BRIEFS

GALLO TO REP OLSON IN NORTHEAST

SANTEE, Calif. — Olson Irrigation has appointed Phil Gallo to represent its landscape and agricultural products in New England, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware and parts of Pennsylvania and New York. The Olson line had previously not been available in the Northeast. Gallo can be reached at 203-350-5111.

BROOKS TO HANDLE SCOTTS FIELD SALES

MARYSVILLE, Ohio — Ken Brooks has been promoted to field sales manager for the Consumer Business Group (CBG) of The Scotts Company. Brooks, who has been with Scotts for 23 years in a variety of positions, had been field manager for the Southeast region. In his new role, he will assume responsibility for the CBG field sales organization and sales administration functions. He will move from Atlanta to central Ohio.

MILLWARD JOINS HUNTER IN EAST

CARY, N.C. — Hunter Industries has appointed Bill Millward the new district manager for the East Coast manufacturing facility here and can be reached at 919-467-7100.

STONEMAN TO PROMOTE ENVIRONMENT

CHRISTIANA, Utah. — Jordy Smith has been named regional sales manager for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). However, there will be a general implication to any users of pesticides. The EPA’s administration’s proposed bill is very significantly asking for integrated pest management (IPM) techniques which would apply to...golf course superintendents.

NEW PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

Mechanized creature emerges from depths ... with golf balls!

WHITE GOLD. That’s what Bill Serafin calls the booty he raises from golf course water holes. But unlike sunken-treasure divers who may spend a lifetime searching for a single payoff, Serafin and his crew harvest some 20,000 lost golf balls a week from water hazards for resale to courses and driving ranges. Also unlike the sunken treasure chest that dreams are made of, Serafin knows he can go back to a pond or lake and retrieve new white gold in a few weeks — an endless, renewable supply of sought-after commodity.

A former machinist at a Michigan auto plant, the 52-year-old Serafin fished golf balls out of ponds for many years using Scuba tanks or hip boots. Frustrated with the hazards and limited results, Serafin used his machinist skills to copy the design of a 500-pound slotted roller-retriever that is dragged with two winches across the bottoms of ponds. Using two golf cars with a motorized pulley system, the roller enters the water empty on one side of the pond, and emerges from the muck and mud on the others side with up to 900 balls caught in its slotted fins. The cars move the roller up and down the pond until it has covered each area twice. When the roller is full, crewmen like pickers are used to pull the trapped balls from between the roller’s fins.

“We did a golf course in the fall of 1992 that Scuba divers had been retriving balls from for about 10 years,” Serafin said. “The course management said divers just pulled 4,000 balls out a couple of weeks earlier. We went in and with our roller collected 18,000.”

Serafin sells back to the course balls suitable for resale in pro shops — continued on page 49

GCSAA renews commitment to Asian trade show

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Citing its mission to further the profession and its continued belief the value of cost domestic members a dime, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) has decided to continue its relationship with Asia Golf Asia. The superintendents association will again sell booth space to "indust-try" exhibitors, while Singapore-based Connex Private Ltd. will cater to the "commercial" or playing-side exhibitors. GCSAA will also run the education conference that takes place during the trade show, while Connex will host the more development-ori ented Asia-Pacific Golf Conference prior to the show. International Management Group (IMG), the sports marketing giant, is the third mem ber of Golf Asia’s triumvirate. A valuable portion of the GCSAA domestic membership has voiced its displeasure with the association’s overseas ventures. But at their spring

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PVP Act ready by mid-summer?

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Lawmakers and the seed industry expect a new Plant Variety Protection Act to be ready for final approval this summer.

"We're quite hopeful that the full House will move within next month to six weeks [mid to late-July], and then we'll work out differences between the House and Senate bills and have a final bill for approval perhaps by early August," Tim Galvin said from Sen. Bob Kerry's office.

