

**T**he golf car is becoming somewhat more than what its name implies as several manufacturers, in a convincing show of optimism, unveil new top-of-the-line models aimed at getting from Point A to Point B (and not necessarily from tee to green) in style.

1985 looks like a good time, several manufacturers are betting, to enter markets created by the growth and increased popularity of retirement and planned communities.

Joining longtime luxury car maker Elmco with eye-catching models are Yamaha with its sleek Sun Classic and American Continental with its scaled down version of the classic Model T, the Mini T.

"The market seems very strong and we just viewed it as another opportunity. The timing seems good for a variety of applications for our

new cars," Gary Jones, manager Leisure Products Division of Yamaha, says. "The market is becoming more segmented and basically its hard to cover all the different kinds of demands with just two models."

Manufacturers realize there is a limited but potentially lucrative market in planned, self-contained residential and resort communities built around golf courses and shopping complexes.

American Continental's Mini-T comes complete with such amenities as an oak dash, AM/FM radio, horn, lights, and turn signals. Available in four colors and in either gas or electric models, the Mini-T has been in full production for almost a year. With a base price of \$5,900, the Mini T is definitely not your run-of-mill golf car.

"Some of the golf car market is not

affected as much by economics as much as by the weather," one industry spokesman explains. "It's something like owning a boat. If you can afford to own a boat, you don't worry about buying gas for it."

Prestige car maker Elmco is picking up new distributors in its quest for more effective marketing strategies, company spokesman Ed Rutkowske says, and that Illinois-based company is looking forward to a "fantastic" 1985.

But, with an estimated 75,000 new golf cars being sold annually, the bread and butter of the industry will obviously continue to be the utilitarian fleet vehicle; and manufacturers continue to tinker with the design and mechanics of their best selling models to make them both more eye-appealing and efficient.

# Turf Vehicles Spurred by Healthier Market, Demand for Luxury Cars

by Ron Hall, assistant editor



Two new golf cart models from one of the largest golf cart manufacturers, E-Z Co.

## 1985 Golf Car Guide

	Model	Engine	Payload	Notes
<b>American Continental Inc.</b> Box 280 Willmar, MN 56201 (612) 235-1752	ACG 400	4-cycle	2,000 lbs.	3-wheel
	ACG 4000	4-cycle	2,000 lbs.	4-wheel
	ACE 400	electric	2,000 lbs.	3-wheel
	ACE 4000	electric	2,000 lbs.	4-wheel
<b>Club Car</b> P.O. Box 4658 Augusta, GA 30907 (404) 863-3000	DS Electric	electric	750 lbs.	4-wheel
	DS Gas	4-cycle	750 lbs.	4-wheel
	DS Villager	electric	1,000 lbs.	4-wheel
	DS Villager	4-cycle	1,000 lbs.	4-wheel
	DS Carryall	electric	1,000 lbs.	4-wheel
	DS Carryall	4-cycle	1,000 lbs.	4-wheel
<b>Columbia Car Corp.</b> P.O. Box 1 Deerfield, WI 53531 (608) 764-5474	Classic G3T	2-cycle	615 lbs.	tiller, 3-wheel
	Classic G3S	2-cycle	615 lbs.	steer, 3-wheel
	Classic E3T	electric	523 lbs.	tiller, 3-wheel
	Classic E3S	electric	523 lbs.	steer, 3-wheel
	Cruiser G4S	2-cycle	716 lbs.	4-wheel
Challenger	electric	641 lbs.	4-wheel	
<b>E-Z-Go/Textron</b> P.O. Box 388 Augusta, GA 30913 (404) 798-4311	X440	electric	500 lbs.	3-wheel
	X444	electric	500 lbs.	4-wheel
	GX440	2-cycle	500 lbs.	3-wheel
	X500	electric	500 lbs.	4-wheel
<b>Melex USA</b> 1201 Front St. Raleigh, NC 27609 (919) 828-7645	152	electric	500 lbs.	3-wheel
	252	electric	500 lbs.	4-wheel
<b>Ross Products</b> 145 NW 20th St. Boca Raton, FL 33431 (305) 395-4414	Legend RV3	electric	750 lbs.	3-wheel
	Legend RV4	electric	750 lbs.	4-wheel
<b>Yamaha Motor Corp.</b> 6555 Katella Ave. Cypress, CA 90630 (714) 761-7300	G1-AM5	gas	1,000 lbs.	4-wheel
	G1-EM5	electric	1,000 lbs.	4-wheel
	G2-A5	4-cycle	1,000 lbs.	4-wheel
	G2-E5	electric	1,000 lbs.	4-wheel
	SunClassic	electric	1,000 lbs.	4-wheel

