

If you're thinking of purchasing a walk-behind greens mower, you're looking to sport the best putting greens in the neighborhood. Walk-behind mowers are recognized for their high caliber of cutting.

But remember that buying a walk-behind mower is like purchasing a Cadillac. You shouldn't care how much it costs because you desire — and are getting — excellence.

"Quality of cut is the issue for most people who are walk-mowing their greens," says David "Buddha" Brandon, superintendent for Riverwood GC in Mount Pleasant, Mich. "Price is not a consideration."

Many superintendents believe walk-behind mowers are better than triplex mowers, says Peter Whurr, vice president of product management for Textron Turf Care And Specialty Products. They are willing to pay more for the single-unit machines and employ additional labor to operate them.

Helmut Ullrich, a marketing manager for Toro Co., says clipping greens with walk-behind mowers is "the ultimate you can do for your clients."

What distinguishes walk-behind mowers from triplex mowers? For starters, they are better apt to cut severe undulations and contours on difficult-to-groom greens, experts say, and we're talking one-eighth inch here.

But there are points to consider when selecting a walk-behind mower. Bill Williams and his crew use walk-behind mowers on the severely undulating greens at Worthington Hills CC in Worthington, Ohio. Williams warns that if the front rollers on the mower are too far in front of the reel, the mower may scalp the green when cutting at a low height. So Williams prefers walk-behind mowers with front rollers and reels that are well-balanced. Whurr says the mower must have enough weight on its front end to keep it from bouncing on a green.

"The balance of the machine is important, not only from front to rear, but left to right," Whurr adds. "Any inaccuracy from left to right will lead to different shades of green."

Brandon will only purchase a walk-behind mower that features a more durable reel, which transforms into a better-looking and consistent cut, he says.

Speaking of aesthetics, Ullrich notes that walk-behind mowers won't leave behind tire and compaction marks like some riding mowers. Whurr stresses that superintendents should purchase walk-behind mowers that operate with no engine vibration, which can affect cutting performance and, hence, green reac-

tion. Even small vibrations can cause ripples on greens, he notes.

Noise level is also an issue when selecting a walk-behind mower because most course workers are cutting greens in the early morning, Whurr notes.

Some superintendents might not think they have the time to use walking mowers, especially if they're running busy daily-fee courses. But Whurr says they can place lights on the mowers to cut the greens at night.

Whurr suggests purchasing a mower that's versatile enough to add attachments. "If you have thatch on a green, you need to be able to pull it out with a groomer attachment," he says.

Or a small brush might need to be attached to the front of a mower to flick grass up so it can be precisely cut. "Little things like that help superintendents attain the quality of greens they're looking for," Whurr says.

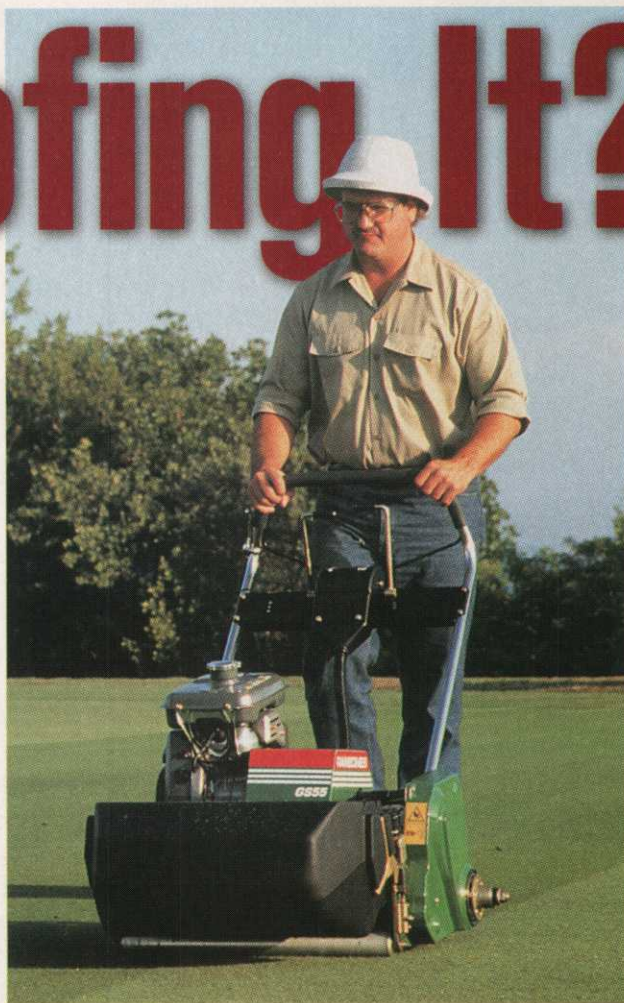
Competition for golfers and tournaments has spurred a renewed interest in walk-behind mowers because superintendents believe quality of cut, not speed of cut, is the main issue, Whurr says. Brandon echoes that sentiment.

