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 reorganization plan and in response, some say, to lower-than-expected sales resulting from the worldwide recession.

Ransomes America, a subsidiary of Ransomes Group plc of Great Britain, includes Ransomes Inc., based in Fargo, N.D., as well as five other companies that manufacture John Deere, Jacobsen and Steiner equipment. All will take on different management style of the past few years.

What does that mean for the golf business?

"We'd like to see all our turf products eventually moving through one distribution channel," said Irv Aal, recently appointed president of Ransomes America. "The time-table is a little different. It will be an evolution, not a revolution."

Ransomes America — whose four business units include professional lawn care, turf, industrial and commercial, and consumer — will be headquartered in Minneapolis, the company's new headquarters. He will also serve as a member of the Ransomes plc board of directors.

Ransomes America Corp., a subsidiary of the Ransomes Group plc of Great Britain, includes Ransomes Inc., based in Fargo, N.D., Cashman Inc. with manufacturing facilities at Lincoln, Neb., and Edgewater, Fla.; Brouwer Turf Equipment, Keswick, Ontario, Canada; and Steiner Turf Equipment Inc., Overville, Ohio. Before joining Ransomes, Aal was a founder of Phoenix International Corp., a special electronic company based in Fargo, N.D. Previously, he was involved in the farm equipment industry, executing positions with Sperry New Holland, International Harvester and Steiger Tractor Inc. "Ransomes plc has demonstrated its vision and commitment to serving the worldwide markets for professional turf care equipment," Aal said.

"With the acquisition of Steiner Turf in 1988 and Cashman in 1986, Ransomes has moved into position to be a major player in the turf market," Aal added.

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Pennington Enterprises reorganizes...

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 Tiddett 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..."

... and decides to construct new plant

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

The new facility, 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 packaging 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, gave 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 is a graduate of R.C. "Bob" Sears of Sacramento, Calif.

The bulk of Putnam's industry experience was focused at Tesco Industries in Dallas, manufacturer of Weathermatic Irrigation Products and Tesco Fittings. From 1967 to 1986 Putnam worked his way up within this organization, starting as California regional...
Ransomes names new managers

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Doug McCormick

sible for sales and marketing for all Ransomes companies with a network of 300 dealers in North America. He will also have support responsibilities for international marketing efforts of Ransomes Sims & Jeffries in Great Britain.

McCormick joined Cushman in 1989 as market manager for industrial and commercial vehicles. He was promoted to director of sales and distribution for Cushman & Co. products in 1990. Previously, he was sales executive for RPI Inc. and Air Power Equipment Corp. in Minneapolis.

Nachtsheim has been named vice president of finance. He had been vice president of finance and treasurer at Cushman.

He formerly was chief financial officer for the Reach All Co., a manufacturer of aerial platforms in Duluth, Minn., and executive vice president of operations for FWD Corp.


GCMAA releases

The Center for Golf Course Management, the marketing research division for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, has released its second and third 1991 marketing research reports.


The golf car and utility vehicle report presents statistics on the market share, typical lifespan and product ratings of golf cars, modified golf cars for maintenance tasks, and light- and heavy-duty turf utility vehicles, cross-tabulated by manufacturers. Capital expense data is presented for each product category.

The Mower and Maintenance Equipment Report provides information and statistical summaries broken down by manufacturer. The report features data on product inventories, market share and superintendents' ratings of specific products' performance, reliability, service, and support.

CGCM will release one more marketing research report later this year — the Buying Habits of Golf Course Superintendents Report. It will feature summarized information from the golf car and mower reports and the previously released Pesticide and Fertilizer Usage Report, and a section devoted to maintenance trends in the golf course management industry.

The reports cost $1,500 each.

Putnam has been active and an officer in a number of industry and commerce groups, including the Sprinkler Irrigation Association, the Texas Turf Irrigation Association, and the California Green Industry Council.

He will reside in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area.

Pennington

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Triplett's national accounts department has been increased from six to 12 employees.

Plywood Allen, long-time Pennington Seed, Inc. of Madison employee, has transferred to the national accounts department. He will be assigned certain accounts and will assist in coordinating shows and public relations.

Meanwhile, Grady Gill will remain as vice president for accounting and computer operations and Ronnie Stapp will continue as vice president for all seed operations.

Stapp is responsible for all aspects of the corporate bookkeeping network.


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