



## Equipment lifts make shop work easier

By Pat Norton

In their never ending desire to constantly improve their maintenance shop operations, many WGCSA members have discovered and now utilize small equipment lifts. While there are many different types of lifts available, only air, mechanical, small hydraulic, and automotive (or large hydraulic) will be discussed here. Although each type has its respective benefits/drawbacks, they all have some common positive traits.

First of all, three of these types are very affordable. Prices range from about \$400 for the mechanical type lift to approximately \$600 for the air type lift. Price of the small hydraulic lift is approximately \$1800, while the price of the automotive type is around \$2000. The cost of these service station lifts, coupled with their lack of versatility, probably prohibit their use in most golf course shop operations.

Secondly, equipment lifts are very cost effective. Lifts all make equipment maintenance easier and less frustrating, which directly translates into less time and labor spent on this time consuming area of responsibility.

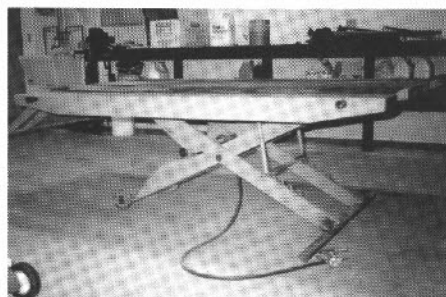
Lastly, equipment lifts are great employee morale boosters. No shop employee, mechanic, or superintendent likes to work without the proper equipment or tools. And certainly no shop mechanic likes to work all winter kneeling on cold, bare concrete. So, anything like this that a superintendent purchases not only for his operation but also for his employees will be repaid many times over in better quality work and more satisfied employees.

Here's a review and comparison of the four different types of equipment lifts.

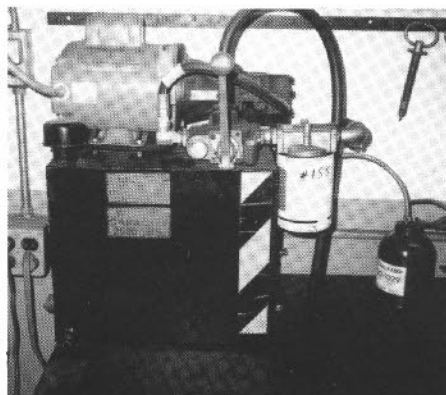
1) **Mechanical type.** The one I investigated is known as the Jiffy Lawnmower Lift. This type is basically a push rotary mower lift consisting of steel tubing and pipe framework on caster wheels. Models come in 28-48" widths and are powered either by hand winch or electric winch. This lift is ideally suited for the lawn mower repair

shop as its use for the golf course maintenance shop seems limited to push rotary mowers or other smaller pieces of equipment. Its lift capacity is 800-1000 lbs., raises up to 5 feet high, and is available for about \$400 (depending on model) from Chris-Nell Products, Pardeeville, WI.

2) **Air type.** Manufactured by Western Manufacturing, this type is basically a lift table mounted on a scissors type under-carriage that employs any shop air compressor to lift the table to a maximum height of 2.5 feet. This table can be modified to maximum dimensions of 5'x6'8". It is portable (mounted on caster wheels), has a lift capacity of 1200 lbs., and has the ability to lift most commercial turf equipment (greensmower, aerifiers, power trap rakes, etc). More information on this popularly priced (\$625) unit can be obtained by contacting Ray Woznick of Hanley Implement in Sun Prairie.



The Western Manufacturing lift table, available from Hanley's is operated by compressed air.



Controls and pump for the Van DeHey lift.

3) **Small hydraulic type.** This equipment lift was first introduced to Wisconsin Golf Course Superintendents at the 1985 WTA Summer Field Day by Peter Van DeHey of Mid-Vallee Golf Course in DePere. This lift employs an electric motor to run a hydraulic pump and ram setup. Height of the deck ranges from 4" to 5', while the unit boasts a standard lift capacity of 2500 lbs. This unit is permanent and requires some concrete cutting to install it into your shop floor. While this unit is easily stronger and more versatile, it's also more expensive. Cost of the unit is currently \$1795, with extra heavy duty options adding slightly to the price. These units are very well liked by all current owners in Wisconsin and are well worth a look if you're considering such a piece of equipment. They are currently being custom-built by Peter Van DeHey and Associates. More information on these interesting equipment lifts can be obtained by contacting Pete at Mid-Vallee Golf Course, Inc. in DePere, WI.

4) **Large hydraulic or automotive type.** This type of lift is definitely the strongest, but also by far the most expensive and the least versatile. It requires quite an effort to install it, a huge hole in your floor to mount the hydraulic ram, and in the end is too big to be of much good in lifting relatively small



Notice concrete work at base of lift - Van DeHey's unit does require some concrete cutting. This one is in Maple Bluff's shop; Tom Harrison modified the deck to 92"x67" - it is large enough to lift a HF-5.

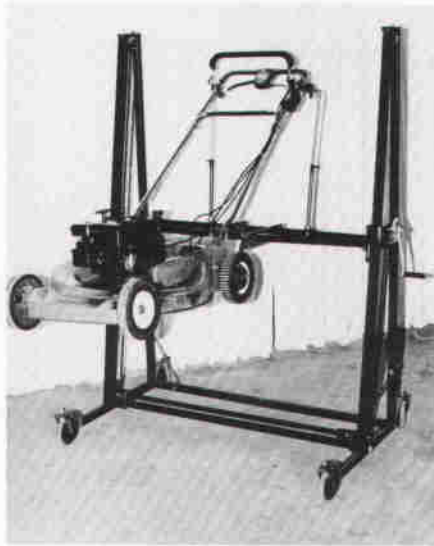


Pete Van DeHey's small hydraulic lift is perfect for a golf course shop.

turf equipment. If anybody is considering installing one of these, talk first to Bruce Worzella at West Bend Country Club. He's got one of the only ones around, and would probably be happy to give you an opinion of his lift.

Lastly then, let's summarize our findings on turf equipment lifts:

(1) The Jiffy Lawnmower Lift definitely has its place in the equipment repair business. That place is in the homeowner lawnmower repair business. If my business was repairing rotary lawnmowers, I'd buy one of these units in a real "jiffy". (The pun



The Jiffy Lawnmower Lift is manufactured in Pardeeville, Wisconsin.

is intended). These units are sold by Chris-Nell Products, Pardeeville, WI.

(2) The Western airlift table is marketed by Hanley Implement of Sun Prairie, WI. It has the advantages of being inexpensive, versatile, portable, and a heck of a lot better than having no lift table in your shop at all! This unit is one that I would definitely look at and check out with other superintendents currently using them.

(3) The electric hydraulic lift is custom made and sold by Pete Van DeHey and Associates of DePere, WI. It's a step up from the Hanley unit, not only in capacity and versatility, but also in price. The initial purchase price may

scare some people, but this is definitely a heavy duty, permanent addition to your shop that'll pay for itself many times over in convenience and versatility.

(4) An automotive type lift is probably much too big for any superintendent to consider. Besides, how many of us have shop ceilings high enough to handle raising your work pickup eight feet in the air?

The best bet, in my judgement, is to check out the lift table from Hanley's or the small hydraulic lift from Pete Van DeHey — one or the other should fit your operation. It's definitely on my Christmas shopping list.

# Rubs out grubs faster.

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