Kerry, D-Neb., last fall asked the U.S. Department of Agriculture Plant Variety Protection office to draft new PVP legislation to bring the United States into conformity with a new international Union for the Protection of Varieties (UPOV) treaty. Once a new law passes, the Senate can take the final step of ratifying the treaty — a 1991 rewrite of the original 1978 agreement.

Twenty-one countries negotiated UPOV. It appears the new U.S. law will pass with turfgrass exempted from Variety Not Stated (VNS) regulations. That would mean grass seed could be sold in bags without stating variety, except within the 10 states that prohibit VNS labeling.

The full Senate approved the PVP legislation on May 25. The House was expected

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Seed trade association backs bill now in Congress

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The American Seed Trade Association "feels good" about the Plant Variety Protection legislation in Congress, according to President of Governmental Affairs Leslie Cahill.

"It's been a long haul and a difficult process," Cahill said. "But, we've had an opportunity to work very closely with farm and commodity groups, and I think we've demonstrated a very strong voice. Plant breeders will certainly benefit from this, and they will enjoy the reciprocity that comes with having good, strong protection and rewarding incentive and ingenuity... All this goes back to yield and performance: That's the only reason you select a particular variety. If that window — of introduction of new varieties — is interrupted, then farmers will be forced to use older varieties that are less drought, pest- and disease-resistant. That comes at a cost in two ways. One, you're probably not going to be as good a steward because you'll be using more inputs. Secondly, that itself will add to production costs.

"We're on a roll here with intellectual property rights," Cahill added. "The U.S. has become a very strong advocate and supportive voice [in that regard], and that's referenced in agreements like GATT [General Agreement on Tariff and Trade], NAFTA and, most recently, the biodiversity treaty."

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For more information about SiteMate, call nationwide toll-free 1-800-527-1670

Supplemental text:

WOODS APPOINTS MILLER IN SD
OREGON, Ill. — Woods Equipment Co. has appointed Daniel L. Miller to the post of operations manager at its Sioux Falls, S.D. facility. Formerly production manager at Woods' main manufacturing facility here in Oregon, Miller will manage the 200 personnel who produce Woods-Du-Al tractor loaders.

Woods has created a second toll-free number (1-800-31-WOODS), available to Woods dealers as a secondary customer service number to be used for detailed product and order inquiries only.

†††

PVP legislation

To pass the Senate bill in total, but with some fine-tuned language concerning prompt payment, according to Leslie Cahill, vice president of government affairs for the American Seed Trade Association here.

The Senate added a clause that if a grower contracts with an owner of a plant variety, it must be paid within 30 days of the date set on the contract, or by May 1 — whichever comes first. "We're discussing what happens to the dispensation of the seed if the contract is still not met," she said. "We would prefer this be brought under contract law. A number of states have arbitration boards. I'm not sure this [PVP Act] is the right vehicle, but if that's what will be, we certainly want to accommodate." Beside the VNS exemption for grass, red clover and alfalfa, Cahill said other changes have been made since the PVP measure was introduced last August:

- Language further clarifying the role of the conditioner. "Basically, the original language said conditioning in and of itself was an infringement, and that's not true because you recognize that there is a provision for legitimate farm-safe seed," she said. "It has to be cleaned. The change says if you're knowingly conditioning seed for unauthorized use, it is an infringement.

- Removing all gender references.

- Striving for prompt payment.

- Including potato varieties, which are now unprotected.

- A number of states are looking at VNS right now," Cahill said. Officials hope to address disputes involving seeds with somebody at the state level before they get to court.

"The advantage of arbitration is, it is a relatively quick process, less expensive than court, and you can have legal counsel. With an arbitration panel, you are also dealing with people who know something of your business," Cahill said.

She said ASTA hoped both the House and Senate would pass the bill in time for the July recess, which began July 1.

The UPOV treaty deals with other issues as well. USDA PVP Office Commissioner Ken Evans said it would extend plant variety protection, including turfgrass, from 18 to 20 years, and for woody plants from 18 to 25 years.

