

Ransomes name leaves the golf arena

The Ransomes name which has been synonymous with golf for almost as long as courses have been professionally maintained is to be lost to the game.

In a major new strategy by parent company Textron the Ransomes brand is to be linked to the municipal market while golf will come under the Jacobsen banner. It will mean a phasing out of the familiar green machines on golf courses to be replaced by the orange of Jacobsen.

"When we looked at our position in the market sectors it became clear that the Textron brands were not as clearly defined as we thought," explained Harold Pinto, Managing Director of Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products.

They looked at three options. Changing the corporate colour for all machinery to Textron blue; branding the premium products as Jacobsen and the cheaper brands as Ransomes or splitting the two brands under the Textron banner so that they had Golf - Jacobsen, orange and Municipal - Ransomes, green.

"Before going ahead we spent a lot of time talking to people in the industry including some of our biggest customers at St Andrews and Gleneagles Hotel and they were all extremely positive about the move," said Harold.

The 120 products in the current Turf Care and Specialty Product portfolio will remain intact with machines being repainted and rebranded to fit their new market. For example the Ransomes G-Plex II becomes the Jacobsen G-Plex II; the Ransomes T-Plex 180 becomes the Jacobsen T-Plex 180 and the Ransomes Fairway 305 becomes the Jacobsen Fairway 305.

"Our aims were to present a simple message to customers, eliminate in-house brand conflict and provide a more specialised sales support service," explained Neil Woodfin, the company's recently appointed Marketing Director.

While Textron undertook research before announcing the change they are still aware of the potential dangers.

"There is an element of risk about it and we did think long and hard about it before going ahead," said Harold.

"We announced it to our work force at a recent employee meeting and they were positive although there is some sorrow that the Ransomes name will be lost to the golf market."



Above: The giant HR-9016 rotary mower for the municipal market, formerly a Jacobsen machine, now appears in the green livery of Ransomes

Below: The former Ransomes Fairway 305 now sports the distinctive orange Jacobsen livery as a dedicated golf mower



Major environment award for BIGGA

BIGGA has received one of the coveted Green Apple Awards 2000 for Environmental Best Practice. The trophy will be presented during the Gala Prize giving at The Cafe Royal, London, on 1 August with Environment Minister, Michael Meacher, in attendance.

BIGGA is at the forefront of promoting an increasing awareness of the positive environmental impact of golf. The Association has a key role in stimulating action and debate in

relation to the 'Committed to Green' initiative throughout the European golfing community.

For the past four years, BIGGA in conjunction with Amazone Ground Care and, for 2000, the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, has organised and run the BIGGA Golf Environment Competition. This has developed into a major competition for golf clubs and BIGGA believes that through this competition it can greatly advance the message of environmental responsi-

bility and stewardship to golfers, greenkeepers and trade companies as well as impact on the environmental and general media.

At BIGGA we are delighted to have received this award. It recognises the commitment of both members and staff in environmental matters and I believe that this award recognises that the game of golf is taking a lead in serving as a role model for good environmental practice," said Executive Director, Neil Thomas.

Jenny moves on

Jenny Panton, whose work in BIGGA's Sales and Marketing Department has done much to make recent BTMEs the success that they have been, is moving to pastures new.

Jenny, who has been with the Association since February '97, is to become Project Event Manager, with Harrogate company Raho Ltd.

It will be a busy time for Jenny as she takes up her new position immediately on her return from honeymoon so as well as wishing Jenny all the best in her new job, we wish her and Scott every success for the future.

After August 17, all enquiries in relation to BTME2001 should be directed to BIGGA's Sales and Marketing Manager, Steve Hardy on 01347 833800 or via steve@bigga.co.uk

S West & S Wales Region set to go supersonic?

An approach by South West and South Wales Regional Administrator to Amenity Technology to investigate the possibility of the company sponsoring transport to BTME 2001 has revealed that the Region's members may be in for a whale of a time on the journey north.

In reply to Paula Humphries' letter Amenity Technology Managing Director, Carl Crome, wrote the following:

Dear Paula

Thank you for your letter dated 12th June regarding our sponsorship of the coach to Harrogate. We have also been investigating other modes of transport with some interesting results.

For speed of transit we have looked at the option of a coach trip to Heathrow, and chartering Concorde for a swift five minute flight to Leeds airport. Alternatively for a little extra expenditure the trip can be extended via Dublin to allow the plane to reach supersonic speeds. The cost of this would be £125,500 and, as agreed, we would be pleased to fund 50% of this.

