Chemical exhibitors pump up the volume

Making noise is perhaps the primary objective of exhibitors at the annual Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) show. By that I mean creating some buzz on the show floor. You know what I'm saying: People talking about, making noise regarding a particular company's products.

Without a doubt, chemical companies made the most noise in Las Vegas. This industry sector was busy on several different fronts, from new product releases, to division realignments, to distribution relationships.

Who made the most noise? It's a toss-up between Novartis — the newly merged entity consisting of formerly Ciba and Sandoz — and Zeneca, which rolled out its highly anticipated new broad-spectrum fungicide, Heritage.

The Heritage buzz was enormous (see stories page 59). Testing has shown the product to be effective on just about everything except dollar spot. Indeed, the prospects are so good for Heritage that companies were lining up to distribute it on Zeneca's behalf. Not just anyone, mind you. But the Scotts Company, United Horticultural Supply, Lesco, Terra, Wilbur-Ellis and others. Clearly, this is a product to watch.

Further, another new product creating a stir, though it has yet to receive Environmental Protection Agency approval, is Mach2 — an insecticide born of the collaboration between American Cyanamid Co. and Rohm and Haas (GCA/February '97). Principals in the joint venture, called RohMih, held a news conference in Las Vegas to herald the coming of Mach2, which has tested very well in the field. When EPA signs off sometime this spring, Mach2 will go directly to market.

Novartis made noise by distilling the message behind its mega-merger, which was announced last January and finalized Jan. 1. While Novartis is Latin for "new skills," the company brings a plethora of existing skills to bear. At a news conference held in Las Vegas, Novartis formally introduced its new Head of Specialty Products, Thomas McGowan; its Director of Turf & Ornamental Products, former Sandoz employee Gene Hintze; its National Sales Manager, former Ciba employee Jose Milan; and its new Market Manager for Golf, Jerry Hintze; its National Sales Manager, former Ciba employee Jose Milan; and its new Market Manager for Golf, Jerry Hintze.

Letters

A SPIKELESS BUT HARDY TOOTHLESS REBUTTAL

To the editor:
Mr. Cotton's comments on the spikeless revolution taking place now in golf ("They wouldn't let me wear my spikes, your honor,
GCA January '97) are both uneducated and that of the ambivalence that is lurking everywhere now.

Apparently he hasn't read about the gentleman member of a country club that just recently was awarded a large amount of money because he tripped with metal spikes and fell off the front walk of the clubhouse after consuming eight drinks. Why are cart paths finished rough or grooved? It is so golfers with metal spikes don't slip.

Furthermore, courses are not mandating "spikesports," they are mandating that metal spikes may not be worn. I think he is right in his second paragraph where he stated that he is "getting old," meaning he is unwilling to change. Of the centuries that golf has been played, spikes have only been around since the 1870s. And if he is so old he should check with an orthopedic doctor, who would probably recommend that spikeless golf shoes will save his feet and ankles in the future.

At any rate, the traction of metal spikes are no better than tennis shoes — if you would take the lunge out of your swing.

Corey Eastwood, CGCS
Bakersfield, Calif.

We need another dead-ball era

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Phillips comment
Continued from page 8
Osborne, another Ciba veteran.
In Vegas, Hintze was asked whether the merger of two such enormous companies had resulted in any product redundancy. "None whatsoever," he explained, adding that Banner, Subdue, Sentinel, Primo and Barricade are perfectly complementary and account for 70 percent of Novartis turf and ornamental sales. All of these products will be available for 1997 with full service and support, he said.
As for new product development, Hintze said to expect Novartis' first packaging innovation in August and six new products over the next four years. Medallion, a contact fungicide for ornamental use, will launch this year, he said.

Leedom comment
Continued from page 9
independent owners have sought professional managers to run their courses. American Golf, the largest operator of golf courses, leases approximately 250 golf courses nationally and is responsible for the daily operations and maintenance of each facility. NGP and American Golf constitute an example of closely tied firms with a clear division in course ownership and operation activities.
Many of the younger management companies are regional operators specializing in particular locations to achieve economies of scale. This market clustering has firmly established some companies in specific regions. In addition to institutional funding, companies such as CCA are actually providing seed capital to new management ventures to establish a foothold in a particular region.
The coming years will see the continued emergence of regional operators and the initial stages of consolidation between the operators themselves. These "super-regionals" will attract the attention of larger investors and eventually the public markets. Newcomer, Meadowbrook Golf [GCN November 1996], publicly traded on the lowly Bulletin Boards, has already begun such a strategy by purchasing management companies on both the East and West coasts as regional operating divisions. Though Meadowbrook remains undercapitalized, this concept will likely provide a blueprint for further industry consolidation.
Alliances between management companies and large home builders is a relatively new concept. Management companies have established these ties to add business to newly constructed golf communities. Arnold Palmer Golf Management has allied with Toll Brothers on the East coast and Western Properties recently teamed with U.S. Homes following completion of the Heritage Palms golf community in Palm Springs, Calif.
O.B. Sports [GCN July 1996] of Portland, Ore., has differentiated itself by creating unique innovations in course management. On a 36-hole facility the combination of CHIPCO® 26019 fungicides, CHIPCO® ALETTE SIGNATURE fungicide is the perfect choice when it comes to enhancing turf vigor and quality during those peak stress periods. You already know how effective CHIPCO ALETTE is when used in tankmix combination with FORE® or CHIPCO® 26019 fungicides. CHIPCO ALETTE SIGNATURE now lets you apply a tankmix of DACONIL ULRTEX® or generic mancozeb as well. It's designed to give you

A FEW WORDS ABOUT NEW CHIPCO ALETTE SIGNATURE.

Yes, It Is The Most Cost-Effective Way To Manage Turf Stress.

Yes, It Gives You More Tankmix Options Than Ever.

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