While attempting to snuggle in your mower supplier. That mower company mergers and long-term, watchdogs can only speculate; what the Textron acquisition of better this year and will be bun-tighter with their long-standing iron and chemical companies are guess. It's a little too early to tell buy number four.

THE WORLD OF SUPPLIER BUSINESS '97

Let's consider 1997 the year of the partnership. Through company mergers and long-term, exclusive arrangements, the big iron and chemical companies are aiming to expand their services while attempting to snuggle in tighter with their long-standing customer base.

The face of the golf course supplier business has a softer, more understanding smile plastered across it. Big business senses the need to become more intimate, more human. No longer will your favorite mower supplier just be your mower supplier. That mower supplier got to know you a little better this year and will be bundling services that you wouldn't expect to find from "just" a mower supplier. We saw a golf car supplier jump into a tour sponsorship, two arch enemies in the chemical world buddy up, and more recently, we saw the number two iron supplier buy number four.

1997? Well, that's anybody's guess. It's a little too early to tell what the Textron acquisition of Ransomes could mean to the industry at large. So far, industry watchdogs can only speculate; but consider the powerful position Jacobsen will find itself in if it chooses to fold the best of Ransomes under the Jake umbrella. Stay tuned.

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PGA Tour, Deere ink 3-prong deal

By HAL PHILLIPS

MOLINE, Ill. — In a deal that impacts three distinct segments of the golf industry, John Deere has reached an unprecedented nine-year agreement with the PGA Tour to provide turf equipment to the Tournament Players Club (TPC) network of courses, assume title sponsorship of the Quad City Classic and provide 385 acres for a new TPC course development.

The nine-year partnership — comprising three consecutive 3-year leases — was an ink 3-prong deal. Deere has reached an unprecedented nine-year agreement with the PGA Tour to provide turf equipment to the Tournament Players Club (TPC) network of courses, assume title sponsorship of the Quad City Classic and provide 385 acres for a new TPC course development.

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Heritage introduced in Las Vegas

By MARK LESLIE

LAS VEGAS — The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has expedited registration of the first fungicide ever approved in its "reduced-risk pesticide" category — the broad-spectrum azoxystrobin, which represents a new and different class of chemistry.

"We are extremely excited," said Keelan Pulliam, business director of Zeneca Professional Products which, he said, mandated for azoxystrobin "the most extensive research in turf, ever — both by universities and companies."

"We are committed, with research and development, to support this market [turfgrass]," Zeneca President Robert Woods said at a press conference at the International Golf Course Conference and Show here announcing the new product, which is being marketed as Heritage. "It has significant importance to Zeneca as we move forward." Scotts and Zeneca will distribute Heritage.

Developed from natural compounds found in certain species of wood-decaying mushrooms, it has activity against plant pathogens from all four major fungal groups.

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NEW PRODUCT OF THE YEAR: THE DRAGONFLY

Solo cart leads British invasion

By MARK LESLIE

CARMEL, Calif. — When Englishman John Tullis began to lose the mobility in his legs from illness, he didn't quit golf. Along with business partner Tony Brown, he put on his inventor's cap. The result: A one-man golf cart designed to speed up play, defy worries about soil compaction and, for the physically challenged, make golf a viable recreation.

"Suddenly the cart is starting to move [in sales]," said Tullis from the Surrey, England, headquarters of his firm, CF Leisure Mobility Ltd., or A La Carts. "For years, we've been batting our heads against the traditional Continued on page 42

FTC gives blessing to Ciba, Sandoz merger

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The United States Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has cleared the creation of Novartis through the merger of Ciba and Sandoz.

Though the merger was first announced back in March of 1996, Novartis Crop Protection, Inc., was not formed until Jan. 1, 1997. And the timing couldn't be better, as the new Novartis operation will conduct a week-long coming out party at the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America show in Las Vegas, Feb. 6-12. So said Gene Hintze, formerly of Sandoz and now the head of Novartis Turf & Ornamental.

For right now, you can call me director of Novartis Turf & Ornamental," said Hintze, who relocated to Novartis' North Carolina office. "In Las Vegas, we plan on hosting a media reception, Sunday evening the 9th of February. We will have a joint presence on the floor. A brand new Novartis booth. Distributor meetings — you name it."

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RohMid collaboration a work in progress

By HAL PHILLIPS

PHILADELPHIA, Pa. — It's been nearly six months since American Cyanamid Co. and Rohm & Haas Co. formed RohMid L.L.C., a marketing and sales joint venture chartered with developing, registering and commercializing a new insecticide, RH-0345.

The eagerly awaited product has a name, Mach II, and RohMid officials seem confident the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will register the product this year.

Yet the fate of grubs and soil-borne pests — the targets of Mach II — have taken something of a back seat, as observers of the turf and ornamental industry gauge the success of this unprecedented partnership. In a time of unmatched competition, mergers and acquisitions among multinational chemi-