"To many superintendents, there's no bigger issue than quality of cut, and what a green is going to look, putt and feel like when you're done mowing it," he says. ■

Hoofing It?

There are points
to consider when
purchasing a walk-
behind greens mower

By Larry Aylward



Handle With

Care

ClubCorp's chief outlines his company's approach to meeting and exceeding golfer expectations

By Robert H. Dedman Jr.

A favorite pastime of golfers is judging the merits of their club's course. For some, the evaluation has a direct correlation to the day's scores. For better or worse, it's likely to be the course superintendent who is the target of the blame or praise. But the perception of a golf course is a major factor in its success and community image. That's why a superintendent is a vital link in its success.

From ClubCorp's start in 1957 with 54 holes at Brookhaven CC near Dallas, the company has approached golf as it has every facet of its business — with an unwavering goal of exceeding members' and guests' expectations. The key to success isn't a secret; it's member service.

At ClubCorp, we have a culture called STAR Service that works equally well on the golf course and in the dining room. We keep STAR Service on course in golf operations by creating Pride in Belonging. P-R-I-D-E. means:

Personalized service We treat every member the same by treating every member differently. This is especially important because golf is a repeat-business industry. We know the golf experience begins in the parking lot and extends to the course. Through personalized service, we strive to make every round memorable.

Recognition and acceptance We call members by name and know their individual preferences. We make sure they receive warm welcomes and fond farewells and, in between, become connected to activities at their clubs. This includes showing respect for the little things and paying attention to details.

Involvement and communication Member satisfaction surveys help keep lines of communication open among superintendents, members and greens committees. Most clubs have regular columns written by superintendents in their member newsletters. Superintendents attend golf committee meetings to keep members apprised of maintenance schedules and other factors that affect playability.

To enhance this communication, we've made it easier for superintendents to receive and exchange information by the use of e-mail and the Internet. We have made an investment to network our clubs, using PCs in each superintendent's office.

Developing relationships Earlier this year, ClubCorp entered into a new six-year agreement with The Toro Co. This and other partnerships help produce well-maintained courses for our members.

When it comes to course maintenance, we're not just talking lawn mowers. We're talking about the people who implement the detailed maintenance practices. Perhaps there is no better example within the company than Pinehurst No. 2, site of the 1999 U.S. Open. This layout required the best golfers in the world to hit every club in the bag and even held up during wet weather. Those facts not only are a tribute to the genius of Donald Ross, but to the agronomic skills of Pinehurst's maintenance staff and the USGA.

We also value protecting and maintaining the ecology foundation of a golf course. About three-quarters of our clubs are members of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program.

Education and growth The company pays for certification, continuing education, attendance at GCSAA conferences and other types of training for all employee partners. We want good people to come in and not just do the job, but to be motivated to do the job better every day. Each assistant, head, and regional superintendent candidate is tested not only on technical agronomy skills, but also on personality traits. We search for employee partners who will stay and grow with us.

Robert H. Dedman Jr. is president and CEO of Dallas-based ClubCorp, the world's largest owner and operator of private country clubs and golf resorts.



Money Shot

MARKETING AND GOLF

Night was falling when the golfer completed his 9th and final hole. Too bad. He was just finding his groove. "I sure wish I could play some more," he said, disappointed the dark ended his stellar round.

Dean Wilson and his father, Charles, were within earshot of the golfer's remark. The Wilsons, owners of the course the man was playing, turn and gazed at each other with silver-dollar-sized eyes when they heard the man speak. Father and son shared the same notion.

"We oughta light this course up," Charles said, as Dean nodded in approval.

About a year later, Hillcrest GC, located near Houston in Alvin, Texas, was lit up like the Las Vegas strip. The course was equipped with 34-foot-tall light posts from tee to green on each of its nine holes. And, as the Wilsons expected, business began bustling at moonrise.

