



Have a

# Lifesaver

*On-course rescue vehicle rolls where others can't*

## MED-BED AT A GLANCE

**What is it?** The Med-Bed was created by Lecompton, Kan.-based Bud Newell & Associates to be used on the John Deere Gator. Together, the Gator and the Med-Bed combine the versatility of a utility vehicle with the benefits of a modular medical rescue unit. With the Med-Bed, the Gator can be adapted for transporting accident victims on a back-board.

**How much does it cost?** The Med-Bed retails for \$3,000. Additional accessories push the cost to around \$3,335.

**Where can I buy it?** The Med-Bed is available through John Deere dealerships.

**Are there other options?** Yes. E-Z-GO and Club Car offer vehicles with ambulance package kits.

BY STEVE AND SUZ TRUSTY

**I**n an era of lawsuits, Good Samaritan statutes and sky-high workers compensation claims, "be prepared" is more than a catch phrase used by Boy Scouts.

Golf courses have always taken steps to prevent and prepare for injuries to employees and guests. Training programs, signage, safety nets, safer golf cars, lightning detection systems — they've all become routine. But given the physical nature of courses, on-course medical emergencies have always presented a challenge.

What duty does a course have to its guests? How quickly can an ambulance reach a heart-attack victim on a distant hole? What capabilities, beyond CPR training and a first-aid kit, should course management provide?

Until the past few years, too few courses have been prepared to answer these hard questions. But as new technologies such as portable

defibrillators become common, more facilities are finding ways to meet the challenge of on-course injuries and illness.

For Longaberger GC, in Hanover, Ohio, an emergency response program is one more step in customer service. The Longaberger Co. is a renowned basket maker that draws more than 500,000 visitors annually. Its premium public golf course opened for play last spring as an added attraction for visitors and local residents. It's nestled in the timber-covered hills of an 800-acre property and provides challenging play amid spectacular views of the countryside.

"For the safety and security of our guests and employees and for the security of the property and facilities, we keep security personnel on-site at the course 24 hours a day, seven days a week," says Matt Blowers, Longaberger's assistant security manager. "Part of that security team is out patrolling the course in a util-

ity vehicle equipped with a Med-Bed. While we hope to never need the use of this unit, we believe it's important to have it available on the course in the event of a health emergency."

The Med-Bed is a relatively new entry into the golf market. In short, it is a customized bed insert that carries a variety of life-saving supplies. Essentially, it turns a John Deere Gator into a mini rescue unit capable of reaching and treating a victim quickly and efficiently.

All personnel are trained to use the course's two-way communication system to alert the proper individual of any emergency and to describe the problem and the location on the course.

Longaberger security has an emergency response plan with the local emergency response units including the police, sheriff and fire departments. Four specific areas surrounding the course are designated as sites where emergency vehicles and personnel would meet the course's Med-Bed-equipped Gator should the need arise.

Each hole on the course is assigned to one of these four sites. Should an emergency occur,

all security staff and emergency personnel know the meeting place. Given this, Blowers thinks it's unlikely that an ambulance or other rescue vehicle would need to drive onto the course itself.

The Med-Bed attachment can be installed on any Gator and easily removed. The initial assembly takes about two hours. The front passenger seat is replaced with a shorter back seat provided with the Med-Bed package.



The Med-Bed turns a John Deere Gator into a mini rescue unit capable of reaching and treating a victim quickly and efficiently

The short back seat, when rotated, sits on the handle bar in the Gator and becomes the front attendant seat. This allows a backboard to be placed in a level position inside the vehicle, extending from the front to the back.

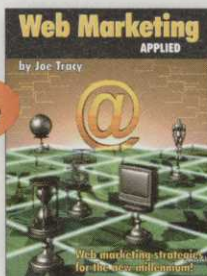
The original front seat is then attached to the Med-Bed in the rear-sliding seat position, adjacent to the backboard and facing the rear of the Gator. The original cargo shield is replaced with the split cargo shield provided with the Med-Bed package. Backboard strap attachments also are provided.

There are four components to the Med-Bed system, including the unit itself, a backboard, the headlock and the patient straps. The total package costs \$3,335.

Once the initial conversion is completed, the Med-Bed can be installed or removed quickly by sliding the Med-Bed onto the vehicle and hooking the handle over the appropriate T-Bar to secure it. ■

Steve and Suz Trusty are partners in Trusty & Associates, a Council Bluffs, Iowa-based industry consulting firm.

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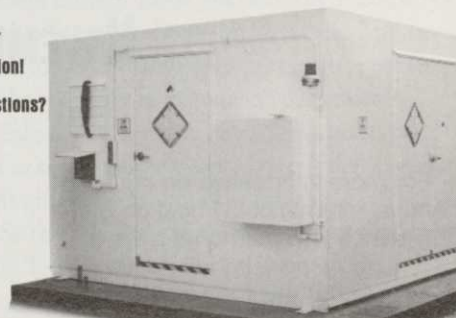
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