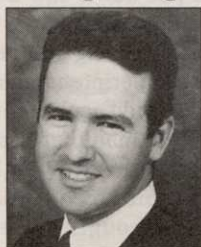


BRIEFS

**ZIRKLE HEADS UP RAIN BIRD MARKETING**

AZUSA, Calif. — Matthew A. Zirkle has been named marketing manager for the golf division of Rain Bird Sales, Inc. Zirkle will oversee the marketing and communications functions for the division. Prior to being named marketing manager, Zirkle served as new business development manager in Rain Bird Golf.



Matthew Zirkle

RIVERDALE NAMES SCHUTZMAN, PHIPPS

GLENWOOD, Ill. — Riverdale Chemical Co. has named Lendel Schutzman as regional sales manager. His responsibilities will include promoting product sales in the turf, vegetation management, forestry and aquatic industries. Mark Phipps has been named Northeast regional sales manager. In his new position, Phipps will be responsible for sales and technical support for Riverdale distributors located in the Northeast and the development of new distributors within his territory.

PEROTTI JOINS JACKLIN SEED

POST FALLS, Idaho — Larry Perotti has joined Jacklin Seed/Simplot Turf & Horticulture as technical service manager. Perotti is responsible for answering questions from Jacklin Seed customers on such subjects as grass species and variety selection, and growth characteristics. Additionally, he provides backup technical and sales services for Jacklin Golf's three outside sales representatives.

NELSON TO LEAD SCOTTS TURF BREEDING

MARYSVILLE, Ohio — The Scotts Co. has hired Dr. Eric K. Nelson to lead its turfgrass breeding efforts at the company's Oregon Field Station. As senior scientist and turfgrass breeder, Nelson will join Scotts' variety development group in its efforts to produce herbicide-resistant grasses and will conduct traditional plant breeding, drawing upon biotech-based gene sources. He will interact with scientists within Scotts and at universities across the country. Nelson most recently served as senior technical agronomist for Jacklin Golf, where he provided agronomic assistance and technical communications for golf course architects, builders and superintendents.

J.R. Simplot set to expand deal, inject \$20 million into Eco Soil

By ANDREW OVERBECK

RANCHO BERNADO, Calif. — Building on November's marketing and distribution alliance, Eco Soil Systems, Inc. and J.R. Simplot Co. have strengthened their relationship by entering into a multi-faceted letter of intent. Under the agreement, Simplot would acquire \$20 million of a new series of Eco Soil preferred stock. Simplot would also agree to commence field trials of Eco Soil's proprietary products in agricultural markets. The deal also grants Simplot the option of acquiring an interest in Eco Soil's Turf Partners subsidiary during the spring of 2001, depending on Turf Partners 2000 financial performance.

"Simplot is investing in the parent company," said Eco Soil President and Chief Executive Officer Bill Adams. "But they retain the option of converting that investment into Turf Partners or putting some additional money into the subsidiary to buy some level of shares. They have to make that decision in the next 12 months."

"We are interested in the BioJect and FreshPack products," said Hiromi Yanagisawa, senior vice president of marketing for J.R. Simplot. "But we need to look at it financially to see if it makes sense."

While a 12-month valuation period is unusual, Adams remains unfazed.



Bill Adams

"Simplot is not sure whether they want to be fully invested in a distribution company," he said. "At this stage of the game it doesn't matter to us. We wanted to make sure they made a commitment to us since we had made a distribution commitment to them, and in addition, we have some technology that we wanted to shove into their agricultural markets and this was an easy way to do it."

Building a relationship with a vendor also makes a lot of sense to Adams.

"The working capital helps, but the bottom line is that we wanted to get closer to our major vendors because we have always presented ourselves as a value-added sales force," said Adams. "In the final analysis, it is all about positioning someone's product over someone else's. You have to have favorites and Simplot is one of them."

Concurrently, Eco Soil will be working to cut costs after losing \$11 million in the fourth quarter due to restructuring costs and operating losses in Mexico. While Eco Soil continues to expand its revenues — \$22 million in the fourth quarter — it faced overhead expenses of \$17 million in 1999. By streamlining operations and using the proceeds of the Simplot investment to retire debts, Eco Soil expects to trim 2001 costs to \$9 million.

"When you consolidate all the busi-

Continued on page 62

Redexim to distribute Carraro tractors

By ANDREW OVERBECK

PITTSTON, Pa. — Redexim Charterhouse has entered into an exclusive marketing and distribution pact with Padova, Italy-based tractor manufacturer Antonio Carraro. Redexim Charterhouse has had a distribution agreement in Europe with Carraro since August 1999.

"The success of the European joint venture led us to roll out U.S. operations," said Philip Threadgold, executive vice president of Redexim Charterhouse. "Carraro was looking to get into the U.S. market and we offered the distribution."