That was 1994 and nothing has changed, except that night golf is as popular as a pinch of tobacco between the cheek and gum in Houston. Dean says competitors have opened five lighted, par-3 courses in the area since Hillcrest upped its electric usage.

"Right now it's 3 p.m., and I'm looking at an empty parking lot," Dean said. "But at 6:30 p.m., this place will be packed."

Hillcrest is jammed most nights until about 10 p.m., Dean says. The last golfer might walk off the course at 1 a.m.

"Our business has increased dramatically," Dean says.

While he refuses to reveal exact sales numbers, Dean did disclose that night golf at Hillcrest boosted profits enough that the family business could afford to build a new, 18-hole, par-72 layout — lighted, of course. The front nine opened in July 1996, the back nine in November 1997.

Dean says Beacon Lakes GC, located about 20 minutes from downtown Houston, takes its name from a Bible passage. "Beacon" means light, according to the Big Book.

Dean says golfers love playing at night for various reasons. There are benefits year-round.

Have you ever tried to tee it up on a sizzling July afternoon in Texas? We're talking melting.

Golf Course Owner Sees the Light

BY LARRY AYLWARD



IN THE WINTER,
NIGHT GOLF IS A
GODSEND FOR
BORED WORKING
STIFFS

For that reason, folks would rather wait until the temperature drops to 90 in the early evening to take to the links.

In the winter, night golf is a godsend for bored working stiff, who normally head to the bar for beers and Birdie King after the bell rings because it's too dark to play the real deal.

"Our market picks up during the winter because we're drawing from a bigger customer base," Dean says, noting that competition for golfers is limited in the winter, especially if you have a lighted course.

Dean won't say how much the family business paid to light Hillcrest and Beacon Lakes. Of course, the Wilsons paid a lot less because they installed the lights themselves.

"Let's just say it's a profitable venture," Dean adds.

Besides seeing the light, the Wilsons are also seeing green. Dean would like for the family business to take on a new role — consulting, as in here's how to install lights on your golf course.

"We didn't do all this work just to give away free information," Dean says. "If someone is interested, we'll consult for a fee."

What's that line about a free lunch?

Anyway, if you're looking to drum up new business, consider lights for nighttime play. And why not? It's time the golf industry catch up to the 21st century.

Did you know the first Major League baseball game played under the lights took place in 1947 at Boston's Fenway Park? Baseball owners lighted their stadiums because they discovered more people could attend games at night.

Finally, a half-century later, golf course owners are finding out that more players are eager to tee it up under starry skies. Better late.

Larry Aylward, managing editor of *Golfdom*, can be reached at 440-891-2770 or larryward@advanstar.com.

Case Study #1

■ MAINTENANCE

Clearing Up a Murky Matter

A multi-use lake required a clean-up effort of excessive algae and bottom sediment



Problem

The irrigation lake at Addison Reserve GC was overcome with algae and bottom sediment, causing a variety of problems from clogged irrigation heads to unpleasant odors.

Solution

A system to aerate and better circulate water from the lake's bottom, and a bioaugmentation product to destroy algae food sources.

Like a utility baseball player playing various positions, the irrigation lake at

Addison Reserve GC in Delray Beach, Fla., performs several functions related to the successful operation of the property.

For starters, the four-acre lake, part of an interconnected waterway system of about 27 lakes, is the irrigation lifeblood of the golf course. The lake, which averages a depth of 10 feet, also serves as an aesthetically pleasing natural background for a number of upscale houses on the property. It also has a sinister

side — it can be a distracting water hazard for golfers.

The lake is an integral part of the golf course. So when it began experiencing problems with excessive algae and bottom sediment, there was concern.

The problem

The problems started in early 1997, about a year after the course was built. George Elliott, director of golf course operations for Addison Reserve, noticed algae growing throughout the lake.

"It's a common problem down here," Elliott says, attributing the problem to southern Florida's constant heat and humidity, as well

Nutrients overloaded the lake, and excessive algae and bottom sediment affected the course's irrigation system.

as nutrient runoff into the lake's shallow water, which made for a perfect breeding ground for algae.

Eventually, nutrients overloaded the lake to the point where excessive algae and bottom sediment affected the course's systems. The algae and decomposing nutrients clogged the irrigation pump station intake valve and irrigation sprinkler heads, causing them to perform erratically at best.

