Aventis CropScience is complete
The integration of Bayer and bevy of new products 3
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finds job security
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tough job market
• Jacobsen, Cushman, Ryan and
By ANDREW OVERBECK
San Diego, Calif., has changed its name to Jacobsen
of its second rebranding strategy
and introduce several new products at the Golf Course Super-
interpreters Association of America Show in Atlanta this month.
Last fall, Textron adopted or-
range as its flagship color to visu-
ally unify its four major brands: Jacobsen, Cushman, Ryan and
Ransomes.
The recently announced rebranding strategy will go much
deepen than the paint job. The Cushman and Ryan names will be
folded into the Jacobsen brand,
joining the Ransomes products that were rebranded last year. For
the first time, commercial land-
scape products will also be
branded Jacobsen.
“We did some research over the
last year and a half that indicates
there has been fragmentation in
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Palmer Design gets boost in 2002
The 8th hole at the Palmer-designed Rivertowne Country Club outside Charleston, S.C., which opened last year.
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COUNTERPOINT
Deere to test hydrogen fuel cell technology
By ANDREW OVERBECK
Moline, Ill. — As part of an effort to explore alternative fuel
options across all of its product lines, Deere & Co. has partnered
with Canadian fuel cell manufacturer Hydrogenics Corp. to develop a modi-
fied Pro-Gator demonstration vehicle that uses a hydrogen fuel cell.
The project is being
handled by Deere & Co.’s
new ePower Technolo-
gies Group that was set
up last year to evaluate alternative fuel technologies and see how well
they fit into the company’s plans for future products.
“We are learning how to apply
these technologies to a variety of
our products and some of the first
candidates are going to be some
of our golf equipment like mowers
and utility vehicles,” said engi-
neer Bruce Wood, director of the ePower group. “These are
products where the hydrogen fuel cell can do something better
than a diesel engine or a battery. The technol-
ogy has made enor-
mous strides in the last
couple of years.”
Wood said Deere
turned to Hydrogenics
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Court ruling puts
Gotham Golf future in limbo
By DEREK RICE
Hershey, Pa. — The last several weeks have seen the fortunes of a Gotham Golf
Corp. merger with First Union Real Estate Equity and Mortgage rise and fall
on almost a daily basis.
At press time, the merger
seemed as far from a done
deal as it has been since it
was first discussed nearly
three years ago. The Wall
Street Journal reported that
William Ackman, co-head
of Gotham Partners Man-
gement Co., a $300 mil-
ion hedge fund, an-
nounced to investors that
he and partner David
Berkowitz were shutting
down their fund. Ackman
also said Gotham Golf,
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Textron takes Jacobsen name, introduces new products

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the marketplace as a result of having multiple brands," said Jacobsen's Joe Zvanut.

The rebranding move is part of an ongoing consolidation strategy within the company. In 2001, it began a process that consolidated product engineering and design, sales, marketing and customer service and support into three locations. The turf care division operates out of Charlotte, the utility vehicle division is based in Augusta, Ga., and commercial grounds care is based in Johnson Creek, Wis. As part of this strategy, the firm also streamlined product lines and reduced costs in manufacturing, distribution, procurement and warehousing.

While Zvanut said the consolidation process is still ongoing, he added that the company will count on several new products to drive its growth in the golf market. Among the products that Jacobsen will be introducing in Atlanta are two new walk-behind greens mowers.

The patented E-Walk electric greens mower uses two 48V electric motors that independently drive the ground speed and chip frequency. It uses snap-in/snap-out sealed battery backs and is lighter than a comparable gasoline-powered unit.

"It is pollution-free and noise-free," said Zvanut. "And it has no oil or hydraulic fluid. This is a growing market segment.

Depending on the size and undulation of the green, the E-Walk will be able to mow 18 greens with two to three battery pack changes. Jacobsen's Tournament Cut-22 is squarely aimed at Toro's Flex-21 mower that has been a hot-seller over the past two years.

The Tournament Cut-22 has floating head reels allowing it to move horizontally, vertically and from side-to-side to eliminate scalping on severely undulating greens. The unit will be available with 4-hp Honda engine or with the new 48V electric power system.

In addition to the walk-behind mowers, Zvanut said the company will unveil a new fairway mower, a PTO-driven verticutter, and a new line of utility vehicles in Atlanta.

Mihailides, Reelcraft developing market

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projects," he said. "We need to get consultants and distributors involved to spec the product."

However, since irrigation sales depend on slimmer and slimmer margins, Mihailides is finding it difficult to penetrate the market with such a cost-prohibitive product. While it is difficult to argue the convenience of having an underground, constantly pressurized hose next to a green to control hot spots and localized dry spots, it has been difficult for some superintendents to get past the price point.

"Our underground reel costs $1,450 with a 75-foot hose attached. A quick coupler, pressurized isolation valve, hose and fittings costs $400 and the hose can be used all over the course," said Mihailides. "So there is a price difference. But we are also saving courses labor, time and wear and tear on equipment."

"This keeps the hose right at hand and saves water because you only have to water as much as is needed," he continued. "Instead of sending four or five guys out to hand-water all day long, one guy can do it."

Product benefits aside, Mihailides realizes that he has a challenge ahead.

"We have a brand-new product and no competition," he said.

One way he hopes to build awareness is to produce private-label products. "That way," said Mihailides, "superintendents won't say 'Why should I buy this' but 'Who should I buy it from?'"

In a move to expand the product line beyond underground reels, Reelcraft has also introduced a trailer-mounted reel to allow golf courses to more easily transport hose around the golf course. The unit hooks into the back of a utility vehicle.

Mihailides, Reelcraft developing market

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Wireless rotor

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identification information via a handheld device. That information is then transferred to the central control system, allowing the rotor to be operated with the central control, Rain Bird's Freedom System, or manually. Pricing for the wireless system has not been released.

According to Sakurai, the wireless rotor will offer many advantages when it comes to renovation work.

"Wireless technology provides the necessary installation flexibility and makes retrofits and additions simple," he said. "There is no turf damage from trenching, limiting downtime in play."