Tom Salt, plant variety protection examiner with the USDA, added that under the old version of UPOV, "your rights were to the propagating material. No one could reproduce, by seed, your variety. Under new guidelines, that would be extended to reproducible material, plant parts and harvested material... The new PVP also addresses Essentially Derived, which casts an eye toward biotechnology. If a breeder uses another person's protected plant in order to develop..."

Continued from page 45
Boon to sod growers

Continued from page 1
very limited supply.”

“Sod farms are doing very, very well,” agreed superintendent Jerry Lemons of Old Hickory Country Club in Hermitage, Tenn., adding that “most all courses are open, but horrible. Some lost 100 percent of their Bermudagrass.”

Some superintendents have decided to resprig their courses with zoysiagrass, but those supplies went mainly dry until a mid-
to late-July harvest, O’Brien said. Those people hope to avoid future devastation, he said, adding: “Everybody with zoysia fairways in the Southeast — approximately 15 are in wonderful shape.”

“It’s hectic,” said Richard Petrina, office manager for Thomas Bros., a sod producer in Fayetteville, Tenn. “Everyone wants grass right now. But we’re scheduling for a week from now. We’re running five trucks constantly, plus a leased truck sometimes.”

“I’ve been in the sod business for nine years and never seen anything like this. That January freeze did a world of damage,” said Chris Staples, officer manager for North Georgia Turf in Newman, Ga., who added that the spring buying spree follows another at the end of 1993.

Sod companies “are working around the clock trying to get everybody sprigged,” commiserated Dan Gibson, superintendent of golf operations for the Metro Board of Parks and Recreation in Nashville, Tenn., which operates seven golf courses. “It’s a mad fight to try to get them scheduled because everybody’s after them.”

(They don’t have enough machines, or enough trained help to run them. They’re run ragged. It’s a good business to be in right now, but a harrowing experience because they can’t take care of everybody.)

Noting that North Georgia Turf has helped “a lot” of golf courses replace turf in Tennessee and north Georgia, Staples said supplies were running thin. “We’re waiting on grow-its,” he said. “Supply will build back up until the end of July or early August.”

He said six superintendents have called his firm to replace Bermudagrass with El Toro zoysiagrass sod. Most sod farms did not lose turf because they mow it high. Thomas Bros., however, saw its farm flood and freeze, killing most of its Bermudagrass and a lot of zoysia. To meet demand, it was forced to lease another company’s sod farm — Emerald Acres in South Huntsville, Ala.

Pesticide reforms

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Though it doesn’t target any particular pesticide, “There is also a good deal of discussion that addresses the speed by which [pesticide] registration and reregistration is done,” Scott said.

Scott also expressed the need to speed up the “toxicology and time-consu-
m ing” process for cancellation of pesticides introduced before the passage of the stricter Federal Insecticide Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) in 1987.

Raymond Davies, head superinten-
tendant at Virginia Country Club in Huntington, Calif., does not see any-
things to be concerned about with the proposed legislation. He said he sees no changes in the administration’s pesticide agenda to target “bad actors” for market removal and to promote biological products. Davies emphasized the government has not targeted certain pesti-
cides for elimination. “My opinion is, they are just trying to reduce overlap from a cost standpoint,” he said.

If hearings are held this summer, which seems possible to Scott, a new pesticide bill may be out as early as October. If there are no hearings this summer, passage of the bill could carry into January 1995, if it passes at all.

The EPA has also proposed the nation’s first-ever emission stan-
dards to protect public health by reducing exhaust pollution from gasoline-powered lawn and garden equipment.

According to the EPA’s Mike Scott, buyers will experience a cost increase across the board of one to three percent. “Industry members say it will probably be closer to one percent or less,” he said.

The proposed legislation comprises two phases.

Phase I, which would take effect in 1998, would require a mon other things, exhaust emission standards to which manufacturers would com-
ply by improving the air and fuel mixture for more complete fuel combus-
tion. In Phase II, which is incom-
ple at this point, the EPA will re-

evaluate the appropriate level of standards, said Scott.

Barring any surprises, the law will be passed in no more than six months, he added.

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