

THE HOPPER

~ Grasshopper Periodical ~

Increased
PRODUCTIVITY
AND RELIABILITY
GRASSHOPPER-STYLE



In this issue: Charles Rainey, Norex
Scott Brewer, Rotolo Consultants, Inc.
Hollis Malone, Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center

GRASSHOPPER
YOUR NEXT MOWER®



SINGLE OPERATOR VALUES GRASSHOPPER PERFORMANCE AND RELIABILITY

The Bermuda grasses of Arkansas grow relentlessly making regular maintenance a challenge. Just ask Charles Rainey, owner and sole operator of Norex, a landscaping and visual enhancement company in Conway, Ark.

"It's hard to stay on top of it, especially if your equipment isn't up for it," he says, and that's why he looks to Grasshopper.

Operating a 725K² FrontMount™, Rainey tends 25 residential acres each week, but he only spends 15 hours on the mower.

"Other machines bog down and their maneuverability is poor, but I can mow right through the top 1-1/2 inches without a second thought."

For three years, Rainey's Grasshopper has been influential in trimming mowing time and allowing him to branch out and diversify his services.

"It takes me two days to complete jobs that used to take a week." He uses the remaining days to do jobs he would not have been able to take otherwise. As a result, Rainey has tripled his income.

"The first year, he increased his bottom line by \$3,700, all mowing," says David Washburn, president of David's Small Engine, Inc. "The second year, it increased \$6,800."

"You have to do something better than the other guy to retain your customers and earn new business," says Rainey.

Grasshopper provides a cleaner cut and the PowerVac® Collection System allows him to remove all the yard waste and clippings, which he uses as compost. The finished job is always pristine, and Rainey picks up new business from his clients' neighbors. "I get more new business from those referrals than anywhere else."

Another benefit is the machine's light footprint. "I'm practically the only guy out on the job the day after a hard rain. I don't have to worry about leaving ugly tracks and ruts. I don't have much downtime due to weather."

He likes to keep going and Grasshopper's handling and comfort are features that make mowing easier and more enjoyable.

"If I take a break, I'll just grab a drink, sit back down in the seat and relax." And because of Grasshopper's comfort, he is able to spend more time mowing and less time resting because productivity is critical.

Rainey cannot afford downtime for repairs but doesn't have that problem with Grasshopper. He says he can jump on the machine any day, and it will run like the first day he got it.

Rainey says that switching to Grasshopper was the best business decision he has made.

"He'll even stop guys who are mowing with other machines and offer to let them test his Grasshopper," says Washburn. "He's one of our greatest cheerleaders for Grasshopper."

Rainey has been able to expand his business without the expenses of more equipment and additional employees. He gets more "bang for his buck" with the Grasshopper, which has allowed for quick business growth. However, as Rainey knows all too well, the Bermuda grows quickly, too. ~

GRASSHOPPER IMPLEMENT SYSTEM HELPS FUEL PRODUCTIVITY, GROWTH

When Scott Brewer, maintenance manager for Rotolo Consultants, Inc. (RCI) in Slidell, La., first needed to clear debris from a 26-mile stretch of highway curbing, the task took several days using four employees with backpack blowers.

To increase productivity, Brewer switched to a Grasshopper grounds maintenance system equipped with a turbine blower designed specifically for the job. One employee could complete the same job in 1/4 of the time, reducing labor and time costs 16-fold.

Brewer also created other avenues for increased profitability. In addition to the turbine blower, he invested in other implements: front-mounted aerator, sprayer and rotary broom implements and an edger, which they use on the mid-mounted mowers.



Brewer's Grasshopper fleet consists of three Model 725G² FrontMount™ mowers and 16 MidMount™ mowers – a mixture of Models 225, 227, 322D and 325. Four of the mid-mounts have rear-discharge decks that discharge clippings and debris out the back.

"The rear-discharge decks are perfect for our government and municipal contracts, especially for roadways. They keep the clippings off the road and they let us edge from either side.

Plus, he says the decks are capable of mowing through 18-inch-tall grass without a big mess.

