WAXING PHILOSOPHIC

Invest a few minutes daily and reap mega-savings

By MARK LESLIE

PONTE VEDRA, Fla. — Spend a few bucks and save yourself thousands. Sound too good to be true? Not if you listen to Cal Roth and how the 14 Tournament Players Clubs under his charge liquid-wax their equipment every day after use.

"Liquid-waxing makes a huge difference," Roth said from his PGA Tour headquarters here, where he is director of golf



SHOP TALK

course maintenance operations. "It was the missing key to keeping equipment looking good and extending its life."

In the pre-liquid wax days, TPC crews were expending too much

effort getting the equipment clean enough to wash, Roth said. "It was collecting a lot of dirt and grass stains that would not come off."

Liquid-waxing at the end of the day has changed all that. When the operators come off the course, typically they air-blow or wash off the grass clippings, dirt and sand that has accumulated. Then they apply the liquid wax, which takes only three to four extra minutes on the average, he said. And the cost is minimal.

"It's a little plastic applicator that can be purchased at any hardware store for \$20, and it costs pennies to apply. You just mix the wax with water, spray it on and wipe it dry," he said.

In addition to the daily liquid-waxing, the equipment is hard-waxed every four to six weeks.

The routine "adds to the life span of the equipment," Roth said. "It increases value at trade-in by hundreds and, in some cases, thousands of dollars because of the appearance and overall working conditions. It protects paint, surface, rubber parts, hoses, seats — all areas of the equipment."

"We have 5-year-old equipment that is in absolutely perfect condition. I wouldn't consider trading it in."

The functional benefits of liquid-waxing, according to Roth:

- The mechanics, who do a routine check before putting equipment away, can give it a more thorough visual inspection. They can also work on it without having to clean it up themselves.
- It protects paint and plastic surfaces from degradation from the sun, and keeps grass, rocks and sand from collecting on the machine.
- It keeps equipment cleaner, so it is easier to clean up again.

"This perpetuates the effect we're trying to establish," Roth said. "It's part of a whole package that affects the mentality of the operators. We believe in good housekeeping throughout the maintenance facility. If we provide a neat, clean place to work, employees will carry that source of pride out onto the golf course. We feel the same way about equipment."

"People get demotivated when you give them a job to do with equipment that won't work well. Our plan is to keep our staff motivated and the operations very efficient."

NEW DEAN AT PENN STATE

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — Dr. James L. Starling, senior associate dean and professor of agronomy in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences, has been named interim dean of the college. Starling, who succeeds Dr. Lamartine F. Hood, was head of the Department of Agronomy from 1969 to 1985. He had been senior dean since 1993.



It takes an average of three to four minutes to liquid-wax most pieces of maintenance equipment.

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