

Tips:

Equipment Financing

Your fairway mower is tearing up your fairways. Your tractors are falling apart. Clearly, you need new equipment. But how can you convince skeptical members or owners to get you the equipment the course needs? Here are the strategies that Todd Gray, director of golf and turf leasing for John Deere Credit, and Dan Gilmore, director of leasing and financing for Textron Turf Care And Specialty Products, suggest you use to sell your club on an equipment program:

■ Leasing instead of buying the equipment allows the club to spread the cost over a longer period.

Fifteen years ago, most golf courses wouldn't have considered leasing equipment, Gray says. Today, paying cash and owning the equipment is the exception rather than the rule.

"You're often able to get more equipment for less money over the term of a lease," Gray says. "You'll be able to keep your equipment fresh without breaking the bank."

■ Getting an entire fleet under lease or through financing will bring the course a volume discount.

This doesn't mean you have to acquire all your equipment through Sam's Club, BJ's Wholesale Club or Costco Wholesale. It does mean that you should group your needs together when you talk to a finance specialist, Gilmore says.

"The more equipment you can place under one lease agreement, the better deal you're going to get on each individual piece of equipment," Gilmore says. "It also establishes a long-term relationship with the company with more interaction. It's good for both sides."

■ Owners can plan more easily when equipment is a fixed cost during the lease.

Leasing allows the course to know how much they are going to spend on a piece of equipment each year without worrying about the added costs of parts and labor if the equipment begins to break down, Gilmore says.

"As golf becomes more of a business, superintendents who think of their equipment in terms of how to make it easier on the owners' pocketbook will be more valuable," Gilmore says. "A fixed cost is always more attractive than a variable one."

■ Newer equipment will create better conditions.

Take the argument to the place it most affects the members: the course itself.

"Members at courses around the country now expect an unparalleled golf experience every time they get on the course," Gray says. "That puts pressure on superintendents to produce perfect conditions. It's hard to do that with old equipment. Most owners understand that."

— Frank H. Andorka Jr.

Leaders

■ PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Dan Dinelli, superintendent at the North Shore CC in Glenview, Ill., was awarded the 2000 Scotts Tradition of Excellence award from Marysville, Ohio-based The Scotts Co.



Phoenix-based Intrawest Golf hired **Kathy Bryant** as its vice president of sales and marketing.

Mike Archer was named marketing development and research coordinator for Milwaukee-based Milorganite Division — MMSD.

Elwood, Ill.-based Tyler Enterprises named **Sam Huff** as its sales and marketing manager for northern Kentucky.



Gregory J. Hofstetter was promoted to vice president of east coast operations for Lakeland, Fla.-based International Golf Maintenance.

Merlin Affleck was elected president of the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association.

Chardon, Ohio-based Best Sand awarded **Chad Alan Mark** the Best Sand Annual Turf Scholarship, a one-year scholarship selected by superintendents from Ohio. Mark is pursuing a four-year degree in turf science from The Ohio State University.

Meadowbrook Golf Group promoted **Cindy Geiger** to compliance manager.

Kurt Krause was named the director of golf operations at the Prescott Lakes GC in Prescott, Ariz.

GCSA of New England elected its new officers for 2000: **Robert Ruszala**, Hickory Ridge CC, president; **James R. Fitzroy**, Presidents

GC, vice president; **Michael Iacono**, Pine Brook CC, secretary; **Daniel Higgins**, Winchester CC, treasurer; **Arthur Silva**, Belmont CC, finance chairman; and **Michael J. Hermanson**, Gardner Municipal GC, golf chairman.

Jones Mills, Pa.-based Frontier Construction Co. named **Jerry Pierman** as vice president of the firm's new southeastern division, based in North Palm Beach, Fla.

Michael Murphy, superintendent at Waterville Golf Links in Ring of Kerry, Ireland, won the 1999 Toro Award for Professional Golf Course Management in Ireland.

Seed Research of Oregon, based in Corvallis, Ore., presented its Superintendent of the Year award to **Dave Davis**, superintendent at Palo Alto GC in Palo Alto, Calif.