The tractors will be distributed in



Carraro's TTR 440 in action.

the United States through Redexim Charterhouse's network of 47 distributors. Replacement parts will be stocked at the company's new warehouse facility in Pittston.

Continued on page 66

AgriBioTech files Chapter 11; asset sale to follow

HENDERSON, Nev. — Citing low seed prices, high expenses and slow collections, AgriBioTech (ABT) has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. The full-service turfgrass seed company has been struggling to integrate the 34 companies that it has bought over the last four years.



According to ABT's second-quarter report released Feb. 22, "The company has incurred significant operating and net losses since inception and has been unable to generate sufficient cash flow from operating activities to meet projected debt service and other obligations as they become due."

ABT reported a net loss of \$19.5 million for the second quarter ended Dec. 31, 1999, and posted losses of \$49.8 million in fiscal year 1999. The company's second-quarter sales were \$52 million compared to \$75.9 million in the same period last year, a decrease of 31.6 percent. As of Feb. 11, the company had outstanding debts of \$68.9 million. The NASDAQ National Mar-

Continued on page 66

Golfsat plans to be one-stop online source for supers

By ANDREW OVERBECK

NEW ORLEANS — Looking to fill the Internet gap that exists in the golf course maintenance industry, Golfsat has launched its website (www.golfsat.com) and industry portal to golf course superintendents.

Golfsat Chief Executive Officer Mike Scott equates the site's unveiling to the Oklahoma land rush.

"Everyone is running to the Internet and is not sure where they are going," said Scott.

"The Internet has embraced this industry. There are a lot of manufacturer and distributor websites. But by and large there has not been a formation of e-commerce or a virtual community for superintendents. That is what we are creating at Golfsat."

Scott aims to get superintendents online, create a high-speed industry network and design and develop industry-specific software and content.

CONTENT

Registered Golfsat users can use the Golfsat search engine to locate information on turfgrasses and cultivars, diseases and insects, biological and chemical



Mike Scott

Golf Course News STOCK REPORT (2/24)*

Company	Symbol	Stock Price	%Change 1/1/00	%Change 1/14/00	P/E	52-week Range	Proj. 5-yr Earn. Growth
Astrazeneca	AZN	33.25	-20.36	-18.90	22.83	31-48.94	10.30%
Deere & Co.	DE	38.25	-9.73	-20.31	38.14	32-47.5	9.20%
Dow Chemical Co.	DOW	106.375	-19.79	-23.68	18.16	90-141.5	8.60%
Family Golf Centers	FGCI	1.125	-20.00	-26.47	N/A	0.72-10.125	25%
Golf Trust of Amer.	GTA	18	6.27	6.64	14.17	14.5-25.75	8.80%
Ingersoll-Rand	IR	36.08	-34.47	-32.52	10.01	35-73.82	12%
Lesco Inc.	LSCO	16	-5.88	7.53	11.76	12.25-19.5	15%
Nat'l Golf Prop.	TEE	20.88	5.72	-2.32	18.1	18.38-27.75	N/A
Toro Co.	TTC	32.88	-11.88	-9.61	12.38	28.5-39.5	12.5%
Textron Inc.	TXT	60.88	-20.61	-11.74	4.04	57-98	14.3%

*DATA PROVIDED BY VALUE TREND LINKS, LINKS FUND UP 11.48% IN '00, WWW.GOLFMUTUALFUND.COM

Golfsat.com

Continued from page 59

manufacturers, distributors and other related products and services. Golfsat users can also access DTN satellite weather for regional or national forecasts. In addition, Golfsat offers configurable chat, enabling a superintendent to filter or identify a region of peers with which to communicate.

There are 1,100 manufacturers and 50,000 products represented on the Golfsat website. Superintendents can look up a manufacturer, click on the product, configure the order, select a distributor, get pricing and throw the product in the virtual "forklift." The product is then ordered via Golfsat's secure distributor interface.

Likewise, Golfsat has catalogued research publications from 42 universities and has several consulting professors under contract. "Universities lead the Internet online," said Scott. "But you would be challenged to go to a site and in a few minutes find where their turfgrass or horticultural research is."

On Golfsat, superintendents can select a turf species and then choose from a list of insects specific to that turf. The site then links up to research relating to the pest and eventually to a product catalog page that suggests what to use to solve the problem and then places an order.

CHALLENGES

There are several challenges in launching Golfsat.

First, superintendents have limited computer hardware, 15 to 20 percent have no computer at all and only 10 to 15 percent have a computer with decent processing capabilities, said Scott. Those who already have computers and Internet access will be able to use the site for free.

Further, a very small percentage of superintendents has access to DSL or cable lines and only one to five percent have 56.6 modems.