The second option that we have investigated, is, in my opinion, more financially viable, and would also be more enjoyable for your members. This involves chartering the new luxury cruise liner Hedonism III. Sailing from Portsmouth the liner will stop at Calais allowing everyone to purchase duty free items before docking in Grimsby, for transit to the Harrogate show via a free courtesy coach. At only £99,000, this is in my opinion a 'steal' and, as above, we would be pleased to fund 50% of the costs. Naturally our offer is subject to each BIGGA member attending placing an order of £10,000 each.

I trust that you will find these options of interest and if you would like any further details then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards
Carl Crome

Sad passing of Ron Whitehead

Ron Whitehead, until recently Head Greenkeeper at La Moye GC, on Jersey, has died after a short illness.

Ron, who was 68, retired to Skegness two years ago but in that time designed a golf course for a Jersey-based syndicate at Tattershall Castle, in Lincoln. He had started work on the construction of the course when he was taken ill.

He had started his greenkeeping career at Beauchief GC and worked at both Dore and Totley GC and Wheatley GC before moving to Jersey.

He is survived by his wife, Pauline; sister, Mavis; son, John and daughter, Delyce.

New MD at Stihl

Peter Baker has retired as Managing Director of Andreas Stihl Ltd on the grounds of ill health.

Martyn Thomas, the newly appointed MD joined the company at the beginning of May and the formalisation of his appointment as the new Managing Director takes immediate effect.

As head of the STIHL operation in UK, Peter Baker has been a key figure in the industry for over 20 years. His retirement, which had been planned and announced for December of this year, has been brought forward to allow him to concentrate on recovering his health and thus fully pursue his active plans next year. Friends and colleagues throughout the organisation wish Peter a full and speedy recovery.

Martyn Thomas' first months in the business were spent visiting the company's global headquarters in Germany and working closely with senior management to ensure the smooth transition of his role for customers, suppliers and staff.

Previously with Mitsubishi Electric Europe, Martyn was Divisional Manager responsible for the significant multi-million pound Industrial Automation Systems business - a major supplier of control systems to manufacturing industries throughout the UK.

Prior to working for Mitsubishi Electric, Martyn spent 15 years with DuPont, the US based chemical company in a number of sales, marketing and technical roles. Since graduating from Bristol University in 1977 with a First Class Honours Degree in Chemistry, Martyn has lived and worked in Germany, Switzerland and the USA, and has travelled extensively throughout Europe and Japan.

Daniel returns to STRI

A former STRI employee has returned to Bingley, following the loss of three turfgrass advisers in June.

Daniel Binns, previously employed as an STRI Research Officer in Soil Physics, is currently working as a project team manager for a community environmental programme operating a recycling business.

Daniel will be joining Henry Bechelet, also a former STRI Turfgrass Agronomist who re-joined the Institute in May.

Sisis record a busy year after merger

A year on from the company's take over of Huxley's, Sisis has completed the extensive consolidation work and is now ready to face the future with confidence.

"With ourselves based in Macclesfield and the Huxley headquarters down in Hampshire it was a logistical nightmare," explained Lynn Hilton, who added that she believed the company now offered the largest single range from a single company in the world.

"A team including joint Managing Director, William Hargreaves; Operations Manager, John Arnold, and Design and Development Manager, Brian Hartley spent three months at the Huxley site ensuring a smooth change over.

"Some 40 wagon loads of parts came up from Hampshire and all had to be logged and found space in the existing storage here," she explained, adding that a recently built mezzanine floor will help to alleviate the congestion.

The "merger" of two of the best known British companies in the fine turf industry made sense from an economies of scale factor but also because Huxley was a grass cutting specialist whose portfolio of products fitted nicely into Sisis' wide range of products.

Since the purchase of Huxley's, the Sisis staffing numbers have increased to around 77.

Huxley's had around 30 products in



its range and Sisis will be concentrating on around 12 of these - the other 18 being covered by products in the existing Sisis range.

"On a few instances we shall be continuing with the Huxley machine and dropping the Sisis one," said Keith Vertigan, the UK Sales Manager.

"It is good to be getting back into grass cutting which Sisis did 20 years ago," added Keith, who is relishing the task of selling the new expanded Sisis range.

Sisis now export to 42 countries and to every continent while the recently

formed outlet in South Carolina, under the stewardship of Ian Camp, is making headway.

Although the Huxley name no longer appears on machines Sisis have retained the familiar burgundy colour for the grass cutting machines.

"It was felt that burgundy was a better colour than our usual black and yellow colours for grass cutting machines," explained Lynn.

