

More flexibility

BY VICKY POULSEN

These grounds professionals discuss why utility vehicles have become an absolute necessity

Small enough to get into tight spaces but tough enough to do the job of their big truck counterparts, today's utility vehicles have greater power, payload and traction abilities that give landscape professionals more flexibility in their day-to-day operations.

An increasing number of landscape professionals are finding that utility vehicles have become an absolute necessity, especially in areas like university campuses where parking is a problem. We talked to university grounds managers and others to find out just how useful these utility vehicles are, and here is what they had to say:

▲ PHOTO COURTESY: THE TORO COMPANY

MEDIUM PROPERTY

Name: Greg Burriss

Title: Grounds manager

Company: Furman University

Location: Greenville, SC

2000 budget: \$1 million

Company profile: "We have 80 acres of turf on the athletic grounds and 80 acres on campus grounds. The total acreage we maintain is 400 acres. We have nine grounds workers for the athletic areas, 12 with campus grounds and two on the



Burriss

Many grounds operations have Club Car's Carryall, which is adaptable to light and heavy work.

PHOTO COURTESY CLUB CAR



nine-acre president's estate. We perform total grounds maintenance care and landscape implementation.

Equipment arsenal: "We have 10 half-ton Chevy trucks, a one-ton Ford dump truck, two five-ton Ford dumptrucks, seven golf cars, one Cushman sprayer, one kromer painter, one 4x4 Club car, and three John Deere Gators.

Purchasing decisions: "We buy new except for the golf cars."

Dream vehicle: "A three-quarter ton 4x4 with turf tires, heavy duty dumpbed, winch and weather band radio — and 40 miles to the gallon!"

SMALL PROPERTY

Name: Chris Fay

Title: Grounds manager

Company: University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Location: Greensboro, NC

2000 budget: \$873,400

PHOTO COURTESY BERT VANDERVEEN



Company profile: The University of North Carolina at Greensboro is located on a 197-acre campus in the Piedmont Triad Region with 3.1 million gross sq. ft. of building space. The grounds department performs services such as maintenance of the golf course and soccer stadium, moving, commencement decoration and set-up, placement and collection of extra trash receptacles for outdoor events, preparation of athletic fields for major events, coordination of utility excavations and special landscape design, excavation and installation. The grounds division also houses the Solid Waste Management Division. One supervisor, three full-time and seven part-time laborers care for the athletic fields.

Equipment arsenal: "Ten pickups (Dodge/Ford half-ton), three two-ton dump trucks and two Cushman trucksters (gas) with spray tanks. We also use a John Deere Gator (gas) to haul and dump clay and mulch to sand fields/golf course and a John Deere (gas) infield Groomer. We drag baseball and softball infields and groom sand traps with a Tenant litter vacuum unit (gas). We have three used golf-type Club cars (electric) and one used six-passenger Club car (electric) to give tours of campus grounds and transport seasonal workers across campus."

Purchasing decisions: "We buy new units based on a bid process because we're a state institution. We've had good luck with used units from golf courses, too."

Chris Fay drives one of his Cushman trucksters.

LARGE PROPERTY

Name: Michael Lynch

Title: Account manager

Company: Environmental Management Services, Inc.

Location: Columbus, OH

2000 revenue: \$10.8 million

Business mix: Mostly commercial

Company profile: Mark Wehinger started Environmental Management Services, Inc. in 1992 as a commercial landscaping company. Installation services were added to complement maintenance contracts. "Since that time, we have grown into a full-service landscape contracting company that performs such services as design build, installation, irrigation, seasonal color, bird aversion and snow removal. We have 160 employees, and our business mix now consists of 70% commercial maintenance and 30% installation."

Equipment arsenal: "The utility vehicle we get the most use out of is the Exmark Lazer converted turf tractor, a zero-turn tractor with a dry fertilizer hopper added to the front and liquid tanks added to the back with both hand wand and boom spray applicators."

Purchasing decisions: "We have three of these Exmark vehicles in our fleet. Two were purchased new in 1998 and one in 1999. We plan to purchase another next year."

Dream vehicle: "These machines take care of our needs, but we're going to have a large boom added to our next purchase."

IT'S ONLY IN
TO WANT THE BEST

Muscle up

Manufacturers of utility vehicles keep making them stronger, more versatile and more efficient

Vehicles with more horsepower and greater payload capacity are what contractors are looking for, and manufacturers are responding by putting more muscle in their products. We asked several manufacturers what the driving force was in their design of these products, and here's what they had to say:

ASV, INC.,
GRAND RAPIDS, MI
218/327-3434

Brad Lemke, director of new product development
Utility vehicle: RC30 all-surface loader
Key trends: "We'd been building larger rubber-track vehicles for a number of years, then
ASV RC30 ▼

heard more people talk about smaller machines. In response, we developed the RC30."

Best features: "Our rubber-track technology allows our machines to go anywhere."

On the horizon: "I think there will be multiple models of rubber-track machines to choose from, and more choices in size and horsepower."