Yamaha is introducing its first 4-cycle gasoline engine model, the G2-A5, which will be available in April. "We're trying something different and we want to monitor its performance very closely," Yamaha's Jones explains.

Club Car's introduction of a 4-cycle engine car in 1984 met with an "excellent" response, a company spokesman reports.

Melex redesigned its electric cars this past year, coming out with slightly narrower (for easier storage) Turtle 152 and 252 models. In addition to the styling changes, the Melex cars feature a more efficient electrical system and self-adjusting rear wheel brakes. The Raleigh, NC, company is expected to introduce a new car at the PGA show in January.

"We're definitely finding it a pretty

good year," C.W. Sharek, executive vice president of Melex USA tells WT&T. "Sales are up somewhat and we're pleased with the second half. I have no reason to believe that it's not going to hold."

New golf course construction definitely figures into the marketing plans of manufacturers such as Ross Products, producers of the Legend RV3 and RV4 cars. The Boca Raton, FL, company is located in enviably attractive Palm Beach County where 45 new courses are being added to more than 100 others. Ross had a big year in 1984 and expects sales to be strong at least through 1985.

### Lease option

In addition to outright sales, manufacturers, dealers, finance companies, and leasing firms offer cars by lease,

often with some type of maintenance agreement written into the contract. The popularity of leasing varies from region to region, and the exact terms of maintenance provisions can be different from course to course.

John Moore at Industrial Leasing, Portland, OR, explains that this segment of the market is subject to ups and downs as well.

"As a third party lessor, we have found our business in turf and golf down the past two years for a number of reasons," he points out. "The first is aggressive leasing programs at very



Daihatsu introduces a four-wheel maintenance vehicle

competitive rates from the manufacturers and the dealerships. They see a profit from the sale of equipment and can therefore offer a more competitive rate for leasing. A third party lessor makes his money strictly on the lease."

Moore adds that dealerships are adept at arranging attractive rates from local banks or from manufacturer programs, and that leasing or buying decisions are often made by golf professionals. "We have had problems with their credibility".

George Wooley, vice manager of Great Lake Golf Cars, Cleveland, tells the advantage a dealer has in maintenance and service over a third party lessor. "We call on each course once a week to take care of small maintenance items. Then, once per year, we take the cars into our shop for renovation," he says. "The course doesn't have to worry about maintenance and we have as good idea of how the cars are being treated. This also takes the burden of maintaining golf cars off the superintendent's mechanics."

No matter who provides the cars in a leasing agreement, the lessor can reap big savings by making sure the cars are handled properly.

"Some courses really take care of them and some turn them into junk before we get them back," Melex's Sharek notes. "If they have pride in their cars and in what they're doing, they'll be better off and so will we."

### Utility market heats up

The introduction of a spate of new products in the utility vehicle market

in recent months could cause buyers to rethink their equipment purchases in 1985, because not only are traditional manufacturers beefing up their product lines (Cushman, the market leader for over a decade, is putting more muscle in its vehicles by going from an 18 to a 22 hp engine) but foreign manufacturers are entering the marketplace with some vigor.

"They've had a captive market for years," Lee Rinehard of Terrain Vehicles, Inc., East Coast distributor of Daihatsu maintenance vehicles, says of the traditional utility vehicle producers. "But, we've come in with a strong product at a competitive price and we'll be right up there too. We're knocking at their back door and they know it."