In addition to government contracts, RCI also provides full-service maintenance to a mix of gaming facilities, large "lifestyle malls," high-end apartment complexes and theme parks in Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina and Texas as well as sports complexes in Indiana.

RCI's diverse client base demands flexibility from the company's equipment, which is why they use Grasshopper.

"Their performance is great. They cut and maneuver well, and are comfortable. Our workers love them, and when our guys in the field are happy, that increases productivity." The implements RCI uses also help improve the company's bottom line, especially since RCI provides a range of services from landscaping installation and maintenance to spraying and chemical applications.

"We are a one-stop shop. We can do everything, even the extremely complex and high-specialty jobs. The AERA-vator™ is three times more efficient than walk-behinds, and the rotary broom helps clear slush from sidewalks in winter. We're able to get more work done in less time."

He says the edgers have been particularly beneficial.

"We use them on roadways where the final appearance is important. We can edge from either side and still be able to face oncoming traffic to increase visibility and safety."

Another positive feature of the edger is that the mower blades can be engaged, increasing productivity by cutting grass and edging simultaneously.

"Grasshopper has contributed to our growth, and as our equipment of choice, we will continue to use Grasshopper as we expand."

With the switch from a manual system of labor to a system that utilizes the productivity-enhancing performance of Grasshopper implements, Brewer has significantly increased RCI's ability to turn a profit, and for him, that makes all the difference in the world. ~



GAYLORD OPRYLAND RESORT AND CONVENTION CENTER

More than 50,000 trees, tropical plants, exotic flowers and lush lawns sprawl over 410 acres – indoors and outdoors – at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, Tenn., making it a horticulturist's dream.

"Our resort is one of the best in the nation, and we take the necessary steps to keep the grounds in top shape in every season," says Hollis Malone, head of the resort's Horticulture and Pest Control Department.



With the total acreage, Malone's chief concern is maximizing productivity while minimizing labor investments.

"You need quality labor, a good reputation, competitive wages and benefits when recruiting," he says. "But the quality of your equipment is important, too."

Quality equipment means ease of use, short downtimes for maintenance, year-round reliability, durable construction, unmatched performance and comfort.

"That's why we use Grasshopper. They're the best, hands down."

The resort's fleet of Grasshoppers – three MidMount™ 428D mowers and three FrontMount™ 928D mowers – run all day, every day from mid-March to early December.

"That would take its toll on other machines," he says. "But the Grasshoppers keep going."

Regular maintenance keeps them running well, something Malone suggests for any machine put to regular use.

"But Grasshoppers are so well built, it doesn't take much to keep them going strong."

The diesel engines perform well in a variety of conditions, wet or dry, hot or cold. Since they mow every square foot of the grounds every week, the mulching option on the mowers' 61-inch decks keeps the grass evenly cut while returning nutrients to the turf.

"And there's no clumping, leaving that nice striped look. The crew switches the mowing direction every other time to create diamond-shaped stripes. It really enhances the lawns' attractiveness."

They also use Grasshopper's AERA-vator™ implement for overseeding, a turbine blower for spring and fall cleanup, a front-mounted sprayer for chemical applications and a rotary broom and heated winter enclosure for snow removal – when the snow does fall.

In fact, Malone recalls one instance seven inches of snow fell overnight. The Grasshoppers worked continuously through the night to keep the sidewalks and driveways clear and make sure no guests were inconvenienced by the snowfall.

"These machines and the attachments do everything for us. The spraying equipment is especially helpful, saving time and labor."

However, Malone emphasizes one thing about Grasshopper above all else: comfort.

With effortless maneuverability and operator-friendliness with a lounge-chair feel, Grasshopper's comfort features are the best in the industry.

"My crews say they are the most comfortable mowers they've ever operated, and these guys have seen and driven everything."

"To me, the fact that you mow all day and are willing to get up the next morning and do it all over again, that's all that matters."

But more importantly, Grasshopper provides the reliability, performance and longevity that Malone requires for the rigorous landscaping demands of a top-rated resort.

"We've never used anything better, and as far as I'm concerned, we never will." ~



This 928D is configured for snow removal with an optional winter enclosure and a rotary broom.