

04 Success stories



The GreatHorse: Off to the Races

Private club's rapid rise
demands enhanced,
higher volume solutions –
right down to the ice cubes



After a substantial investment to renovate and upgrade a shuttered country club bought at auction in 2012, Guy Antonacci and his family debuted GreatHorse, their unique take on the luxury private golf club experience, in 2015. It is, in a word, different: world-class and refined but at the same time laid-back and family-friendly, a club intent on ensuring that member relaxation and enjoyment trump attitude, dress codes and stuffiness.

Brought to market in first-class facilities overlooking the Connecticut River Valley in the small western Massachusetts town of Hampden, the GreatHorse concept resonated right out of the gate. In its first five years, the club signed on more than 350 member families. Its award-winning golf course hosts annual, high-profile tournaments. In addition to a new mountain-lodge-style clubhouse, outdoor pool, spa, fitness center, tennis courts, large event venue — even a private jet available for member rental — the property now includes lodging and a

300-acre farm, which hosts farmer's markets and culinary events, and which supplies GreatHorse chefs with fresh, seasonal produce.

The club's rapid rise to prominence among elite private golf resorts and its fast-growing membership base has also necessitated ramp-up and expansion of its food and beverage programs. And some behind-the-scenes systems critical to providing top quality and service have been enhanced to meet increasing demand. Among them is ice production.

Overall, the club's F&B program at The Clubhouse includes a 120-seat, three-meal-a-day restaurant with raw bar and adjacent 130-seat patio, a lounge with a 22-seat bar and a private dining room. The main kitchen and bar provide service to the pool area, as well. The Starting Gate, a separate banquet facility, has a dedicated kitchen and four mobile bars used for private, public and corporate events.

GreatHorse Executive Chef Denis Griswold notes that when the initial equipment package was selected, the team didn't anticipate the amount of ice that would eventually be needed as membership and volume grew.



“It was a brand-new business and we didn’t know what to expect,” he says. “We started with a 700-pound Scotsman ice machine in the main kitchen, a small machine under the bar, and another 1,000-pound Scotsman in the banquet facility. We also have a machine at the golf course, for filling cart coolers and keeping water cold, but it produces larger cubes that we can’t use for drinks and general foodservice purposes,” Griswold says. “Once we started growing and generating more volume with members and events, we knew we’d underestimated what we’d need. We were always running out of ice and having to fill buckets from the machine in the banquet facility to haul over to The Clubhouse. But banquet’s business picked up quickly, too, so we couldn’t always count on being able to do that. Our solution for a while was to bag ice and store it in the freezer, but it would freeze into solid blocks that were difficult to deal with. It really just became a big hassle.”

Ultimately, after just one busy summer season, Chef Griswold made the request to add funds for a new ice machine to his operating budget.

Working in partnership with regional dealership Kittredge Restaurant Equipment and Scotsman Ice Systems, GreatHorse installed a new machine that more than doubles the amount of ice that’s readily available to the various venues in and around The Clubhouse. “It solved the problem and we haven’t run out of ice since,” Griswold says. “We had to get creative in terms of where we located it, but the stars aligned and everything worked out perfectly.”

Winning Trifecta: Location, Technology, Convenience

The solution for GreatHorse hinged on three key elements: finding a location that could house a machine designed for higher volume production; selecting the right machine; and considering not just production capacity but total ice-system efficiency and convenience. The project team identified a location near the loading dock and freight elevator, choosing Scotsman’s high-tech, Prodigy

Plus® C1848-1800lb cube ice machine, and moving away from messy, labor-intensive buckets for ice transport to self-contained, easily rolled carts.

Doing so, however, took some outside-the-box thinking, particularly in terms of location. That’s because the Clubhouse has three levels, with main kitchen, bar and restaurant on the lower level and offices, locker rooms, spa facilities and other member- and staff-serving areas on floors two and three. The loading dock is on level two.

“I kept looking at this spot up by the loading dock,” Griswold says. “It’s central to the dock and adjacent to the elevator to easily service the kitchen and bar downstairs, and has easy access to the golf course. When we do events, we’re constantly moving a lot of ice over there. I felt if we could find the right machine we could make that location work.”