Elliott says the nutrient masses "were the size of,

and looked like, hockey pucks.” The algae and organic nutrient mass formed layers on the pump station pipes and filters. If that weren’t enough, the lake no longer looked attractive.

Solution

Elliott’s goal was to reduce the lake’s nutrient load to alleviate the associated problems — clogged irrigation heads, pump station filter and piping, unwanted algae blooms, increasing

The solution reduced clogging in pump and irrigation heads, as well as sludge and organic sediment.

bottom sediment layer and unpleasant odors — while maintaining a natural lake setting. After speaking with crew members, he selected two products from Otterbine Barebo, an Emmaus, Pa.-based company that develops and markets natural methods of treating water quality problems.

Elliott used the company’s Air Flo diffused air aeration system and Otterclear Biological Water Treatment together to correct the problems. The Air Flo aerates and

circulates water, and Otterclear removes the primary food sources of algae, including nitrogen and phosphorus, causing algae to die. It also digests dead organic matter and eliminates odor caused by ammonia and hydrogen sulfide.

Outcome

With the Air Flo system, the lake water is aerated and circulated with minimal natural surrounding disturbance. The slow-moving “boil-type” current created by the upwelling water circulates the water and transfers oxygen from the atmosphere to the lake bottom. This stimulates the natural digestion process, which consumes organic nutrients in a quick, efficient manner.

The Otterclear bioaugmentation product complements the aeration system. The club applied the blend of bacteria and microbes at recommended dosages and it performed as expected, Elliott says. He began to see results after about three months.

The irrigation lake functioned normally and appeared healthy after about nine months, Elliott says. The water quality and clarity improved, and the lake surface remained algae-free. The natural solution reduced clogging in pump and irrigation heads, as well as sludge and organic sediment at the lake’s bottom. ■

Leaders

■ PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Racine, Wisc.-based CNH announced that **Steven G. Lamb** was named president and chief operating officer. In addition, **Ted R. French** was appointed president of financial services and chief financial officer.

Brent Wadsworth will receive the Don A. Rossi Award for 2000 from the Chapel Hill, N.C.-based Golf Course Builders Association of America. Wadsworth is the first golf course builder to receive the award.

Mike Mongon is the new superintendent at Fairview CC in Greenwich, Conn. His previous position was as superintendent at Arcola CC in Paramus, N.J.

Sanctuary GC at Westworld in Scottsdale, Ariz., named **Jay Haffner** its director of golf.

Greensboro, N.C.-based G&S Turf Equipment Co., a Textron Turf Care And Specialty Products dealer, has two certified mechanics, **Bill Ledford** and **Freddy Proctor**, to provide after-the-sale service for all Cushman, Jacobsen, Ransomes and Ryan brand turf maintenance equipment sold in North Carolina and portions of South Carolina.

Blind Brook Club in Purchase, N.Y., named **Les Kennedy** as its new superintendent. Kennedy was previously superintendent at Country Club of Waterbury in Waterbury, Conn.

Scott Debolt is the new national marketing director for Post Falls, Idaho-based Jacklin Golf, a division of Jacklin Seed Co. The Philadelphia-based



Rohm and Haas Co. named **Gray C. Wirth** as strategic market manager for turf and ornamental products. Wirth is responsible for pricing, promotion and positioning strategies for all turf and ornamental products.



James Connolly formed Spokane, Wash.-based James Connolly Consulting, which will provide agronomic assistance and services for both existing and new golf course projects.

The Central Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association named **Ricky Craig** of Center Hill, Fla., with its \$1,500 Danny Burgess Memorial Scholarship. Craig will use the money to attend Lake City Community College.

Bob Alonzi is the new superintendent at Fenway GC in Scarsdale, N.Y. Alonzi comes to Fenway from Fairview CC in Greenwich, Conn.

Tyler Enterprises named **Robert L. Murphy** to its Indiana sales team. He will be responsible for sales of Tyler’s custom-blended fertilizer products and custom fertilizer application system in the golf course market.

Flowtronex PSI promoted **Mark Bartley** to lead its Carolina Regional sales effort.

Let us know about your people on the move. Send information/color photos to Golfdom’s Frank Andorka at 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, 44130. Fax information to 440/891-2675 or e-mail to fandorka@advanstar.com.

The Company Line

■ PRODUCTS & SERVICES



▲ Walk-behind mowers

Husqvarna Forest and Garden Co. introduces six new walk-behind mowers, featuring two hydro and four gear units.

