**Suppliers reel in business at Las Vegas conference**

*By Peter Blaus*

They just do presentations, not sales at this show. We spread the word, create relationships and hopefully set up appointments down the road," said Helmut Adam, executive director for manufacturing, finance and management information services with Ransomes America Corp. Ransomes employees began talking about the GCSAA last July, Adam said. District sales managers met in January to critique Ransomes' and competitors' models. Salesmen were briefed, handouts prepared and speeches practiced. Sixty employees from Ransomes and its affiliated companies (Cushman, Brouwer, Steiner and Supreme Mowing) attended the show. Adam estimated Ransomes spent $500,000 on the event. "I think that indicates our commitment to the national show," Adam said. A company's commitment to the national show can vary with the show's location. For some, a successful catch meant a basketful of orders. "Represent the products and write orders, that's what we're here to do," said Don Tutrin, edger blade developer Thomas Wait, who distributes his products through Precision Small Engine Co. "We couldn't survive unless we did this show." For others, it could take awhile to determine whether they had the right bait.

**PGA Merchandise Show draws record crowd**

*By Kit Bradshaw*

"But this year I talked to quite a few who are under construction," he said. "A lot of them are building driving ranges on property that was earmarked for golf course or commercial development that is now going to be used as a range until it becomes profitable to develop the land." Reiter also noted a greater interest in automated driving range equipment. "There are a lot more ranges using automated ball dispensers and automatic ball washers than before," he said. "We've been involved in quite a few of these projects in the last year, and we anticipate we will be active in this area this year as well." Terry Sepke, vice president of marketing and sales for Witten Golf Supply Co., said his company's consulting services and range equipment sales are on the rise. "We see a lot of people who are building teaching centers and looking to make them profitable," Sepke said. "In addition, there are ranges out there upgrading their facilities to create a family-type teaching center so they can compete with the new type of ranges that are now becoming popular." "As a result, it was a tremendous show for us. People were buying the necessary equipment for driving ranges, including lighting, a new product for us this year. I think they appreciated the one-stop shopping we offer," Nancy Akel, vice president of marketing and director of advertising for Toro Co., said the show provided the company exposure to the golf market. "Our range equipment is going well, and from what we heard, a lot of courses, particularly in Florida and the Myrtle Beach (S.C.) area, are still planning to complete their projects," he said. Some golf professionals, particularly those in year-round areas, said ordering was completed before the show. They attended to gather new ideas to increase profits by offering the unusual, gifts that would trigger impulse buying in their shops. Akel said: "Most customers came to our
GCSAA Show is active shopping place again this year

instance, Southern Turf Nurseries spent about $3,000 for booth space and brought five employees to the Las Vegas show, said Director of Golf Course Sales Tommy Nalls. At last year's show in Orlando, Fla., the southeastern U.S.-based firm spent closer to $15,000 for four booths, a hospitality suite, translation service for foreign customers and a dozen employees who attended the show. Nalls expects the higher numbers again when the show moves back south to New Orleans next February.

"We try to attend a show in every state where we do business," said Nalls, whose company concentrates its efforts in about a dozen states.

While it is the biggest, the GCSAA show is by no means the only U.S. golf or turf exhibit. Regional and state shows abound.

National companies usually pick up the tab and staff the booths at the national show. Distributors foot most of the bill at regional and state affairs, although corporate headquarters often contribute some money and expertise. Ohio distributors were mainly responsible for representing Toro at December's Ohio Turfgrass Foundation show in Columbus, said George Reese, director of irrigation sales with North Coast Distributing, Inc. of Cleveland.

"The introduction of new products and building customer awareness of the Toro name, those are the benefits," Reese said.

Similar responses came from corporate and distributor representatives explaining their participation in golf and turf shows. But are there too many shows? "We may be reaching the point where we're over-covered," said D. Bruce McMillan, director of Kubota Tractor Corp.'s Engine Division Many Kubota distributors participate in local shows.

"You compare the dollars spent to close down your operation for a week against the dollars generated and sometimes you wonder," he said. "It seems to take about three years for really new products to come out. It would probably put some show people out of business, but many shows would have a higher impact if you held them every three years."

"Adhed Ransomes" Adam: Wait's company participates in five or six shows a year. "But if the distributor feels it's justified, we'll support him."

Wait's company participates in eight shows a year, and plans to drop one in North Carolina from its schedule next year.

"It's just not worth it for us," Wait said.

Staples promoted by Cushman

LINCOLN, Neb. — Clarke Staples has been promoted to director of sales and distribution for turf and lawn care products at Cushman.

He will be responsible for sales of Cushman and Ryan products throughout North America and Japan, as well as supplying support to Ransomes Sims & Jeffreys of Great Britain.

Staples will have overall direction of the North American network of more than 105 dealers who sell Cushman Turf, Cushman Front Line and Ryan lawn care equipment.

The last 17 of Staples' 29 years in the turf and lawn care equipment industry were spent with Cushman. He became Cushman and Ryan turf care products market manager in 1988.

Lesco appoints Augustin to post

CLEVELAND, Ohio — Dr. Bruce J. Augustin has been named director of technical support. Prior to joining Lesco, he was associate professor at the University of Florida and extension turfgrass and water specialist.

A frequent speaker at turf conferences and other green industry meetings, Augustin has written numerous articles on turfgrass management.

Ransomes makes KinKade director

LINCOLN, Neb. — Gregg W. KinKade was senior account executive with Miller Freund Ludemann advertising here.

"We chose Triathalawn Tall Fescue for Deer Creek based on National performance trials for our region... and some sound advice from Williams Lawn Seed."

Triathalawn Turf-Type Tall Fescue Blend

Larry Hanks, VP Golf Operations; North Star Development Co., Inc. at Deer Creek, Overland Park, KS.

"When planning our World-class, Robert Trent Jones II designed golf course in the Kansas City area, we had to seriously consider our hot, dry summers. We simply could not leave the all-important turf areas to chance. Penncross bent was selected for the greens, zoysia for the tees and fairways, and tons and tons of Triathalawn blend was seeded into the roughs. Our trees, greens and fairways will receive adequate water, but we're counting on Triathalawn's deep-rooting to look good in the unirrigated areas -- especially around our sately trees.

Deer Creek is a privately owned course open for fee play. After observing how tall fescues handled the wear, shade and 1988 drought at neighboring private and public courses, we agreed that the new turf types were up to the task. When it came to selecting a brand name, we picked Triathalawn blend, to make the very best of a real good thing."

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