

Construction Equipment Guide

1958 **50** ANNIVERSARY 2008



June 4
2008
Vol. XXI • No. 12
Published
Nationally

"The Nation's Best Read Construction Newspaper... Founded 1957."
470 Maryland Drive • Ft. Washington, PA 19034 • 215/885-2900 • Toll Free 800-523-2200 • Fax 215/885-2910 • www.CEGLTD.com

Inside

For Some, Amusement Means Hard Work

Theme Park Construction Is a Niche for a Select Number of Contractors

By Giles Lambertson
CEG CORRESPONDENT

Construction work is not fun and games, but contractors that build theme and amusement parks are not immune to the delights they construct. There is something about creating a waterfall or a roller coaster that belies the notion that all construction labor is created equal.

"Well, it is different than building a house," said Dutch McGrath III, president of Amusement Construction Co. Inc., whose motto is, "We Build Fun Things."

"A lot of people who work for me worked quite a few years in general commercial building. They enjoy this work because it is different. It is a change of pace for them."

Some other contractors in the park construction business have reached the same conclusion: Building "fun things" brings a special dimension of satisfaction to a construction project.

The projects are all across America — and around the world — wherever an amusement park, a theme park or a family fun center springs up to cater to thrill-seeking human impulses. The projects range in scope from the original Disneyland in Anaheim, Calif. — and the numerous successor Disney theme parks — to neighborhood amusement centers whose popular appeal never reaches beyond a small community.

In every case, while you can talk about Magic Kingdoms, in

see AMUSEMENT page 45



Leaky Levees Raise Reliability Questions...9



Charlotte Dragway to Open in September...69



Historic Equipment Stars at Pa. Show...76

Table of Contents4

Crawler Loaders, Dozers, Undercarriages.....35-43

Paving Section51-61

Parts Section63-65

Business Calendar.....71

Auction Section85-93

Advertisers Index95



The Link-Belt excavator used to build Goliath at Six Flags Over Georgia seem tiny next to the mammoth coaster.



A miniature golf course takes shape at F3: Fabulous Family Fun Center in Hickory, N.C., under the skilled hands of Amusement Construction Co.'s crew.

Storm Recovery Efforts Continue at Seabees' Base

By Angela B. Humi
CEG CORRESPONDENT

During August 2005, Hurricane Katrina caused millions of dollars worth of damage to the Naval Construction Battalion Center (NCBC) in Gulfport, Miss., home to several thousand Seabees.

Now, nearly three years after the hurricane dev-

see SEABEE page 11



Site work progresses on footers, slabs and underground utilities.

Rainy Situation Eased by GPS at Ark. Project

By Mary Reed
CEG CORRESPONDENT

Record-setting rains in central Arkansas have been conquered by a family construction company with the aid of advanced technology.

"We started work on Aug. 6 last year and it started to rain on Aug. 30," recalled Larry Cox of Larry Cox Construction, "and it's been raining ever

see COX page 14



The motorgrader leaves behind a smooth grade.



(L-R): The Cox family includes Larry, Matthew and Lance.

Getting Machines in Field Toughest Part of Sports Complex Job

COX from page 1

since. It's the worst I've ever seen!"

The \$500,000 job involved site and storm drain work for eight baseball fields and five soccer fields at the city of Heber Springs's Mare Square Sports Complex and Heber Springs High School's physical education facility.

David V. Dow, vice president of TrenchSafety & Supply Inc., based in Memphis, Tenn., and Little Rock, Ark., supplied Cox Construction with GPS equipment. He said the technology makes it easi-

er to work in inclement weather.

"That's the beauty of using satellite signals — you can work 24/7 in just about any weather. The caveat is 'if the machines can get in the field.' With all the bad weather Arkansas has had, getting in the field was the problem, not the equipment," Dow said.

Even before the torrential rains hit, Cox Construction had encountered problems with the project. The company purchased a 2-D grader system a year or two ago, but discovered that the sites had too many elevations to permit its use. Cox therefore decided to use a Champion 720 grader fitted with

Topcon GPS as part of a 3-D set-up also involving a base station and a survey rover. 2-D machine control uses laser or sonic sensors, whereas 3-D machine control uses GPS and GLONASS (Russia's Global Navigation Satellite System) satellite systems for greater accuracy. The advantage of the latter type of excavation control system is that it allows grading without the need for stakes.

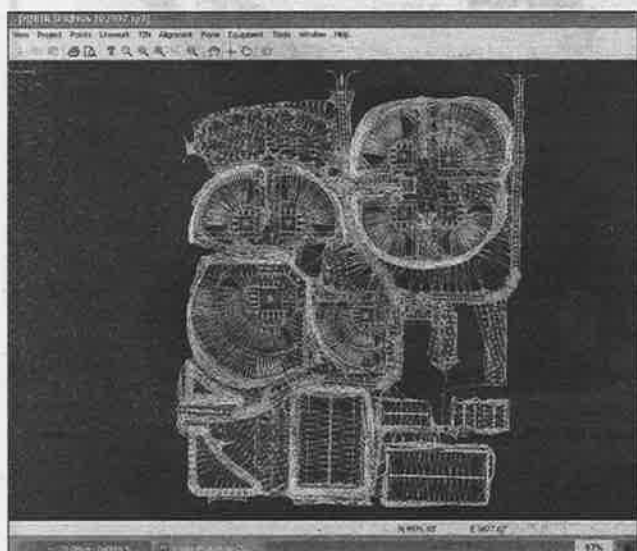
"In addition to our GPS-controlled grader, we also used a 330 Kobelco trackhoe, a D61 Komatsu dozer, two [International Harvester] four-wheel tractor and pans, two

dump trucks and an Ingersoll Rand 100 pad-foot roller for this project," Cox noted, adding that the job is now about 90 percent complete.

Dow said it's not the larger contractors who are forging the way with GPS technology.

"TrenchSafety has been selling machine control since 1997 and involved in GPS machine control since 2001," he said. "What's been interesting is that smaller contractors, like Cox Construction, have been some of the first contractors to adopt this

see COX page 16



The sports complex looks like this through the eyes of the Topcon GPS.



With 3-D machine control, an operator "sees" exactly where he or she is on a job via an in-cab controller.



Lance Cox keeps an eye on the in-cab 3-D machine controller that allows precise cutting of slope on a baseball field in a large sports complex in Heber Springs, Ark.