Powered by commercial grade Kawasaki engines, the mowers offer strong cutting performance on tough terrain, according to the company.

The four gear models feature five-speed transmission with a nine-spline coupler shaft for ground speeds from 2 mph to 6 mph. The two hydro models offer dual hydro gear pumps and Ross wheel-drive motors.

For more information, contact Husqvarna at 704-597-5000, www.husqvarna.com or

CIRCLE NO. 201

Lease program

Golf courses can finance the cost of **Flowtronex PSI's** pumping systems, including the cost of freight and installation, with a leasing program recently introduced by the company.

Flowtronex PSI's preferred

lease rate schedules provide flexible monthly payments for pumping systems, according to the company.

For more information, contact Flowtronex PSI at 214-357-1320 or

CIRCLE NO. 202

Ad Index

112 Aquatrols	39	103 Tee-2-Green	CV4
101 Griffin Industries/Nature Safe1	106 Textron Turf Care	15
130 Griffin LLC	43	109 Textron Turf Care	18-19
116 John Deere Co.	36-37	117 Top Pro	49
108 Lesco	31	111 United Horticultural Supply ..	33-34
118 Milliken Chemical	54-55	121 Van Waters & Rogers	27
107 Monsanto	24-25	131 West Coast Turf	CV2
114 Novartis	40-41	104 Zeneca Professional Products ..	4-7
1105 Nutramax Laboratories	11		
115 Plant Health Care	45		
130 Pursell Inc.	28-29		
120 Q Quest Software	48		
113 Scotts	21		

This index is provided as an additional service. The publisher does not assume any liability for errors or omissions.

Course markers

KBJ Enterprises offers ProMark golf course yardage markers to help speed play without adding to the maintenance worries of superintendents. The yardage markers, which come in regulation colors, are easy for golfers to spot without being obtrusive. They are made of plastic from Bayer Corp.'s Plastics Division.

The markers are suitable for tees, fairways, cart paths and driving ranges. They are available in blue, red and white and are made of Bayer's Lustran ABS 752 resin with a cap of Centrex 833 weatherable polymer.

Most of the markers are used as yardage markers to show distance to the green. But they are also used to show yardage to landing areas or to and over hazards, to indicate quick-coupler locations and to show yardage to targets on driving ranges.

For more information, contact ProMark at 800-552-3485, www.yardagemarkers.com or

CIRCLE NO. 203

Turf blankets

Typar Turf Blankets retain warmth and moisture throughout the winter so turf can survive cold spells. Air and soil under the blankets are 3 degrees to 7 degrees higher than surrounding uncovered areas, providing warmth for turf, reducing the incidence of winterkill.

When spring arrives, the extra warmth and moisture mean that turf responds earlier than it would if it were uncovered, according to the company.

The lightweight blankets are made of 100 percent spun-bonded polypropylene, and they feature continuous filaments that will not ravel or fray.

For more information, contact Typar Turf Blankets at 800-455-3392 or

CIRCLE NO. 205

Generators

John Deere K-Series generators offer extended life, longer run times, easy starting and strong voltage regulation, according to the company. The generators deliver from 2,500 watts to 5,000 watts. They feature Kawasaki OHV engines with automatic compression release for easy starting and automatic electric voltage regulation of 6 percent that protects hand tools and electronic devices by keeping voltage constant.

For more information, contact 800-537-8233, www.deere.com or

CIRCLE NO. 204

▼ Golf lift

Derek Weaver Co.'s Golf-Lift division offers the GL-9 Golf-Lift, featuring the patented lift apparatus with tire adapter, known as the Tire Wedge turf arm system. Maximum productivity is achieved by taking up the least amount of floor space and removing all obstacles found on other lifts, the company says.

Using the system requires no changing of adapters when changing vehicles, no beams protruding around the vehicle, no runways underneath the vehicle and no overhead beam obstacles, according to the company.

For more information, contact Golf-Lift at 800-788-9789 or

CIRCLE NO. 206



Golfdom

Every month, GOLFDOM Classifieds offers a concise, easy to read section of the products and services you're looking for. Check it out!

