

[REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK]

GETTING IT JUST RIGHT

Oak Hill's Jeff Corcoran tells GCI's Bill Brown how he and his team worked closely with the engineers at John Deere Golf to tweak the JD 8000 in preparation for the PGA Championship.

I caught up with Jeff Corcoran, Oak Hill Country Club's director of golf and grounds, on the eve of the 2013 PGA Championship to talk about Oak Hill's fairway mower of choice -- the John Deere 8000 E-Cut Hybrid. During our discussion Jeff told me about his relationship and the support he receives from the team at John

Deere, which went far beyond Championship week.

For example, prior to the public release of the JD 8000 e-cut hybrid, Jeff worked closely with Tracy Lanier, John Deere Golf's product manager, to put the unit through its paces at Oak Hill.

So what were some of the changes Jeff wanted to see from the initial prototype? As Jeff and I looked over the JD 8000 e-cut hybrid, he pointed out the smooth tires with beveled edges along the outside.

"The initial tire that came with the prototype were more aggressive,"

Jeff says. With Oak Hill's height of cut between .325 to .350 they started seeing more wear than they were comfortable with. Jeff worked closely with Tracy Lanier and the team at Deere to get it just right. As a result, the tire you see today is a product of that close working relationship.

What does Jeff like most about the John Deere 8000 e-cut hybrid? Compared to a traditional four-tire, five-unit fairway mower, Oak Hill is seeing the same quality of cut that type of mower produces, but with less of a foot print. For example, the smooth, three-tire configuration of the JD 8000 e-cut hybrid provides a lighter pounds-per-square-inch footprint, while still maintaining enough down pressure on the cutting units to get a great cut.

With the typical topography of a Ross design, the JD 8000 e-cut hybrid's anti-scalp wheels on the individual cutting units allows the units to "land" softer on the undulated turf. This essentially eliminates any scalping as a mower pass is initiated. — **BILL BROWN**

FOR MORE

Check out the app version of this story to read Bill's complete account and to view additional images from his time at the PGA Championship.



Be a master...of invention

The next time you come up with a great idea, a product that would help make other superintendents' jobs easier, follow through on it. You never know what could happen. That's what Patrick Sisk, CGCS, superintendent at Milwaukee Country Club did, and now his idea is hitting the market.

Called the Green Sweep, his product is a simple attachment that fits onto virtually any push blower. According to the website (greensweeptech.com), it "utilizes air redirection technology to move both heavy and light applications of topdressing material safely and efficiently into the canopy of your turf

— without the abrasion and turf stress caused by drag brushes or mats."

"So we're taking that abrasive [topdressing] material, and the standard corporation is to tag it in with a drag mat, or have an army of staff workers with push brooms, taking that abrasive material and pushing it across the surface of the turf," says Sisk. "We've come to accept the damage, because there's a benefit of the addition of sand, and we know how to promote turf growth to eventually have that seal."

Sisk's product will take away the damage.

"There've been a few attempts at

doing this with air," he says. "I'm not the first, but I am the first to take a vehicle off the green."

The best part about the Green Sweep is that it can be used in multiple ways, making it ideal to have on hand.

"I wanted to make a machine you could take on a putting green," Sisk says. "I love it on the putting greens, but I really, really love it on tees and approaches that are irregularly shaped and often difficult to incorporate the sand using the standard method of dragging. Often we have to send staff



Patrick Sisk