

## Strong first-half numbers turned in by Ransomes

LINCOLN, Neb. — Ransomes plc has released its half-year sales and profit results for fiscal 1996. The firm also announced that it has resumed dividend payments on common shares.

Halfway through fiscal 1996 (as of March 30), Ransomes' operating profit increased 8.1 percent to \$17.4. Pre-tax profits advanced from \$7.4 million to \$9.9 million over this time last year. Other highlights of the report include:

- An interim dividend was declared .05 cent per common share, the first payment of its kind since 1991. The dividend, which will be paid on Sept. 2, was promised as part of a rights issue announced last December.

- Turnover is up 10.1 percent, or \$14 million, at \$153 million (1995: \$139 million).

- Dividend payments on convertible preferred shares are up to date.

- Earnings per share increased from one to three cents.

"I am pleased to report that the confidence shown by our shareholders in supporting the rights issue in January has been justified by a continued and substantial improvement in both sales and profits," said John Clement, chairman of Ransomes plc. "This has been achieved despite a slow start to the grass-cutting season in Europe and North America because of the exceptionally long winter."

## Scotts scholarships

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of Maryland's Institute of Applied Agriculture, is employed at Indian Springs Country Club. He has received scholarships from the Maryland Turf Council and is a member of the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents.

A graduate of Oklahoma State University, Wise holds a degree in horticulture/turf management. Currently with the Shawnee Country Club grounds crew, he was previously a four-year member of the Firelake Golf Course grounds crew. Wise is a member of GCSAA and the Oklahoma Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's Agronomy Club.

The scholarship committee has selected five finalists for the 1996 program. Each individual will complete a summer internship and will be considered for a scholarship later in the year.

The finalists are Carrie Mescher of Iowa State University, Donna Catrambone of Lake City Community College, Whitney Elmore of Western Kentucky University, Terry Pasadore of University of the Pacific, and Christopher Carter of Colorado State University.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

## Century Rain Aid names sales reps for Carolinas & Florida

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The building boom in this area has prompted Century Rain Aid, one of the largest U.S. distributors of landscape irrigation equipment, to add David Bush of Pineville as area outside sales representative.

Bush will work out of Century's branch at 4205 Golf Acres Dr., Charlotte, under the direction of Branch Walt Summerville. Reachable at 704-398-7344, Bush will call on professional irrigation contractors within a 50- to 75-mile radius of Charlotte. Century also has a branch in Raleigh. The branch distributes Hunter, Hardie, Vista and some 60 more of the most prominent equipment lines in landscape

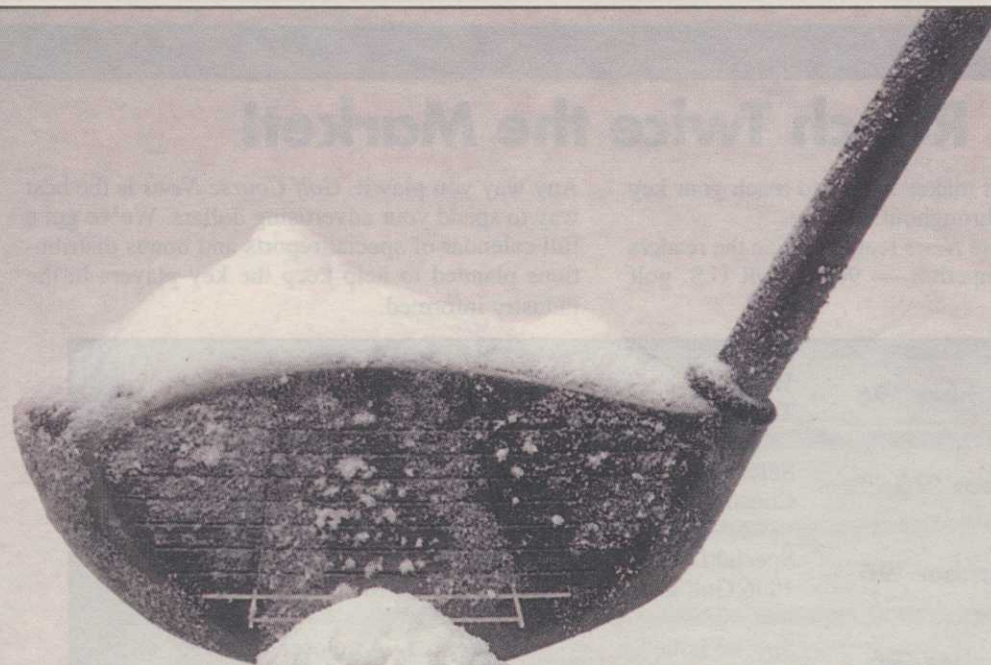
irrigation, fountains and landscape lighting. It is also the exclusive distributor of Legacy Golf irrigation systems for western North Carolina and much of South Carolina.

In other Century news, David Lukach has been named the firm's first full-time golf irrigation sales rep covering central Florida. Lukach will work from the Century branch here, located at 485 West 27th St.

Lukach can be reached by phone at 407-839-3771; or by pager at 407-899-2542. A second generation irrigation contractor, Lukach owned his own firm here, County Irrigation & Landscape Lighting, Inc. for six years.

## VERMEER NAMES NEW PRODUCT DEMONSTRATOR

PELLA, Iowa — Nathan Wallace has been named tree product demonstrator for Vermeer Manufacturing Co. In his new capacity, Wallace will perform tree equipment demonstrations for dealers and customers around the country. Prior to joining Vermeer Manufacturing as a product demonstrator supervising the planning and presentation of tree products, Wallace served nearly 10 years as an officer in the U.S. Army. Wallace can be reached by calling 1-800-829-0051.



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