In addition, Honda, Yamaha, Suzuki, and Kawasaki are encroaching on the market from a different direction, initially with sporty and relatively inexpensive three-wheel ATCs, most recently with more work-oriented four-wheel vehicles. Cost and the growing availability of optional work attachments are making these vehicles attractive for specialized maintenance tasks and for running errands.

It's this diversity which will

## Batteries and Accessories

**Gould** (batteries)  
Ten Gould Center  
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008  
(312) 640-4000

**Industrial Leasing Corp.** (leases)  
2300 SW 6th Ave.  
Portland, OR 97201  
(503) 228-2111

**Lester Electrical** (chargers)  
625 West A St.  
Lincoln, NE 68522  
(402) 477-8988

**Nivel, Inc.**  
1500 NE 131st St.  
N. Miami, FL 33161  
(305) 893-9600

**SolarWest Electric** (solar charger)  
232 Anacapa St.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 963-8667

**Tampa G Mfg. Co.** (covers)  
1115 Twiggs St.  
Tampa, FL 33602  
(813) 229-1559

**Trojan Battery Co.**  
12380 Clark St.  
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670  
(213) 946-8381

cause buyers and users of turf vehicles to think long and hard in an attempt to match purchases with jobs in 1985

Does this mean the "workhorse" type of turf vehicle is losing its popularity? Probably not. It is a signal, however, that competition for sales in specific equipment—applications performed in the past by the "workhorse"—is going to be red hot.

Versatility, even in this day and age, is certainly no dirty word, Dan Hedglin, sales manager for turf and industrial vehicles at Cushman/OMC, stresses. The demand for equipment that fulfills many work functions is still strong. Cushman, of course, built its reputation on its workhorse vehicles.

"We expect a strong year," he says. "We've had an excellent year this year. There are probably a couple of reasons for this. The economy has come back significantly although we didn't see it affect the turf industries as much as other industries. And we enjoyed sales increases because of product improvements." Hedglin says Cushman, in addition to boosting the horsepower of its vehicles, is committed to making its vehicles



## New Improved Self-propelled Top Dresser

It still uses Turfco's original method of conveyor and brush but the new Mete-R-Matic will make your top dressing job easier, faster and better.

**...the best ...just got better!**

**NEW!** Endless composition conveyor belt moves top dressing more efficiently and reduces maintenance to a bare minimum.

**NEW!** All controls are up front and within easy reach of operator for faster, non-stop operation.

**NEW!** Front shield protects engine and drive assembly from overspill when loading.

**NEW!** Full width rear bumper guards against damage to rotating brush.

**NEW!** As standard equipment—galvanized steel, 11.5 cu. ft. hopper and a 5 h.p. I/C engine.

### TURFCO MFG., INC.

Dept. 3410 • 3456 N. Washington Ave.  
Minneapolis, MN 55412 • 612/588-0741



For the big jobs, check out Turfco's Mete-R-Matic II that can top dress 18 golf greens in six hours!

