SUPPLIER BUSINESS

Yamaha jumps into Tour sponsorship spotlight

BY HAL PHILLIPS

MIRLTE BEACH, S.C. — Some times it’s easy to spot a trend in the making. Witness the increasing number of golf industry firms which have secured national television exposure by sponsoring PGA and Senior tour events.

The latest is Yamaha Golf Cars, which has agreed to become the “sponsored by” sponsor of the Energizer Senior Tour Championship. Energizer batteries will retain its title sponsorship.

The move follows last month’s announcement that John Deere would assume title sponsorship of the PGA Tour’s Quad City Classic, heretofore known as the John Deere Classic. For the past three years, The Scotts Company has served in various sponsorship capacities with the Senior Tour’s Tradition tourney.

While similar, Yamaha’s decision sets it apart from Deere and Scotts, both of which have allied consumer divisions that will certainly profit from national television exposure. On the surface, the Senior Tour Championship would appear to offer fewer synergies between Yamaha Golf Car Division and its parent company, Yamaha Motor Manufacturing Corp. of America.

The season-ending Senior Tour Championship, sponsored in part by Energizer batteries and Myrtle Beach Golf Holidays, features the top 31 Senior PGA Tour players and the top 16 MasterCard Champions (formerly the Super Seniors), many of whom use golf cars during competitive

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Tractor makers push protection

In an unprecedented joint effort, North America’s five leading tractor companies are working together to encourage tractor owners to have their older machines equipped with rollover protective structures (ROPS) and seat belts, in an effort to help reduce deaths and injuries associated with rollovers and runovers.

As an incentive to owners, AGCO Corp., Case Corp., Deere & Company, Kubota Tractor Corp., and New Holland North America, Inc. are making it possible to purchase ROPS and seat belts at the companies’ cost. This joint effort is aimed at reducing the two leading causes of death and injury to tractor operators.

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Lesco manufacturing moving to Ohio site

STREETSBORO, Ohio — Lesco, Inc. has announced it will relocate its equipment manufacturing operations from Sebring, Fla., to a new, 177,000-square-foot facility here. The plant will be operated by Commercial Turf Products, Ltd., the company’s new joint venture with MTD Products Inc.

The new plant, purchased from Aquatech, Inc., will be available for occupancy in late Spring 1997. Production is scheduled to begin in mid-summer and it is anticipated Commercial Turf Products will employ up to 225 people within the next two years. Lesco has announced plans to close the Sebring manufacturing plant in October 1997.

The proximity of the Streetsboro site to several existing MTD facilities will enable the joint venture to minimize start-up expenses and to utilize manufacturing resources already in place. “We are excited about this development because it will enable us to begin manufacturing operations al-

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Barenbrug opens offices in Pittsburgh and Beijing, moves Oregon HQ

PITTSBURGH, Pa. — Barenbrug Northeast's Vice President and General Manager, William (Bill) Lind, has announced the opening of the Barenbrug Northeast Pittsburgh Division.

"Our new sales, production and shipping facility in Pittsburgh will enable us to establish a presence in Central and Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio and other parts of the Midwest," said Lind.

Al Suvak, formerly of Mock Seed Company, has been selected as general manager of the Pittsburgh Division. The Barenbrug Northeast Pittsburgh Division is located at 2246 California Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15212. For more information, call Suvak at 412-321-1272.

Barenbrug USA, headquartered in Tangent, Ore., will move into its new office/warehouse facility this month. Upon completion in 1998 the entire complex will encompass over 100,000 square feet and will be designed for maximum efficiency. Adjacent to the new building will be several acres of turf and forage trial plots which will be a highlight during the annual Oregon summer tour. An open house will be announced soon.

Meanwhile, in Beijing, Barenbrug Holding BV of The Netherlands has opened an office and the appointment of Chen Gu as chief representative of Barenbrug China RO.

Chen is responsible for an office staff in Beijing, and will coordinate all trials, market development and sales activities for the Barenbrug Group in China.

Previously, Chen was managing director for a joint venture between the EU and PRC Governments, focusing on implementation of Western agricultural practices and input into farm and animal husbandry systems in various areas of China.

The Barenbrug Group Worldwide consists of three sub-holdings, each with numerous subsidiaries: Europe, North America and Southern Hemisphere (with offices in Australia and New Zealand).

Yamaha

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tournaments. When these 47 competitors tee it up Nov. 3-9, 1997, here at The Dunes Golf and Beach Club, they will be driving Yamaha golf cars.

"We are excited to become the exclusive 'sponsored by' sponsor of this prestigious championship," said Scott Wall, vice president-Golf Car Division of Yamaha. "This major sponsorship is further opportunity to achieve our golf car marketing objectives not only in Myrtle Beach, S.C. — the golf capital of the world — but also nationally and internationally. We view this partnership with Myrtle Beach Golf Holiday as a natural progression of our tremendous success with the National Golf Course Owners Association.'”

Yamaha is one of several firms that participate in the National Golf Course Owners Association’s (NGCOA) Smart Buy Program, a package whereby NGCOA receives discounts on products purchased from participating companies. Although its membership is national, the NGCOA is based in Charleston, S.C., just south of the Myrtle Beach region.

Myrtle Beach Golf Holiday (MBGH) is a non-profit association of 96 accommodations and 87 golf courses in the Myrtle Beach area, which reaches from Georgetown, S.C. north to Southport, N.C. MBGH shares financial responsibility for the event with the PGA Senior Tour.

"Yamaha golf cars are a great fit for Myrtle Beach with us being the seaside golf capital of the world," said Tom E. Baugh, Jr., president of Myrtle Beach Golf Holiday. "Yamaha is a first-class company with a very strong commitment to quality."