For all ads under \$250, payment must be received by the classified closing date. VISA, MASTERCARD, & AMERICAN EXPRESS accepted. Send to: Advanstar Marketing Services, 7500 Old Oak Blvd, Cleveland, OH 44130

BOX NUMBER REPLIES: GOLFDOM, Classified Dept., 131 W. First St., Duluth, MN 55802 (please include box number in address)

FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION AND AD PLACEMENT, CONTACT: Leslie Zola, 1-800-225-4569 (ext. 2670), Fax 440-826-2865, Email lzola@advanstar.com

FOR SALE

Superintendents have to budget, buy, install and maintain the

Kirby Marker System



So how come they make the purchasing decision 85% of the time? (Hint: it's not just because you can mow right over them.)

The quality distance marker popping up since 1991



The Kirby Marker System
Nobody Does It Better!

2731 Loker Avenue West • Carlsbad, CA 92008
800.925.4729 • 760.931-2624 • fax 760.931.1753
www.kirbymarkers.com • e-mail: kirbymark@aol.com

FOR SALE



For more information, call us at (800) 548-0054, or E-mail us at excelbdg@gte.net for your free consultation and catalog, or look us up on the web at www.excelbridge.com



Pictured above is the Excel Macho Combo bridge.



HERITAGE BUILDING SYSTEMS

Established 1979

800-643-5555
BUILD IT YOURSELF AND SAVE
40' x 100' x 8'-6" \$10,265

Commercial all steel buildings and component parts from America's largest distributor since 1979. Any size is available featuring easy bolt up rigid frame design for industry, office, mini-storage, shop, farm and all steel homes. Call us today for a free information package and quote on the best buildings made.

Mini Warehouse Sale
Any Shape Any Size
www.metalbdg.com

ACCU-GAGE®

FOR
PRECISION
MOWING

BEST PRICE
BEST QUALITY
BEST WARRANTY

- AVAILABLE IN 15", 18", and 24" bars
- AVAILABLE IN English, Metric or Digital

Accu-Products Int'l
(800) 253-2112 • (734) 429-9571
or Fax: (734) 429-3985
www.accuproducts.com

ProMark

Yardage Markers For:

- Fairways
- Tees
- Cart Paths
- Quick Couplers



4 year replacement warranty
No minimum purchase
Customized requests our specialty
Excellent Customer Service and Satisfaction!

Since 1990

800-552-3485

Fax: 785-227-9998 www.yardagemarkers.com

WEBSITES

Golf Course and Irrigation Supplies Your on-line connection to all the companies you need. Contact information including web-site links are provided. Look up a company you know or compare what is available. www.golfcoursesupplies.com, www.golfcourseequipment.com, www.golfcoursemanagement.com, www.golfcourseservices.com, www.irrigationsupplies.com

6/00

GOLFDOM, Vol. 56 Issue 1. GOLFDOM is published 8 times per year (Jan/Feb, Mar, Apr, May/June, Jul/Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov/Dec) by Advanstar Communications Inc. 131 W First St Duluth MN 55802-2065.

Subscription rates: one year \$25 (U.S. and possessions), \$35 (Canada and Mexico) and \$65 (all other countries). Air expedited service is available in countries outside U.S. and Canada at \$45.00 per year. Current issue single copies (prepaid only) \$5.00 (U.S. and possessions), \$7.00 (Canada and Mexico) and \$8.00 (all other countries). Back issues (if available, prepaid only) \$10.00 (U.S. and possessions), \$14.00 (Canada and Mexico) and \$16.00 (all other countries); add \$5.00 per order shipping and handling for both current and back issue purchases.

Application to Mail at Periodicals Postage Rates is Pending at Duluth MN 55806 and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send changes to Golfdom, 131 W First St Duluth MN 55802-2065.

Canadian G.S.T. number:R-124213133, Publications Mail Agreement number 1496694. Printed in the U.S.A.

Copyright © 2000 by Advanstar Communications Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use, or the internal or personal use of specific clients, is granted by Advanstar Communications for libraries and other users registered with the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Dr. Danvers, MA 01923, phone 978-750-8400, fax 978-750-4470. Call for copying beyond that permitted by Sections 107 or 108 of the U.S. Copyright Law. For those not registered with the CCC, send permission request in writing to Advanstar Marketing Services, Attn: Permissions, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland OH 44130 or fax to 440-891-2740.

digital cameras

Imagine never having to purchase film again — no overpriced X-brand from a convenience mart, no long drive to take the film in, nor a seemingly longer drive to get it back.

And the best part? No clerk telling you, "There musta been a mix up at the lab."