Palm Harbor, Fla.-based Highland Lakes GC named **Van Mitchell** as its superintendent.

Deaths

Karsten Solheim, longtime president and CEO of Karsten Manufacturing Corp., died on Feb. 16 at his home in Phoenix. He was 88. In addition to revolutionizing the golf club industry with his Ping putters and other clubs, Solheim's company also managed a turf division. He is survived by his wife Louise, three sons and one daughter.

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



▲ Retaining wall reinforcement

Versa-Lok Retaining Wall Systems introduces Versa-Grid soil reinforcement for segmental retaining walls. Versa-Grid provides additional soil reinforcement necessary for structural wall stability when the weight of retaining wall units alone is not enough to retain soil loads placed on walls.

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For more information, contact 800-770-4225, www.versa-lok.com or CIRCLE NO. 200

Mower

The Toro Co. introduces the Groundmaster 4000-D, featuring a 51-horsepower Kubota diesel engine. The 4000-D features an 11-foot rotary mower that delivers power, maneuverability and cutting performance, according to Toro.

Rear discharge decks deliver even dispersion of clippings for a clean after-cut appearance. The tight wheelbase combined with significant steering angles enable operators to easily handle and direct the machine. Also, four-wheel drive traction in forward and reverse while mowing pro-

vides strong footing in variety of turf conditions.

Toro also offers the Multi Pro 1250, which offers a proportional drive spray control system. The precision spray control system is tied to the drive system.

The application flow rate instantly and proportionally adjusts to changes in the speed of the spray vehicle, according to the company. The reliance on an operator's expertise and precision is minimized.

For more information, contact 612-888-8801, www.torocom or CIRCLE NO. 201

Wildflower mix

Pennington Seed offers its CGIG Wildflower Mix. Wildflowers offer landscape enhancement and erosion control, according to the company. A 1-pound mix covers 5,000 feet.

For more information, contact 800-277-1412 or CIRCLE NO. 202

Spiker/seeder

Gandy Co.'s spiker/seeder over-seeds and aerates in one pass and has a 44-inch seeding width with 1,220 replaceable spikes. The spikes create 693 vents per square yard and 854 vents per



square meter, and are threaded into an 18-inch by 48-inch steel roller with rolled edges.

Precise metering along with a resilient rubber rotor and spread plate assures even seed distribution, including bentgrass, according to the company.

For more information, contact 800-443-2476, www.gandy.net or CIRCLE NO. 203

▶ Sod cutter

Turfco's 512 sod cutter is built for maneuverability and engineered to keep machine weight down, according to the company. It's also structurally designed to cut through the toughest soil conditions.

The 512 sod cutter is operator friendly with handle grip clutch control and operating instructions on the handlebar. The handlebar clutch control stops the sod cutter instantly when the operator releases it.

For more information, contact 800-679-8201, www.turfco.com or CIRCLE NO. 205



▼ Golf cup

Napex Golf introduces the Brass Tuff-Core golf cup, combining the tradition of an antique brass cup with the convenience of a modern plastic cup.

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For more information, contact 888-627-3948, www.napexgolf.com or CIRCLE NO. 206



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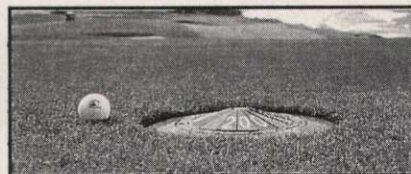
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Company: Rain Bird International, Inc.
Reports to: Division Vice-President
Location: Glendora, California

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Qualified applicant will have an undergraduate degree in business, engineering or liberal arts. Applicant must also exhibit effective communications skills, have experience in dealing with distributors, their installers and specifiers, and have five to seven years of field sales experience. International sales and marketing experience, an MBA in marketing, an understanding of the irrigation industry, and multilingual capabilities are preferred. Extensive international travel will be required.

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mountain bikes

Maybe you've chased riders of them off your golf course. Maybe you've seen them late at night on ESPN, fearlessly navigating down some ungodly incline with wicked switchbacks.

