**Hydrograss Technologies heads down south**

By ANDREW OVERBECK

SARASOTA, Fla. — North Oxford, Mass.-based Hydrograss Technologies has opened an office here to serve the Southeastern United States.

Matt Zirkle, who has worked in golf course construction for Gary Player Design and Jack Nicklaus Design, will head up the new office.

"We are excited about the potential here," said Zirkle. "With the drought and water conditions and the fact that Hydrograss offers an alternative to erosion control and sod applications there is good market potential."

While Zirkle has yet to sign a contract, he is doing test sprays for a number of architects and developers. The Hydrograss system blends grass seeds and sprigs with a wood fiber product, Eco Aegis, that helps grass establish itself and acts as an erosion control device.

"Up North this is a proven technology. It is just a matter of doing test sprays and showing them that we can grow grass with the system down here," Zirkle said. "We have been doing some test sprays for WCI Communities over the last couple months."

According to Zirkle, the biggest adjustment is hydrosprigging warm season grasses as opposed to hydroseeding cool season grasses.

"The tests show that the distribution of sprigs is very good," he said. "We can also spray over sprigs that have already been put down mechanically to help with erosion control."

Hydrograss will be taking a different approach to the market in the Southeast.

"We won't hydrosprig the whole course," said Zirkle. "We will focus on sloped areas that have erosion concerns, like green surrounds, lake banks and car path edges. These are areas that are normally sodded and we can offer an alternative to sod and..."
Hydrograss in Florida
Continued from previous page
still hold slopes and establish turf quickly." Zirkle said hydroseeding is usually 30 percent cheaper than sod.
From the Sarasota office, Zirkle and new salesman Tom Ross will handle Florida, and the rest of the Southeast in addition to the Caribbean, Mexico and Latin America.
“We are already pricing jobs in the Caribbean,” said Zirkle. “There is good potential there because of water concerns. Since Eco Aegis is a wood fiber we are able to cut down on the water needed during grow-in because the fibers retain water. It is also not as expensive as shipping rolls of sod.”

SubAir regroups
Continued from previous page
“Our intention is to continue the proven success of the technology and the process,” said Gary Stough, vice president of sales and marketing. “We want to bring it to market at a fair price and provide excellent customer service before and after the sale.”
The firm has approximately 250 existing golf course clients, including Victoria National in Edwards, Ind., The Estancia Club in Scottsdale, Ariz., and Reynolds Plantation in Greensboro, Ga. The SubAir system provides optimum aerobic subsurface growing conditions on greens by removing moisture, exchanging air and regulating temperature.
Stough said SubAir systems will be expanded its customer base by offering a broader range of products and services. An installed SubAir system costs $19,000 per green and a portable system costs $19,000 in addition to expenses for fittings and other accessories at each green.
We are going to try and open up our product to more courses through increased presence in different markets and by offering a broader range of products and services. The majority of the market doesn’t have to be high-end,” said Stough. “Dave Ferris is solely responsible for new product development and we are looking at expanding the technology to provide customers with another tool to produce world-class putting surfaces.”
The company has offices, a warehouse and a manufacturing shop in Aiken and has recently added three salespeople. Stough said the next step will be to expand sales staff beyond the Southeast.

Changes at Dow
Continued from previous page
arch over the markets. This will streamline our management base and simplify how we communicate with our channel distribution partners,” he added.
As a part of the reorganization, Dow AgroSciences has added several key staff members.
Lisa Bostock will lead the West district for turf and ornamental out of the firm’s Sacramento office. Mark Ringkob will work out of the same office and will cover northern and central California and much of Nevada.
Kent Redding will be the sales manager for the company’s Mid America district and he will be joined by new sales representative Jay Golz, who will cover Alabama, Tennessee and Mississippi.
Linda Satter has signed on with the East District from New Mexico and will cover the East district.

Toro NSN adds recovery solution
ABILENE, Tex.—NSN, Toro’s technical support network for irrigation central control system customers, is now shipping central controller computers pre-loaded with Microsoft Windows XP and Phoenix FirstWare CMX solution, which includes FirstWare Recover, as a first-of-its-kind disaster recovery software product.
“For Toro customers, this means a backup ‘image’ of their original operating system and application files is stored in a special area of the hard drive, protected from virus attacks, software corruption, and end-user errors,” said Mark Kearney, manager of NSN hardware operations. “Users can restore the PC operating system without the original install CDs or recovery CDs.”
Toro is the first irrigation manufacturer to deploy the Phoenix Technologies software.

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