JOHN DEERE,
TRIANGLE PARK, N.C.
800/537-8233

Collis R. Jones, product marketing manager, vehicle group
Utility vehicles: Gators
Key trends: "Landscape professionals need a versatile vehicle that will allow them to efficiently

haul and tow needed supplies."
Best features: "John Deere Gators are popular because of the engine options and varying payload capacities."

Finance/purchasing decisions: "Most landscape professionals own their units, but for large jobs and immediate needs, Gators have become a popular item with rental companies."

THE TORO COMPANY,
BLOOMINGTON, MN
612/888-8801

Jody Hinkle, marketing communications manager
Utility vehicle: Toro Twister, Toro Workman 2100 and 1100 mid-duty vehicles
Key trends: "Utility vehicles are becoming more popular within the landscape marketplace. The new breed of vehicles have greater power, payload and traction abilities."

Best features: "Toro utility vehicles offer the highest horsepower and payload available, and the Toro Active In-Frame suspension and traction system allows for the vehicles to easily and comfortably get to a work site."

Finance/purchasing decisions: "Vehicles are typically owned.

Landscape professionals will primarily shop their local dealers. Larger, national landscape companies are more likely to have a distributor relationship."

On the horizon: "More vehicles in this class will offer more power, which means more advancements in attachments."

OTHER MANUFACTURERS:
Kawasaki Motors Corp., USA
949/770-0400

Broyhill
800/228-1003

Club Car
800/258-2227

Kent Mfg. of Venice, Inc.
800/330-5368

Mitsubishi Fuso Truck of America, Inc.
877/202-9650

MTD Products, Inc.
330/225-2600

Read www.landscapemanagement.net
More

Visit our Web site to read about what other manufacturers have to say about trends in the utility vehicle market.



UTILITY *vehicles*



Haul anything

Club Car utility vehicles' durable, lightweight aluminum construction makes them tough enough to maneuver through rugged industrial sites without damaging turf. They feature a 351cc, 11-hp key-start gasoline engine and can haul up to 1,200 lbs. total vehicle load. Maximum speed is 18 mph. Also has a cargo box. For more information contact Club Car at 800/258-2227 or www.club-car.com / circle #270

Light it up

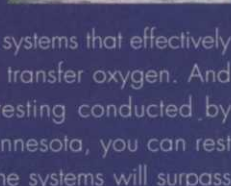
E-Z-GO Textron's Workhorse LX line features the truck-like cowl from the Workhorse ST 350 and provides the same differential scuff guards, tubular front bumpers, bed liners, horns and fuel gauges or charge meters. For more information contact E-Z-GO at 706/798-4311 / circle #271

Twistin' away

Toro's 11-hp Workman 1100 and 16-hp Workman 2100 feature Active In-Frame suspension and flotation tires for high payload capacity. For more information contact Toro at 612/888-8801 or www.toro.com / circle #272

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◀ Polaris Industries' utility task vehicle

Crew-sing

Beginning in 2002, Mitsubishi Fuso Truck of America, Inc. will offer a Crew Cab for its FE-5P

with automatic transmission. The seven-seater truck features a 175-hp engine, 165.4-in. wheelbase and 14,500-lbs. GVWR. For more info contact Mitsubishi Fuso at 877/202-9650 / circle #273

Like a pro

Polaris Industries' Professional Series Workmobiles include the All-Surface Loader, Utility Task Vehicle, ATV Pro and others. The UTV is available in 2x4, 4x4 and 6x6 models. For more information contact Polaris at 763/542-0500 / circle #274

Tread carefully

Kawasaki's Mule 3020 utility vehicle features smooth-tread 20-in. tires and can carry 803 lbs. and tow 1,200 lbs. For more information contact Kawasaki at 949/770-0400 / circle #275

No stopping here

The John Deere ProGator utility vehicle is available in 23.5-hp diesel and 26-hp gas versions. The vehicles have a five-speed, fully synchronized transmission that lets the operator keep going without stopping to change gears. For more information contact John Deere at 800/537-8233 / circle #276

On track

All Season Vehicles' RC30 is a driveable, all-surface loader that fits in the back of a pickup and features rubber-tracked technology. For more information contact ASV at 800/346-5954 / circle #277

Use force

Broyhill Company's TerraForce has a 2,400-lb. payload capacity, cab forward design, standard power steering and mid-engine placement for balance and service access. For more info contact Broyhill Company at 800/228-1003 / circle #278

Out of the box

Aluminum utility boxes from Kent Mfg. of Venice, Inc., offer the chance to have a utility vehicle with the features of a factory direct model but at a fraction of the cost. For more information contact Kent at 800/330-5368 / circle #279

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Palmor Products Inc. is proud to be celebrating 26 years in manufacturing the Trac Vac Lawn Vacuum. Starting with the models 560 and 450 for garden tractors in 1975; the line has expanded to over 15 configurations ranging from 3.5 to 11 horsepower and from 8 cubic feet to 50 cubic feet capacities. Latest models include the 652 steerable vacuum for the mid mount zero rider, the 662 for compact tractors and the 2116 truck loader.



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