It doesn't take a rocket scientist — or techno geek — to understand that digital cameras are redefining the way we share and preserve memories. As the prices tumble and the technology of digital cameras improves, now is a great time to consider making the jump to a faster and easier way to take photos.

There ARE things you need to know before you get started, primarily having to do with the computer and printer you either have — or don't have.



The Epson PhotoPC 750Z is a one-megapixel digital camera with 3x optical zoom and advanced HyPict image enhancement technology, enabling image resolution up to 1,600 x 1,200 pixels.

Increasingly, the cameras work on Macs and PCs, but remember to check the system requirements to make sure one will work with your computer. You will also want to check how the camera can connect and transfer images to your computer — by serial/parallel/USB cable, infrared (rare), PCMCIA card, floppy disc or card reader.

LOOKING FOR A COOL WAY TO CAPTURE THAT KODAK MOMENT?

CONSIDER THESE CUTTING-EDGE PICTURE-TAKERS. BY MARK LUCE

Once you know what you need, choose the price range. Like many electronics items, there are about three tiers of digital cameras — \$350 to \$400, \$400 to \$600 and \$700 and up. The differences in the ranges are real, with lower-end models offering less clear pictures (because of lower pixel capabilities), less strong zooms and less storage capability. When browsing, keep these features in mind:

- **Resolution** — This determines how crisp your pictures will look. If you're just e-mailing vacation pictures to a relative, resolution isn't as important,

but if you want pictures for your club's newsletter, higher resolution will mean better printing.

- **Optical zoom vs. Digital zoom** — Basically, digital zoom is a computerized zoom, and optical zoom works more like a traditional camera.

The higher the optical zoom, the better zoom pictures are going to be. If a camera touts a digital zoom, remember that the zoom pictures will tend to look more choppy and pixilated.

- **Batteries** — Rechargeable is the only smart way to go. Make sure before you buy that you can use either nickel-cadmium rechargeables or Nickel Metal Hydride rechargeables. They will cost more initially, but will save you money over the long haul.

- **Interface and software** — Make sure the interface on the camera is easy to use. If

you don't, it will mean headaches later. All cameras come with software to view the pictures on screen and sometimes allow for picture manipulation (like taking that demon red out of your eyes).

- **Storage** — This is another part of the digital camera equation with many questions. These cards, or sometimes floppies, are where the digital camera pictures are stored. CompactFlash can offer more memory than SmartMedia cards, but in either case, transfer to computers is normally simple, as is transfer to floppy discs.

While final decisions should be personal, one good way to go is Minolta's Dimage EX Zoom 1500 (\$699). The camera has high picture quality zoom and wide-angle lenses and can shoot 7.5 frames a second. The camera is a great introduction to the ease and implicit of digital cameras, and more experienced photographers will enjoy the ability to set manual exposure and focus.

For printers, the Epson Stylus Photo 750 (\$250) delivers excellent printouts, is cross platform and prints a 4-inch by 6-inch print in about a minute.

Digital cameras may not be for everyone, but if you're looking for something easy to use and without the hassles of real film and processing, it's tough to beat one of these powerful tools that operates like it were a toy.

Happy snapping.

Freelance writer Mark Luce always takes the scenic route while traveling in his hometown, Lawrence, Kan.



ALL

IN ONE

ALL AT ONCE



Introducing new

TurfVigor

with high impact
beneficial microbes and
key organic nutrients.

6 NEW MICROBES

New TurfVigor is a complete nutrient and microbe complex featuring six new microbes specially selected and screened to encourage turf health. During times of stress, TurfVigor responsively triggers the synthesis of essential growth factors and regulatory elements to maintain a healthier stand. Its performance has been validated through research conducted at leading turf grass universities.

ONE STEP APPLICATION

Because TurfVigor contains both beneficial microbes and organic nutrients, it can be mixed and applied in one easy step. In fact, TurfVigor is tank-mix compatible with a variety of fungicides and growth regulators. Its highly stable nature assures a long shelf life.

IT PAYS TO BE SELECTIVE

Like all GREEN-RELEAF products, TurfVigor is environmentally friendly with microbial strains selected strictly on their ability to provide targeted turf benefits and manufactured under strict ISO 9002 quality control.

We're very selective. You should be, too.



GREEN-RELEAF.
by Sybron

TO KNOW MORE,

visit our website at
www.green-releaf.com
or call 1-800-845-8502.
Distributed by Milliken

Circle No 102