To solve these problems, Golfsat is offering a hardware package to users that includes a fully equipped Pentium III personal computer and high-speed, broadband Internet access from anywhere in the nation using satellite, cable or DSL configurations. The package will cost \$29.95 a month and will be available this summer. Work on the satellite network is still being sorted out.

While Golfsat hopes to have direct access to a distributor's inventory, those agreements are also in flux.

"We have captured all the manufacturers' data. The challenges now lie with the distributors," said Scott. "We are on that road right now and if things start this summer we will begin to actively recruit other distributors and go through that conversion process."

However, if the interest shown at the GCSAA International Conference and show is any indication, signing on additional distributors and manufacturers will not be that difficult.

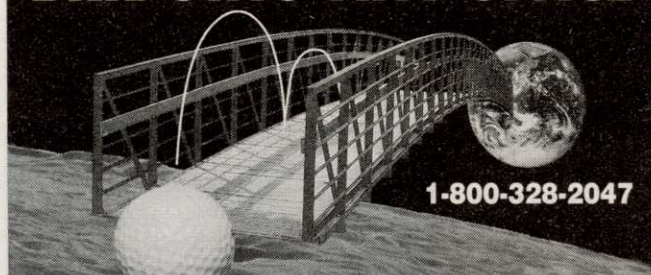
The manufacturer and distributor interest is something that we didn't anticipate," said Mike Trompeter, senior vice president of member and distributor relations. "The amount of top level people that stopped by and spent time with us understanding the program was very encouraging."

Continued on next page

Golf Course Marketplace

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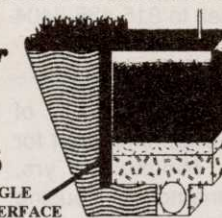
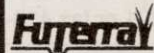
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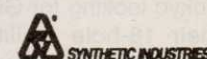
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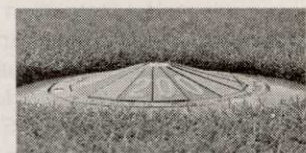
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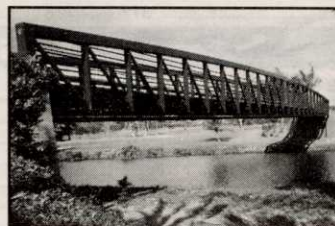


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6 — GCSAA Seminar on Turfgrass Ecology in Sioux Falls, S.D.

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6-9 — New England Regional Turf Conference & Show. Contact 401-848-0004.

7 — GCSAA Seminar on Maximizing Job Satisfaction in Gaylord, Mich. *

7-8 — GCSAA Seminar on Physical Problems of Turfgrass Soils: Identification and Correction in Valley Forge, Pa. *

7-8 — GCSAA Seminar on Golf Greens: History, Theory, Construction and Maintenance in St. Louis Park, Minn. *

8 — GCSAA Seminar on Maximizing Teamwork in Gaylord, Mich. *

9 — NYSTA Western Regional Conference in Buffalo, N.Y. Contact 800-873-8873.

14 — GCSAA Seminar on Management Strategies for the Turfgrass System in Cincinnati, Ohio. *

14 — GCSAA Seminar on Turfgrass Stress Management in Sunnehanna, Pa. *

14-15 — Rutgers University course Beyond the Basics of Landscape Construction in New Brunswick, N.J. Contact Kurt Martens at 732-932-8451.

15 — GCSAA Seminar on Bentgrass Management and Rootzone Maintenance in Manchester, Vt. *

15 — Rutgers University course on Successful Insect ID and Control of Ornamental Plants in New Brunswick, N.J. Contact Kurt Martens at 732-932-8451.

16 — Rutgers University course on Hazardous Tree ID in New Brunswick, N.J. Contact Kurt Martens at 732-932-8451.

16 — GCSAA Seminar on Lake and Aquatic Plant Management in Phoenix. *

16 — GCSAA Seminar on Insect and Disease Management for Warm-Season Turfgrass in Palm Desert, Calif. *

17 — Rutgers University course on Large Tree Pruning and Rigging in New Brunswick, N.J. Contact Kurt Martens at 732-932-8451.

* For more information contact the GCSAA Education Office at 800-472-7878.

Golfsat.com

Continued from previous page

A significant number of superintendents also registered for Golfsat at the show, said Trompeter.

GOING FORWARD

Golfsat will be tested at 200 beta sites in California, Arizona, North and South Carolina, and Florida this month which will be served by 12 distributors.

"We will work on flushing out bandwidth issues, but we expect that because of isolation and the limited availability of DSL, most golf courses will wind up with satellite connections," said Scott.

Golfsat is set to roll out nationwide this summer and Scott said the company is structuring itself to accommodate 70 to 80 percent of the nation's superintendents. "In the next three years, we hope to get to the 10,000 to 12,000 range," he said. ↑