Ciba, Jake and Rain Bird back Environmental Steward II

MINNEAPOLIS — Ciba Turf & Ornamental Products, Rain Bird and new sponsor Jacobsen Division of Textron announce the second annual Environmental Steward Award competition.

Submissions from the United States and Canada will be reviewed for overall excellence in golf course management, as well as for innovative ideas such as wildlife habitat enhancement. Entries are reviewed by an independent panel of judges. Also, merit winners may be named based on the quality of entries, competition within regions and other criteria.

Awards will be given in three categories: Public, private and resort. One national winner will be selected in each category. In addition, there may be as many as 24 regional winners: one public, private and resort winner in all seven U.S. Golf Association Green Section regions, plus a Canadian region.

Donations will be made jointly by Ciba, Rain Bird and Jacobsen to GCSSA S&R in the names of all national and regional winners: $500 each for national winners and $50 each for regional winners. In addition, all three sponsoring companies will donate $5,000 to GCSSA S&R.

For more information write to the Environmental Steward Award, c/o Mona Meyer McGrath & Gavin, 8400 Normandale Lake Blvd., #500, Minneapolis, MN 55437; or call 612-832-5000; or fax 612-831-7751.

Bio Grounds Keeper and Sustane merge

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. — Bio Grounds Keeper Inc. of Bloomington and Sustane Corp. of Cannon Falls have signed a definitive letter of intent to merge. Implementation of the merger is anticipated within 90 days, pending completion of financial details.

The new company, to be known as Sustane Corp., will be one of the country’s largest producers of organic and biological products for the lawn, garden, turf and agricultural industries. It will be headquartered here.

David Henderson, managing general partner of Founding Partners II, Las Vegas venture capital fund participating in the financing arrangements, will become president and chief executive officer of the merged company. Craig Holdren, president and founder of Sustane in 1987, will serve as executive vice president and chief operating officer. Thomas Dailey, president of Sustane and co-founder of Bio Grounds Keeper, will serve as executive vice president of sales, marketing and administration.


Dakota institutes leasing program

GRAND FORKS, N.D. — Dakota Peat & Blenders President Michael Pierce has discovered a new formula to 1) make his Dakota Blender 2200 available to more people, cheaply, and 2) sell more peat at the same time.

Golf course superintendents, contractors and sand companies who can’t afford to buy the $50,000 Model 2200 can now rent one.

“This is no profit in the rent,” Pierce said. “We’re providing it as a service if they buy our peat.”

The sale of the peat makes the deal worthwhile for Pierce. The more cost per mixed ton equals a savings for the renter.

“A lot of contractors can’t afford them for one or two jobs a year. So we deliver the blender, show them how to operate it, and then pick them up when they’re done,” Pierce said.

Jim Hengel, part-owner/superintendent of the Links at Hiawatha Landing which is under construction in Binghamton, N.Y.

Deere earns acclaim for outstanding customer service

RALEIGH, N.C. — CIO, the magazine for information executives, has named the John Deere Lawn & Grounds Care Division to its 1993 CIO-100 list for outstanding customer service. The company was selected for this honor by a panel of consultants, academicians, editors and business and association officials who specialize or have expertise in the field of customer service.

To provide a vision of ever-changing business trends, the focus of the CIO-100 changes annually. This year’s survey, called the “Customer Service 100,” explores the link between information technology and an organization’s ability to provide first-rate service.

“Our dealer Technical Assistance Center uses an imaging system called ‘KEYFLEX,’ explained Jerry Schelfaut, manager of the Information Services Department at Deere’s Lawn & Grounds Care Division.

“We have all of four technical manuals, parts catalogs and other related service publications stored on hard disk, so they can be retrieved on-line by our technicians as they’re working with dealers to resolve technical problems.”

According to CIO Editor-in-Chief Marcia Blumenthal, “Customer service is the most pressing issue facing companies today. The CIO-100 presents innovative solutions on how organizations are keeping their customers happy and how information technology assists in this endeavor.”