Circle No. 147 on Reader Inquiry Card

# 1985 Utility Vehicle Guide

	Model	Engine	Payload	Notes
<b>American Continental, Inc.</b> Box 280 Willmar, MN (612) 235-1752	EVC-2	17 hp	980 lbs.	3-wheel (4-wheel optional)
	EEVC-2	electric	1,120 lbs.	4-wheel vacuum cart
<b>American Honda Motor Co., Inc.</b> 100 W. Alondra Blvd. Gardena, CA 90247 (213) 327-8280	TRX200	4-cycle	456 lbs.	4-wheel
<b>Columbia Car Corp.</b> P.O. Box 1 Deerfield, WI 53531 (608) 764-5474	Utility Car	250cc gas	500 lbs.	4-wheel, disc brakes
<b>Communter Industries, Inc.</b> P.O. Box 309 Cascade, IA 52033 (319) 852-3207	340 Granger	4-cycle	600 lbs.	3-wheel
	Sasquatch 340	4-cycle	600 lbs.	3-wheel
<b>Cushman/OMC</b> P.O. Box 82409 Lincoln, NE 68501 (402) 475-9581	Model 530	22-hp gas	1,700 lbs.	3-wheel
	Model 531	22-hp gas	1,700 lbs.	3-wheel
	Model 532	22-hp gas	1,900 lbs.	4-wheel
<b>EquipTech Products, Inc.</b> 615 Shepherd Drive Cincinnati, OH 45215 (513) 733-4770	Chikazu GX12B	.7-hp gas	1,100 lbs.	4-wheel
<b>E-Z-Go/Textron</b> P.O. Box 388 Augusta, GA 30913 (404) 798-4311	GX-800	2-cycle	800 lbs.	4-wheel
	GT-7	4-cycle	1,500 lbs.	3-wheel
	X300	electric	500 lbs.	3-wheel
	GX300	2-cycle	500 lbs.	3-wheel
<b>Hahn, Inc.</b> 1625 N. Garvin Evansville, IN 47711 (812) 428-2027	Spray-Pro 44	.16-hp gas	1,500 lbs.	4-wheel
<b>Carl Heald, Inc.</b> P.O. Box 1148 Benton Harbor, MI 49022 (616) 849-3400	Mark Hauler Hauler Kits	4-cycle gas	not given	3 or 4-wheels
		4-cycle gas	650 lbs.	3 or 4-wheels
<b>Jacobsen/Textron</b> 1721 Packard Ave. Racine, WI 53403 (414) 637-6711	T1000	gas	1,000 lbs.	4-wheel
	T2000	gas	2,000 lbs.	4-wheel
<b>Kawasaki Motors Corp.</b> P.O. Box 11447 Santa Ana, CA 92711 (714) 835-7000	KLT250	4-cycle gas	361 lbs.	3-wheel

even more maintenance-free than in the past.

Jacobsen strengthens its offerings with a pair of new utility trucks, the T1000 with a 1000-lb capacity and the T2000 with a 2000-lb capacity and a variety of optional attachments that can convert it to a mini dumper, aerator, seeder, spreader, top dresser and sprayer.

Taylor-Dunn offers its new 2,000-lb. capacity B 2-10 model with an exclusive speed control that increases the running time and distance of the vehicle up to 30 percent. It can be



**The all-terrain Yamaha 200 four-wheel reverse shaft all-purpose vehicle.**

adapted to seat two and four passengers with a cargo area, or seat six passengers comfortably.

Further evidence that the workhorse-type vehicle should remain popular is Smithco's new Runaway turf maintenance truck which got its first production run this past summer. Smithco's Donald Smith feels the Runaway, which features a hydraulic drive train, is also an example that reducing maintenance costs, even at the expense of a slightly higher initial cost, will become increasingly important.

"People don't seem to mind spending the extra money for fewer maintenance costs, for less down time," he explains. "The whole industry will be going more into hydraulics we feel."

Even though Smith doesn't feel the introduction of new foreign products has made a major impact on the market yet, particularly in the East, he cautions traditional manufacturers from taking it too lightly. "If we don't see the direction the industry is going and take steps to stay with it, four or five years down the road we're going to get hurt," he notes.

Notable among the newcomers to the market are such companies as SNS Motor Import, Oxnard, CA, which became the distributor of the Sanfu line of equipment last January, Terrain Vehicles, Inc., Addison, IL, the East Coast Distributor for Daihatsu, and EquipTech Products Inc., Cincinnati, OH, sole U.S. distributor for the Chikazu line.

