Former Cushman executive forms international consulting firm

By Mark Leslie

LINCOLN, Neb. — Clarke H. Staples, former international marketing services director for turf products for Cushman-Ryan/Ransomes America Corp., has opened a consulting firm, GreenTalk International.

Staples, who has worked extensively in the United Kingdom, Europe and Asia, will work deal with manufacturers and superintendents. He said on the one hand he is helping sales staffs in their training, understanding markets, equipment and equipment purchasing.

On the other hand, he is available to superintendents for groups in appraising courses for the best type of equipment, how to buy and what to buy.

"I think I can give a very knowledgeable, objective point of view," Staples said. He is drawing on 30 years experience, consulting major manufacturers of golf course maintenance equipment on reaching foreign markets. Among his major clients have been Jacobsen, Toro, Buycyflk, National Mower, Turkey and LESCO.

"The main thing is, what would be the best distribution for their needs. If we're talking about Thailand, for instance, I know the distributors pretty well and have a rat- in my own mind as to how they would help them," he said.

"I have an empathy for, and believe in, the superintendent in mind. In addition to the standard Swiss accessories, the SwissBuck features tools designed to allow users to conduct general maintenance, how to buy and what to buy.

SULLIVAN TO REP FOR SYNCROFLO

NORCROSS, Ga. — Sullivan Electric and Pump, Inc. of Lake Worth, Fla., has become exclusive irrigation representatives for SyncroFlo, Inc. The unique distribution and service agreement allows SyncroFlo to support all golf professionals in this important area. Sullivan Electric will also join the SyncroFlo group of support companies that can be called upon to service equipment throughout the Caribbean and South America.

GIAUCUE JOINS SUNBELT SEEDS

NORCROSS, Ga. — Sunbelt Seeds, Inc. has announced that Pete Giaucue has joined its staff as an agronomist and sales representative. Giaucue has an agronomy degree from Purdue University and many years of experience in the different areas of turfgrass management. His background includes positions in the research, development, and technical support departments with Cheniow as well as experience in golf course management.

LEAHY NAMED TO PICKSEED POST

Pickseed Canada Inc. has announced the appointment of Peter Leahy as technical turf sales representative for Eastern Ontario. This area was formerly served by Richard Dwyer, who transferred to the company's Winnipeg branch. Leahy comes to Pickseed well versed in soil chemistry and with past experience in seed, fertilizer and chemical sales. He also teaches night courses in soil chemistry, possessing the essential knowledge to deal with the technical aspects of turf production.

LANDS NAMES VAN NOY SALES VP

Lawrence W. Van Noy has been the appointed vice president of Marketing and International Sales for NDS-National Diversified Sales, Inc. Van Noy will be responsible for international sales and product marketing. Van Noy has an extensive background in residential and commercial construction and design, working closely with architects and engineers. Headquartered in Camarillo, Calif., NDS, Inc. is the innovator of injection molded plastic exterior surface drainage products that include catch basins, graters, channel drains, sewer and drain fittings, and irrigation control valve boxes.

More than 200 companies exhibited at Golf Asia '93, held in late March in Singapore. Jon Hixman (below), the United States Ambassador to this island nation, officially opened the four-day exhibition.
Trade policy

Continued from page 1

explained. U.S. seed producers have no problem getting product into China, a burgeoning market.

"The problem is they sometimes steal a variety and then sell it back a few years later," Hays said.

New Zealand and Australian seed producers receive government subsidies, giving them a competitive advantage over their unsubsidized American counterparts, he added.

The golf car industry's marketing problems have also happened elsewhere in Asia, according to Club Car Chairman and CEO George Inman. Inman is also president of the National Golf Car Manufacturers Association.

Japanese tariffs on imported golf cars are very low compared to other countries, where the added levies often add 40 and 100 percent to the final price, according to Inman. Few of those countries manufacture golf cars.

"They're usually trying to protect the jobs of their caddy force," Inman said. "It's viewed as luxury tax. We don't like it. But at least it's the same for everyone."

American golf car makers have never had problems getting into the Japanese market. "If anything, it's more open now than it's ever been," the Club Car executive said. Inman added he couldn't speak for all members of the manufacturers' group regarding higher U.S. tariffs on Japanese products to get the Asian country to further open its doors.

"Personally, I don't think they are a good idea," Inman said. "Tariffs may have a place on some occasions. But in general, all they do is encourage a lack of investment and the entrepreneurship needed to be competitive in a global economy.

"Anyone who doesn't think we are in a global economy today just isn't in the ballgame. Tariffs inevitably lead to protectionism. And that's just counterproductive."

American turf equipment manufacturers don't meet the barriers in Japan that producers of generic products like steel or food do, said international marketing consultant Clark Staples, former international marketing services director of turf products with Cushman-Ryan/Ransomes America Corp.

"U.S. golf equipment is the equipment of choice there. The Japanese view golf as an American game and buy American equipment," Staples said. Japanese manufacturers have copied most American turf equipment, Staples said. Japan-based companies like Baroness and Japan-based golf car manufacturers in the United States through American distributors like Brouwer and Bunton, he noted.

Japanese manufacturers have no advantage over companies like Ransomes, Jacobsen or Toro when it comes to selling in Japan, he added.

"What it all comes down to in Japan is distribution," Staples said. "If you have good distributors you will do well."

While on a professional level Staples sees no need for higher tariffs on golf products, America's $1 trillion weekly trade deficit with Japan bothers him on a personal level.

"I favor some equalization to make [overall] trade fairer," he said. "The Japanese should be buying some of our beef, steel or something to lower the trade deficit. We need more free trade in those areas."

Chemical manufacturers report some problems in the Japanese registration process.

"We haven't done any formal studies, but we have received some anecdotal information," said John McCarthy, vice president of science and registry affairs with the National Agricultural Chemicals Association, an industry trade group.

"Foreign companies must get their products approved for use in Japan. Japanese companies seem to have an easier time getting approval than U.S. manufacturers."

"A number of years ago the Japanese required that all testing be done there. With the help of the State Department, we got that waived."

Paul Grosh, sales manager of Lebanon Turf Products professional group, said his company unsuccessfully tried to register a fertilizer in Japan 18 months ago.

"We didn't have a whole lot of luck. We would be interested in marketing products there, but our first experience wasn't very positive," he said.

Neogen acquisition

Continued from page 43

present and semiquantitate the pathogen load.

The Reveal diagnostic kits, used predominantly by golf course superintendents, are used to detect fungal diseases of turf including pythium blight, brown patch and dollar spot. The kit is designed to complement Neogen's EnviroCaster, which superintendents can use to monitor environmental conditions and predict the onset of plant diseases and insect emergence.

For more information on the acquisition and other Neogen products, call 1-800-254-5333.