Martin Cook, one of the former Huxley staff who joined Sisis, drives on of the Huxley machines which now carries the Sisis name.

New storage system increases efficiency



Textron dealer Scottish Grass Machinery has invested £30,000 in a storage facility for parts to dramatically increase the speed and efficiency of their distribution and after sales support.

The Inverkeithing based company, part of the SGM Group, purchased the giant-sized Kardex Industriever as part

of its constant drive to improve customer service as the machinery operates a carousel enabling quick and easy access to more than 10,000 stored parts.

"Time is of the essence in meeting customer demand. It now takes seconds to access a part using this piece of machinery. This means we

are able to provide an even more efficient maintenance and support service to our customers. It has also reduced the floor space required for parts storage by around 60%, which we now use as additional workshop space," said SGM Managing Director David McInroy.

Porsche efficiency at Antonio Carraro

Technicians from Porsche in Stuttgart have begun an important collaborative project with Antonio Carraro as part of the Padova firm's on-going development.

This project with the German firm fits into the Company's wider strategy. During the last three years Carraro has made a major commitment designing and developing tractors to form the Ergit series. They have also constructed a new manufacturing plant and further developed their centre for study and research.

The intention is to optimise on these investments by further developing manufacturing processes and commercial methods using information technology at every level.

In this first stage Porsche technicians have reduced production times on the old assembly line by re-organising the warehousing to achieve a just-in-time process. This has resulted in work on the assembly line having fewer interruptions and creating high quality control at every stage.

The training system advocated by the Porsche technicians has the individual at its centre. Each person is made to feel actively part of the



construction process and is allowed to work with a high degree of autonomy. This results in an increased sense of responsibility and greater personal satisfaction.

These changes have generated a

great deal of enthusiasm for the project and for the training which it involves.

Charterhouse Turf Machinery Ltd are the sole importers of the Antonio Carraro Tractor range.

Golf Course Architects merger confirmed

The merger between Europe's three leading golf course architects organisation was finally ratified in London at the beginning of July. The British Institute of Golf Course Architects, the European Society of Golf Architects, and Association Francaise des Architectes de Golf have merged under the title of the European Institute of Golf Course Architects.

The European Institute now represents the vast majority of qualified and experienced golf course architects throughout the continent of Europe, 'from Spain to Scandinavia, from Iceland to Italy'. The EIGCA intends to pursue the goals developed by the former British Institute, which include enhancing the professional status of the profession, developing the role of education, and increasing the opportunities for its members to practise in countries throughout the world. The European Institute of Golf Course Architects is recognised by the R&A and the EGU, and hopes to draw support from all golf Federations throughout Europe as well as pan European organisations. This can only be of further and increasing benefit to the profession in years to come.

The Head Office is at Merrist Wood House, Worplesdon, Guildford, Surrey with a second office in Vienna, Austria. The Institute has appointed a new Executive Officer. Julia Green, based at Merrist Wood, who took up her post from the formation of the new Institute.

At the EGM held earlier that day, David Williams was elected President of the Institute with Peter Harradine as his Vice-President. Other Members elected to the Council were Simon Gidman, Ken Moodie, Rainer Preissmann, Main Pint, Mark Adam and David Krause.

At the meeting, David Williams expressed great thanks to all those who had put considerable effort into the lengthy merger negotiations over the past five or six years.

New faces at Textron

Selina Flynn has been appointed Communications and Promotions Manager at Textron Turf Care and Specialty Products. She will be responsible for the planning and implementation of Textron's marketing activities throughout Europe, the Middle East and Africa and will report to Neil Woodfin, the former Turf Care Product Manager appointed to Marketing Director earlier this year.

Selina joins Textron from a marketing communications background having worked in East Anglia for Volvo Commercial Vehicles and latterly the US-owned electronics company Wavetek in Norwich. Previous to this Selina lived in Brussels and worked for the European Union as an interpreter and translator after gaining an BA in French and European Studies at Keele University.

She now lives in Norwich and has enjoyed travelling to many parts of the world enjoys weekend breaks in

Europe as often as a busy work schedule permits.

Tim Lansdell has joined Textron as Product Manager, Turf Care and Tractors and will be responsible for product development and promotion of the Ransomes Jacobsen, Cushman and Ryan turf care products throughout the world and the Iseki tractor range in the UK.

Tim obtained a degree in Agricultural Engineering from Silsoe College in Bedfordshire and then joined Ford Tractors, now New Holland, as a Product Demonstrator. During his 16 years with the company he was promoted to work in the Training Dept before being appointed a Product Marketing Manager, a similar position to his current job at Textron.

