

NEW SCOTTISH DEALER FOR RANSOMES JACOBSEN

Ransomes Jacobsen Ltd, the Ipswich based turf maintenance equipment manufacturer, has confirmed that Fairways (GM) Ltd will succeed Scottish Grass Machinery Ltd as the distributor for Ransomes Jacobsen products in Scotland with effect from 8 November 2004.

The Fairways Group is an established, family-owned business based at West Yonderton, close to Glasgow airport. Its major subsidiary companies are: Sportsgrounds Ltd, Sportsgrounds Machinery (a division of Sportsgrounds Ltd) and Wiedenmann (UK) Ltd.

David Withers, Sales and Marketing Director at Ransomes Jacobsen said, "We are delighted to confirm the appointment of Fairways GM as our new dealers for Scotland with effect from 8 November.

"The Fairways Group is a well-run and very professional business and I have great confidence that they will help us with the continued growth of the business here in the UK.

"The experience of the group and their commitment to the turf sector will ensure the delivery of outstanding service to our customer base in Scotland. We warmly welcome them to our dealer network."

Managing Director of the Fairways Group, David Rae added, "This appointment is a significant step for Fairways and we are equally delighted to be joining the dealer network of such a major player in the international turf care industry.

"To ensure the smooth transition of service for Ransomes Jacobsen customers we are currently sourcing and equipping additional depots in the west and east of Scotland and recruiting and training staff in readiness for 8 November.

"We bring a reputation for outstanding service and after sales support and look forward to building lasting relationships with existing customers and new prospects."



David Rae, Managing Director of Fairways (GM) Ltd.

NEW FUNGAL DISEASE DISCOVERED

The fungal disease known in the US as Rapid Blight has recently been identified on a golf course in the UK. Rapid Blight is a disease that was first observed in California in 1995 and has since been seen in 11 other States across the US.

Initial symptoms on affected turf include water soaking of the leaves in small, irregular shaped patches. As the disease progresses, the affected areas coalesce and the infected plants eventually die. The damaged turf has been described as looking like a cross between Take-All patch and Fusarium patch.

Initially, the causal agent of this disease could not be determined. However, in 2003, Dr Mary Olsen and her team at the University of Arizona, isolated a species of *Labyrinthula* from turfgrass plants showing symptoms of the disease and have since confirmed that this pathogen is the cause of Rapid Blight.

Until this identification, all known reported species of *Labyrinthula* have only caused damage to plants in marine environments and salt-water estuaries.

The *Labyrinthula* pathogen is unlike any other previously described turfgrass pathogen. It is not a fungus and shares few, if any, characteristics in

common with the fungi generally accepted as causing disease on cool-season turfgrasses.

In all cases to date, Rapid Blight has developed on swards that have been irrigated with water with high sodium and bicarbonate levels (high salinity). Bentgrass, meadowgrass and ryegrass all appear to be affected by this disease but so far, fescues have appeared to be tolerant.

Rapid Blight disease has now been identified as developing on several greens on one golf course in the UK, following receipt of turf samples for analysis by Dr Kate Entwistle at The Turf Disease Centre. Kate confesses that, "Identifying turfgrass diseases is always a challenge and sometimes, it can take a large amount of detective work to finally confirm the cause of any damage.

"With this disease, however, the challenge was much greater. I had identified the presence of this unusual organism in all of the infected plants removed from the turf sample, but I had never seen anything like it before, apart from in printed articles. I read more about this new disease when I had heard of it in the US.

"Subsequently, I contacted Dr Olsen for support and eventually confirmed that what I was looking at was in fact the causal agent of Rapid Blight. I would like to thank Dr Olsen for all of her help to date and look forward to working with her in the future to learn more about this new disease".

Kate, who is a visiting Fellow of Cranfield University (Silsoe), has contacted the University about this new disease and work is in progress to study the pathogen more closely.

Kate says, "Colleagues at Cranfield are as excited as I am about this new discovery and I would like to thank them for their support and encouragement in working on this new disease. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank the Course Manager for initially sending the sample to me for analysis and subsequently for his time and willing cooperation in providing maintenance details and information to support our studies. His help is very much appreciated".

Information is available on the internet about this disease and you can contact Kate on 01256 880246 or email her at Kate@theturf-diseasecentre.co.uk

Royal Inverdivot GC...

Strip Cartoonist of the Year www.tonyhusband.co.uk



NEW NAME FOR ETT

European Turf Technology Limited has become Environmental Turf Technology Limited.

Managing Director, Richard Lawrence commented, "We have seen massive growth throughout the world.

"We have become the largest supplier of specialist turf nutrients to the Middle East and the Caribbean, as well as a major supplier to mainland Europe.

"This coupled with our commitment to a proactive environmental policy made the choice of a new name obvious."