The Prodigy Plus C1848 fit the bill, both for its 1800-pound production capacity and for its compact footprint. The ability to utilize a remote condenser helped to seal the deal.

“That corner in the hallway is a very tight spot, but we were able to mount the machine there and then go through the ceiling to install a remote condensing unit on the roof,” says Dennis Reardon, Equipment Specialist

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Machines installed worldwide:

1,000,000+

Tons of Scotsman flake and nugget ice produced daily worldwide:

12,500

Scotsman ice cubes produced daily worldwide:

6 billion

Crystal-clear ice cubes introduced:

1950

The Original Chewable Ice® Nugget ice introduced:

1981

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at E3 Commercial Kitchen Solutions, Scotsman’s representative in the New England market. “It’s about 50 feet away and it has plenty of room to breathe up there, which cuts down on energy use and maintenance. It’s also hidden from view and, because it’s on the roof, guests in the nearby pool area aren’t bothered by noise generated by the compressor.”

Along with Kittredge Sales Representative Laura Clark, Reardon led design and installation of the system which, while compressing above, is configured to drain below.



Ice Intel

FORM: **Cube ice**, such as that used at GreatHorse, is the most common form used in commercial foodservice applications. Cubes are versatile and considered the ideal for restaurant and bar use. Soft, chewable **nugget ice** is often selected by healthcare operators and for operations where volume of blended drinks and cold beverages is high. **Flake ice** is sometimes also used in blended drinks as well as in healthcare operations, but is especially popular for use in and around chilled food displays.

CAPACITY: Ice machines are typically sized by the number of pounds of ice that they can produce in a 24-hour period. As the GreatHorse team discovered, estimating volume of ice needed and what size machine to select can be tricky, especially for new operations. To avoid situations in which demand exceeds capacity, consider all possible applications, figure anticipated table turns and peak period volume, and allow for business growth. Dennis Reardon, Equipment Specialist at E3 Commercial Kitchen Solutions, says when consulting with operations like GreatHorse on ice-production needs and suggested machine size, he applies the following formulas:

- **Restaurant Dining** — 1.5 pounds per customer. A 150-seat restaurant doing two turns at dinner should anticipate needing 450 pounds of ice per night in the dining room.
- **Cocktail Bar** — 3 pounds of ice per customer, or 90 pounds of ice per night for a 30-seat bar. For particularly busy nights, or if overall bar volume is expected to be high and hours are long, he suggests increasing the estimate by 20 percent.
- **Events** (i.e., weddings, golf outings) — 2 pounds per person



Left: Scotsman ice machines produce ice dependably for GreatHorse.

Below: The atmosphere at GreatHorse is comfortably clubby but never stuffy.



“The wall where the machine is installed is actually load-bearing, so we were able to drive right down through so it can drain in the main kitchen’s walk-in cooler drain right below. Thanks to Kittredge, the installation went like clockwork,” Griswold notes.

The air-cooled machine itself produces small “dice” ice cubes Griswold says he prefers for use in drinks. And with ice production now done outside of the kitchen, he appreciates the fact that staff members aren’t constantly coming in and out to access ice and fill buckets from the old machine there.

“The new Prodigy Plus came with two thermal shuttle carts as accessories. Staff can just roll a cart right up underneath it, slide the cover open, pull a lever and ice drops directly in,” he says. “They roll them out to the golf course or take the elevator down to the kitchen, restaurant or bar or wherever they need to go on the property. They’re

fully self-contained and stainless steel, so they’re easy to clean.”

A similar cart system is used with the original 1,000-pound Scotsman machine in the GreatHorse banquet facility. There, four carts can be filled with ice and rolled into position next to mobile bars used during events on the outdoor deck.

Since installing the new system, Griswold adds that not only has the operation not run out of ice, it has required no service or maintenance beyond regular, basic cleaning. With ample ice production and easy access upstairs, he’s now considering dedicating the kitchen’s original 700-pound machine to another fast-growing area of the GreatHorse’s business, the farm.

“We’re starting to do a lot of farm-to-table activities and events like our fall Harvest Dinner are becoming very popular,” he says. “It’s looking like we’ll soon need some type of ice support there, as well.”