He lives in Chelmsford with his wife and daughter and in his spare time enjoys an active lifestyle, skiing in the winter months, bike riding in the summer and renovating his home.



New role for Joe at Vitax

Joe Crawley has been appointed Technical Sales Advisor for Vitax, prior to the retirement of Allan Stow. Responsible for the whole of the South East, from Hampshire to Kent and Oxfordshire to Essex, Joe will be both looking after established clients and developing new business, in this area.

Thirty-year-old Joe brings over seven years sales experience with the company's products to his new post having worked for two of Vitax's key distributors. Originally an apprentice gardener with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, where he swiftly rose to the position of supervisor, Joe is looking forward to working directly for a company he feels he knows well.

Royal Inverdivot GC...

by Tony Husband



TGA's one-day practical courses

A series of one-day practical courses was held recently for members of the Turfgrass Growers Association (TGA) looking to maintain the continuing rise in the standard of cultivated turf.

Arranged and presented by independent turf consultant and agronomist, Robert Laycock, the courses took place at centres in Lincolnshire and Kent and were attended by managers and field staff from TGA members located in the north and south of England.

The principal theme of the courses was how to assess turf to the TGA quality standards. Produced in 1996, the TGA standards lay down a number of criteria that need to be met by good quality cultivated turf used in general landscape situations. Under this voluntary self-certification scheme, participating turf growers have to complete and provide a written declaration that the specific turf being supplied to the customer meets all of the requirements set out in the standards.

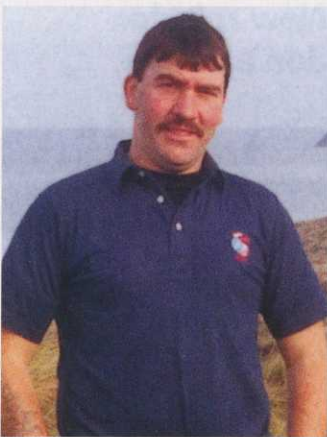
"By the end of the course, participants should be in a position to complete the TGA declaration with confidence and be able to use the equipment necessary to make a number of simple turf measurements," explained Robert.

"The course also involves brushing-up on the identification of individual grasses and provides an insight into the methods of assessing turf, both on the roll and in the field."

According to Robert complaints about turf quality have been one of the most common problems dealt with by Trading Standards officers. However, the rapid demise of pasture or meadow grass, and the steady growth in the area of cultivated turf being harvested in the UK, principally by TGA members, means that quality standards are on a continuing upward path.

"The higher the quality of turf produced, the fewer the complaints from customers," he concluded.

Steve's new pastures



Steve Evans, for the last nine years Deputy at St Enodoc Golf Club and a well known BIGGA member, has taken up the post of Head Greenkeeper at Yelverton, in Devon.



Further to National Chairman, Elliott Small's trip down last month he reported back in his column of the kangaroos he saw on one of the golf courses he visited. We are now in a position to show you the evidence!

Grass Science consultancy attracts new staff

Grass Science, a leading UK based sports turf and environmental consultancy has appointed two new staff to their operation.

Andy Cole, formerly with the STRI, joins as Senior Agronomist and will cover Central England and North Wales while Noel Mackenzie (also formerly with the STRI) joins as Senior Agronomist to cover Southern England and South Wales.

"These appointments are an integral part of the continued expansion of our consultancy services. It also enables us to further consolidate our policy of working closely with our clients to ensure that top quality results are achieved," said Brian Robinson, Director of Agronomy for Grass Science.

Left to right: Andy Cole, Noel Mackenzie.



Lindum Plant appoint Scottish agents

Lindum Plant Nutrition has expanded its operations over the border, following the appointment of Greentech (Sportsturf) Ltd. as its Scottish agents. Responsible for developing the Scottish market, Greentech, now in its third year, has a rapidly expanding customer base, and a three man board, whose members have jointly acquired over 60 years experience in the industry. Kevin Brunton, one of the directors explained that the two divisions of the company, construction and supply, apply to all sports played on natural grass.

"We were looking for a good after care maintenance programme for our customers and Lindum Plant Nutrition offers basic soil chemistry with no gimmicks, backed with sound products," he commented.

Lindum's David Snowden said that the fact that Greentech had quickly established an enviable reputation,



and had two strings to its bow, made the company ideal to develop Lindum Plant Nutrition in Scotland.

Pic shows Greentech Board L-R Hugh Murray, Managing Director; Tom Brannan and Kevin Brunton.