

# Case Study

## Taylor Tools' Bronco Provides Floor Removal Solution

By Jeff Golden

Photos courtesy of Taylor Tools

When flooring contractor, Jim Leblanc, GFM of Central Florida, Palm Harbor, decided to add floor removal to his company's list of services, little did he know that his first floor stripping job would be such a head-scratcher.

The 30,000+ sq. ft. combination of old glue-down carpet and vinyl tile had to come off at a health club in Sarasota, FL. So far, so good. That's what professional ride-on strippers are made for.

The stumbling block: the top layer of flooring had been installed on an original layer of asbestos tile. Neither Leblanc nor the customer wanted to endure the time and expense of an asbestos abatement removal. So, how could the overlying carpet and tile be carefully removed without disturbing the problematic layer of asbestos?

Jim Leblanc has been a flooring contractor for over nine years and, in that time, has contracted numerous removal jobs that involved virtually every brand of floor stripper made.

"There are some big, powerful machines out there that can strip a floor fast," he says, "but I was concerned that I wouldn't be able to keep them from digging all the way down to the subfloor."

After an inspection showed that the underlying asbestos was well-bonded to the floor and local and state authorities had given the go-ahead to the proposed procedure, Leblanc contacted Keith Papulski, general manager of Taylor Tools, and outlined the situation. Papulski suggested that the Bronco stripper might offer a solution.

Successful floor stripping requires that the blade remain flat to the floor at all times. Most heavy-duty strippers rely on their front-end weight to press the swivel-mounted blade to the floor. This heavy downward force was what concerned Leblanc, who was looking for a more precise cutting action.

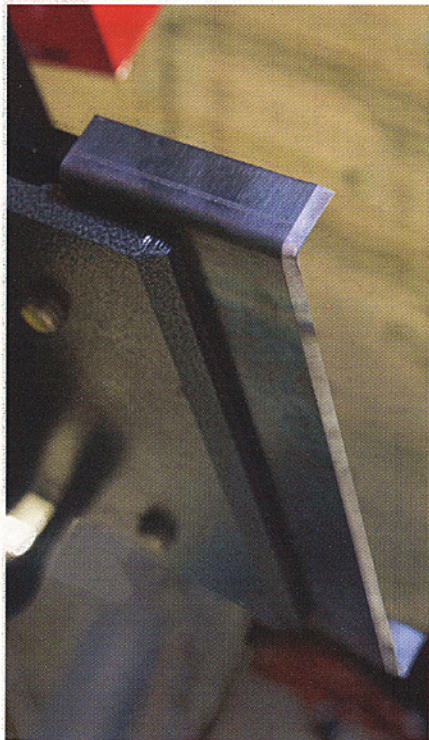
The Bronco, in contrast, features an articulating suspension which keeps the blade flat to the floor while allowing the drive wheel segment to follow the floor's contours. This feature allows the Bronco to remain relatively compact without relying on sheer size and weight to remove difficult materials while maintaining removal rates at least as high as the larger machines.

"I had seen the Bronco operate in a variety of removal

scenarios," said Le Blanc, "and its versatility was what impressed me the most."

The fact that Taylor Tools provides personal on-site training with the sale of any Bronco is what sealed the deal, according to Leblanc. "Heck, if I can get the general manager to come to the jobsite and get me up-and-running, that takes a lot of pressure off of me no matter how the job turns out," he grinned.

But that was only the beginning of the services eventually rendered by Taylor Tools. Once Papulski arrived at the jobsite, he determined that the ideal blade for removing the glue-down carpet would be a self-dicing blade with the bevel on the underside of the blade. The required blade was not available before this job, but was then created in Taylor Tools' in-house, blade manufacturing facility. In 24 hours, a handful of the custom blades were produced and air-shipped to the jobsite.



Once Leblanc had been given a short course in how to operate the Bronco, the remainder of the job went like clockwork. "We adjusted

*Taylor Tools' in-house blade manufacturing facility created the custom blades for removing the glue-down carpet.*

the blade at a very low angle," he said. "This allowed us to delicately skive the layer of carpet and tile from the asbestos." A remaining layer of adhesive was then removed in a re-scrape leaving only a thin film of glue. Prior consultation with the manufacturer of the new flooring material had established compatibility with this film. The floor was then moisture-tested, and now they were ready to install the new flooring.

"I don't even want to think about the time, expense and aggravation I would have had to endure if we hadn't solved the asbestos problem with the Bronco," Leblanc says. "It just goes to show you that there is often more than one solution to a problem."

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