The Sanfu line is anchored by the

*continued next page*

	Model	Engine	Payload	Notes
<b>MFC, Inc.</b> 10 Pleasant St. New Rochelle, NY 10801 (914) 636-3834	Shrunkette	16-hp gas	not given	4-wheel
<b>Olathe Manufacturing, Inc.</b> 100 Industrial Parkway Industrial Airport, KS 66031 (913) 782-4396	Model 492	18-hp	1,500 lbs.	3-wheel
<b>Pargo Eagle</b> 8181 Hoyle Ave. Dallas, TX 75227 (214) 388-7431	Model 775 Model 830 Model 875	electric electric electric	1,200 lbs. 350 lbs. 2,000 lbs.	4-wheel 3-wheel 4-wheel
<b>Rokon LTD</b> P.O. Box 427, Rt. 202 N. Jaffrey, NH 03452 (603) 532-8335	Ranger	2-cycle	450 lbs. pull	2-wheel drive
<b>Smithco, Inc.</b> 11 West Ave. Wayne, PA 19087 (215) 688-4009	Runaway Red Rider	19-hp gas 8-hp gas	1,500 lbs. 500 lbs.	3-wheel 3-wheel
<b>SNS Motor Imports, Inc.</b> 500 Esplanade Drive Oxnard, CA 93030 (805) 485-3300	TPV600	27-hp gas	1,500 lbs.	4-wheel
<b>Taylor-Dunn</b> 2114 West Ball Road Anaheim, CA 92804 (714) 956-4040	Model B 2-10	electric	2,000 lbs.	4-wheel
<b>Terrain Vehicles, Inc.</b> 221 Mitchell Court P.O. Box 418 Addison, IL 60101 (312) 953-8747	Hijet	LP gas	1,500 lbs.	4-wheel
<b>The Toro Company</b> 8111 Lyndale Ave. Minneapolis, MN 55420 (612) 887-8805	Workmaster	14 hp gas	1,000 lbs.	3-wheel
<b>Turf-Vac Corp.</b> P.O. Box 90129 Long Beach, CA 90809 (213) 426-9376	Model 1 Model 2 Model 4 Model 6 Model 8	11-hp gas 18-hp gas 18-hp gas 18-hp 18-hp	1,100 lbs. 1,500 lbs. 1,500 lbs. 1,500 lbs. 1,500 lbs.	3-wheel 3-wheel 3-wheel 4-wheel 4-wheel
<b>Yamaha Motor Corp.</b> 6555 Katella Ave. Cypress, CA 90630 (714) 761-7617	Moto 4	4-cycle gas	331 lbs.	4-wheel
<b>U.S. Suzuki Motor Corp.</b> 3251 East Imperial Highway Brea, CA 92621 (714) 996-7040	Quadrunner 250	4-cycle gas	370 lbs.	4-wheel

TPV600 (turf personnel vehicle) which features a 27-hp, water-cooled engine, rack and pinion steering, and a 12-month, 12,000-mile limited warranty. Even though sales of Sanfu (the vehicles are manufactured in Taiwan) have been primarily in the West so far, SNS Motor Imports is putting together a national dealer network.

"Our first year in 1984 was a building year," Tony Nunez of SNS Motor Imports says. "We knew a lot of the vehicles we would sell would be initial inventory and we expect a lot of reorders. We're looking at having a good year in 1985. We've been able to attract quality dealers and that was our goal, good solid dealers that have been in business a long time."

Likewise looking to the coming year with unabashed eagerness is Rinehard of Terrain Vehicles, a new company that oversees 19 Daihatsu dealer points in 15 states. Although Daihatsu vehicles have been on the market for a number of years, Rinehard feels the quality of the product and the parts support system his company provides will make Daihatsu a more noticeable force in the utility vehicle market.

"We have a high 90 percent parts/fill ratio," Rinehard stresses. "The complaint that foreign products have a parts problem is old hat, a good sales trick. We can fill any order for any part." Daihatsu products are supported by Suburu Mid-America, parent company for Terrain, which maintains a complete supply of parts, Rinehard explains.

The diversity of the market is reflected at Pinehurst, NC, where equipment manager Richard Yow reports using Daihatsu vehicles in a truckster capacity while retaining Cushmans for use on the greens.

Joining the utility vehicle sales fray this September was EquipTech Products with its Chikazu line of 15 different vehicles ranging in size from a motorized wheelbarrow to an eight-wheeled-drive vehicle with a two-ton payload. Included in this array are the GX12B and GX15B mini dump trucks.

"We can cover a number of markets with our products," EquipTech's Joe Engelbert says. "Some of them overlap and some of them don't." Engelbert is looking to a strong debut for Chikazu. "It's one of those things you feel like you should have been in a year ago," he notes.

With the ringing of the bell signifying the start of the 1985 selling season there is no lack of challengers to the traditional utility vehicle leaders; and if they can't win the bout, it might be that they'll be satisfied to win a round or two. At least for now. **WT&T**