

RAWLINGS: MVP OF QUALITY SPORTING GOODS

RAWLINGS INCREASES PRODUCTIVITY AND STREAMLINES ITS LIFT TRUCK MAINTENANCE NEEDS

Since its inception in 1889, Rawlings Sporting Goods Company has grown to be one of the largest manufacturers of sporting goods merchandise in the United States. The company supplies products to professional, collegiate, interscholastic and amateur organizations, making its name synonymous with sporting goods, particularly in the baseball industry. With its tremendous success, the company is rapidly expanding, combining facilities and increasing its production of sporting goods.

This steady increase in growth and production, as well as the consolidation of its various facilities, caused Rawlings to re-evaluate its lift truck fleet and maintenance program. In search of consultation and service, Rawlings turned to Heubel Material Handling, a Raymond Sales and Service Center it had worked with for more than 10 years. Rawlings quickly discovered that Heubel's service plan and lift trucks by The Raymond Corporation helped the company increase productivity, decrease downtime and streamline its maintenance, all while remaining environmentally friendly and dependable.

"I would personally recommend Heubel's equipment and its maintenance plan," says Terrie Semsch, safety manager at Rawlings. "We deal with a seasonal environment in which we experience surges in workload, so we need our equipment to operate consistently. Heubel's integrated service, quality equipment and comprehensive maintenance ensure we are up and running in top performance, and this is something we can now depend on."

» Efficiency through Standardization

Rawlings manufactures a range of sporting equipment and apparel for baseball, basketball, hockey, softball and football. To keep up with this production of sporting goods, the company often runs multiple shifts, especially during the holiday season. For Rawlings, it is the need to maintain consistent production of these items that makes any setbacks due to maintenance issues or equipment failures a possible threat to productivity.

With the goal of streamlining its lift truck maintenance needs and reducing any downtime related to the lift truck fleet, Rawlings incorporated a comprehensive maintenance plan. The plan provided the company with a certified Raymond technician from Heubel who handles any equipment issues, performs scheduled maintenance and makes any necessary improvements on various lift trucks throughout the facility. This gives Rawlings the unique advantage of planning maintenance sessions, allowing lift trucks to stay in operation when needed. By running its fleet so consistently, the company significantly reduced downtime and increased overall productivity.



“ We have seen improvement in productivity and employee morale...it doesn't wear them out, especially during the busy season when we run back-to-back shifts ”

Terrie Semsch
Safety Manager at Rawlings



Another added benefit to the maintenance plan adopted by Rawlings is the structured payment option. With this plan, Rawlings pays a fixed monthly payment, regardless of the amount of service the maintenance technician offers that month. This has saved Rawlings a substantial amount of money, allowed the company to better manage its capital and reallocate dollars that otherwise would have been set aside for unexpected maintenance.

Recognizing that its newly implemented maintenance plan would benefit from standardizing its lift truck fleet brand, Rawlings quickly incorporated a number of *Raymond*® lift trucks with the help of Heubel. Upon an in-depth assessment, Heubel determined that Rawlings could benefit from narrow aisle lift trucks, as well as several other lift trucks, to make its fleet far more efficient. After reviewing the recommendation from Heubel and testing the equipment, Rawlings transitioned its fleet to be comprised of 80 percent *Raymond* trucks. This included electric pallet trucks, counterbalanced lift trucks, orderpickers and *Swing-Reach*® trucks.

“Since we started using the *Raymond* trucks, we have seen improvement in productivity and employee morale,” Semsch says. “They actually like the *Raymond* equipment because it doesn’t wear them out, especially during the busy season when we run back-to-back shifts. It was extremely important to us that our operators felt comfortable with the equipment.”

»» The Proper Training and Features

Equipment and maintenance were not the only factors considered when Heubel installed Rawlings’ trucks. As with all of its customers, Heubel assisted Rawlings in properly configuring its trucks for its specific facility needs and in training and certifying its operators for proper use of its *Raymond* lift trucks. Also, custom features, such as brightly colored belts and additional mirrors, were installed on Rawlings’ new fleet.

»» A Dependable Future

Since the implementation of its *Raymond* fleet and comprehensive maintenance plan, Rawlings has experienced a number of benefits. The company has noted increased productivity levels, decreased downtime, a more streamlined maintenance process and a reduction in its carbon footprint. In addition, Raymond’s approach to providing reliable lift trucks with a comprehensive maintenance plan has allowed Rawlings to rightsize its fleet by reducing redundant trucks. This has left Rawlings feeling secure in its ability to supply quality sporting equipment with the help of its partner, Heubel.

“There are a number of variables that contributed to our seven-year productivity increase,” says Mike Campbell, senior director of distribution at Rawlings. “Two of those variables are the equipment and service that we received through Heubel Material Handling and Raymond. We feel comfortable with their services. They truly offer reliability, dependability and quality.”



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Mike Campbell

Senior director of distribution at Rawlings



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