Ask the hardcore mountain bikers why they do that, and they'll speak of freedom, expression and the thrill of taking on nature. Ask the rest of us, who are a little less daring, and the answer is more simple, "Mountain biking is just fun."

Over the past 20 years, mountain biking has boomed, going from a small-time activity enjoyed by a few old road bikers to a worldwide phenomena that includes professional tours and Olympic respectability. But this isn't a sport for kids with blue hair, no fear and no hope for a real job. Mountain biking can be done by anyone, anywhere.

You do, though, need the right gear and mindset. So before you drop several hundred beans in your latest attempt at getting your butt in shape, there are a few things to know about buying a mountain bike, taking care of it and taking care of yourself.

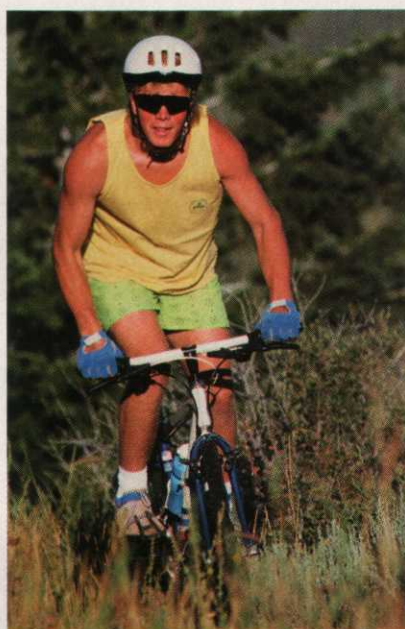
• **Frame it.** "The most important thing to consider when buying a mountain bike is picking the right frame," says Amy Price of the Sunflower Outdoor and Bike Shop, in Lawrence, Kan. "You can always build on your foundation and upgrade your components, but it's more costly to upgrade your frame."

Price says aluminum or carbon fiber frames are more durable and light.

• **Parts is parts.** Like a stereo, there are many parts to a mountain bike, and the flow in your ride depends on the quality

IF YOU'RE THINKING OF TRYING IT . . . LET IT RIDE!

YOU WON'T LOOK BACK. BY MARK LUCE



of equipment you have on your bike. Price says the following components are among the best available, and there are several gradations from low end to top of the line. Look for the following brand-name pieces: derailleur — Shimano; forks — Rock Shock, Manitou or Marzocchi; brakes — Avid; rims — Rolf or Mavic.

• **The whole enchilada.** A great starting bike is the Trek 4500, which costs about \$400. The bike's aluminum frame and Rock Shock Jett forks are all beginners need and can handle off-road abuse.

If you're looking for something more fancy, try a Cannondale — the Saab of the mountain biking world. Characterized by super-thick tubing (don't worry, it's still light as a feather), Cannondales will cost you more, but they are easy to

upgrade as your biking needs change.

Always test ride a bike before buying. Make sure you can handle the bike, and that you have 2 to 4 inches of clearance while straddling the seat.

• **A little TLC.** You should take care of your bike. Many bike shops offer maintenance clinics to help teach proper care. If your shop doesn't offer one, try reading *Zinn and the Art of Mountain Bike Maintenance* by Leonard Zinn.

• **Be prepared.** You also can't forget to take care of yourself. For starters, you'll need a helmet, water bottle and cage, tire tool, patch kit and spare tube, all of which can fit in an underseat pouch. You'll also need a pump. If you plan to ride at night, you'll need a headlight.

• **Water, water, everywhere.** If you aren't drinking enough water or eating enough, you may hit the wall, Price warns. So stay hydrated, and maybe take a few bananas or Power Bars with you on a ride to restore energy.

• **Learn from your mistakes.** You will crash, but that doesn't mean you'll get hurt. If you fall, go down with the bike and don't stick out your arms to break your fall. Your wrists are more fragile than an entire side of your body.

• **Kick it in.** Once you're geared up and ready to roll, let it ride. Watch your stress dissipate as you navigate rocks, buzz past trees and maybe catch some air. Repeat as necessary.

Mark Luce, a free-lance writer from Lawrence, Kan., can ride a mountain bike with no hands.



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