Ransomes America realigns company

Management shake-up and new responsibilities at turf products company

By Peter Blais

Ransomes America Corp. has changed its management structure, top executive personnel and headquarters as part of the company’s realignment plan and in response, some say, to lower-than-expected sales resulting from the worldwide recession.

Ransomes America, a subsidiary of Ransomes Group plc, headquartered in Great Britain, has consolidated its marketing, sales and finance functions of its various North American holdings under Ransomes America Corp.

Those holdings include Cashman Inc., Ransomes Inc., Steiner Turf Equipment Inc. and Brouwer Turf Equipment. All will take place under the umbrella of Ransomes America Corp., a change from the decentralized management style of the past few years.

What does that mean for the golf business for construction and maintenance equipment.

Aal was at International Harvester from 1983-85. During that time, the troubled farm machinery manufacturer sold off its assets to Tenneco and reorganized as Navistar, a smaller engine and truck company, Aal said.

Steiger was a victim of the depressed farm economy. The four-wheel-drive tractor manufacturer saw its sales plummet from 15,000 units in 1981 to less than 3,000 units in 1986, the year the company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, Aal said.

International and Steiger’s financial woes pre-dated Aal’s arrival in both cases.

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Ransomes names new managers

Theodore Host has been named president and chief operating officer for O.M. Scott’s Consumer Products and Professional Business groups, Operations, Information Systems, Research and Development, and Human Resources. Host, who spent 22 years with American Home Products, was division president for Coca-Cola’s Boyle-Midway Household Products Inc. division the last five years.

Scott’s sales have grown from $816 million to $2,887 million since 1986, when the company was purchased from ITT Corp. through a management buyout implemented by a company formed by Clayton & Dubilier Inc. and other investors, including local management.

TOTAL CONTAINMENT TAPS FREY

EXTON, Pa. — Total Containment Inc., a manufacturer of secondary containment systems for underground storage tanks and piping, has named Charles A. Frey as chief executive officer of Highland Tank and Manufacturing Co.’s Manheim, Pa., affiliate. Highland Tank is a licensed applicator and distributor of Total Containment’s products on the East Coast.

Frey has been prominent on technical committees of the Steel Tank Institute, National Association of Corrosion Engineers, National Fire Protection Association and many state associations.

According to TCI President John D. Morrison, Frey has “contributed significant guidance to development of the company’s products. His experience, particularly with effective underground storage tanks and piping systems, will contribute to expansion of the company’s Tank Jacket applicator network and continued upgrading of existing products and development of new secondarily contained product lines.”

JACOBSEN OPENS NEW DISTRIBUTORSHIP

Jacobsen Texton has announced the opening of Southeast Turf and Commercial, the company’s newest distributorship, in Conyers, Ga. Located at 2570 Covington Highway, S.W., Southeast Turf will serve former customers of Lawn and Turf, Inc., with a complete line of Jacobsen products.

“The state of Georgia has always been a good area for Jacobsen products through Lawn and Turf. It’s an important market for the company,” said Ned Brindle, Jacobsen vice president of sales. “We felt the best way to serve the people of the area was with a combination of the best local people available, and strong backing from the company.”

Pennington reorganizes . . . and decides to construct new plant

Pennington Enterprises Inc., the parent company of the various Pennington Seed subsidiaries, has made several organizational changes.

Legal counsel Brooks Pennington III will also serve as vice president of finance, while Dan Pennington will be vice president for all Pennington Seed manufacturing divisions, Richard Best vice president for distribution operations, Keith Kelly vice president for product development specializing in lawn and garden chemicals and fertilizers, and Steve Triplett director of national accounts.

“We realized that the Pennington Seed operations had grown so quickly that we needed to beef up our home office management team in order to help our subsidiaries direct their growth in a positive manner,” the company announced.

Brooks Pennington III is chairman of the board of the Pennington Seed Company and is a director of Allied Bankshares of Georgia.

Pennington is widely recognized for his expertise in the development and operation of high-tech manufacturing facilities. Best’s new position will provide constant supervision for the various Pennington Seed distribution centers. Best will also serve as senior buyer for the distribution centers.

Pennington has experience in the Pennington Seed organization in processing, manufacturing, sales, and as general manager of the Alabama and Georgia distribution centers.

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Pennington Enterprises, Inc., will build a new Pennington forest products and soil amendments plant.

The new facility will be located on Pennington Road nine miles south of Madison, Ga., near Shady Dale, will be a state of the art facility for basic ingredient manufacturing, processing, and packing of pine bark nuggets and mulch, Cypress mulch, composted cow manure, peat moss, potting soils, play sand, and decorative rocks, Pennington said.

It will manufacture two brands of product.

Irrigation Association names new director

Charles S. “Pepper” Putnam, a 30-year veteran of the irrigation industry and past president of The Irrigation Association, has accepted the position as IA executive director. Robert C. Emmerich, president of the association, said Putnam was selected after an extensive search comprising many fine candidates.

“Putnam’s extensive industry experience, combined with his long standing involvement in association activities, give him unique insight into the specific needs of our members,” Emmerich said. Putnam will be responsible for directing the operations and staff of the association’s Arlington, Va., headquarters as well as overseeing the membership and Technical Services departments. He will be managed by R.C. “Bobb” Sears of Sacramento, Calif.

The bulk of Putnam’s industry experience was focused at Tesla Industries in Dallas, manufacturer of Weathermatic Irrigation Products and Tesla Fittings. From 1987 to 1988 Putnam worked his way up within this organization, starting as California regional manager, and eventually moving through one distribution channel.”

— New Ransomes America President Irvin E. Aal

We’d like to see all our turf products eventually moving through one distribution channel.”

— New Ransomes America President Irvin E. Aal

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