

## Rollers, attachments take their place in maintenance program

Turf rollers are becoming an increasingly important maintenance tool as golfers demand ever-faster greens speeds and cutting heights reach dangerously low levels. Rollers are used prior to mowing and during grow in to increase speeds and avoid scalping. They can be used following greens aeration to more speedily return them to puttable condition. In some cases, they can be used after topdressing to work the sand through the turf.

Many companies offer turf rollers for maintaining greens. Among them are the following firms:

**Brouwer Turf Equipment Ltd.** — 416-476-4311  
**CheTech Company** — 800-228-8784  
**Emrex Inc.** — 717-288-9360  
**Farber Bag & Supply Co.** — 319-583-6304  
**Friend Turf Equipment** — 800-777-2936

**Gandy Company** — 800-443-2476  
**Jacobsen Div. of Textron Inc.** — 414-637-6711  
**Multitynes Ltd.** — 416-520-4845  
**Newlon Bowls, Tru Turf Equipment Division** — 805-871-0213  
**Pacific Equipment & Irrigation Inc.** — 909-594-5811  
**Partac Peat Corp.** — 800-247-2326  
**Precision Small Engine Co.** — 305-974-1960  
**Salsco Inc.** — 203-271-1682  
**SISIS Inc.** — 904-733-9715  
**Smithco Inc.** — 215-688-4009  
**The Toro Co.** — 612-888-8801  
**Turf Care Products Inc.** — 800-282-4792  
**Turflite Inc.** — 800-443-8506  
**Wood Bay Enterprises Inc.** — 800-661-4942

## Manufacturers positioned for onset of electric models

By PETER BLAIS

The introduction of the electric riding greens mower is the most talked-about technology to hit the greens mower market in the past year.

**Ransomes** began full-scale production of its E-Plex in late 1994. **Jacobsen**, as it did a year ago, will demonstrate its prototype at the upcoming Golf Course Superintendents Association of America International Confer-

ence and Show in San Francisco and begin selling units in early 1996. **John Deere**, **Toro** and **Bunton** are rumored to be working on electric riders.

As with any innovative new product, questions abound. Those concerning electric riders include, "Will the batteries remain charged long enough to mow greens in hilly terrain?" and "How will the units operate in cold weather on Northern courses?"

"As a concept, it's an interesting one. But we'll have to take a look at what's out there and see what they can do before we get too involved," said Clair Peterson, Deere's advertising and promotions manager.

The E-Plex hit the market on a commercial basis in early November, according to Ransomes spokesman Tom Mentcer. While no specific sales figures were yet available, Mentcer said the E-Plex had generated "a lot of excitement" during demonstrations at golf courses and trade shows. Demonstrations-to-sales ratios were running a "very healthy" 3-to-2 (three demonstrations for every two units sold), he added.

"Superintendents already dealing or concerned about having to face noise ordinances were particularly interested," Mentcer said.

Sales are also strong for the Greensplex 160, a more traditional fossil fuel-driven mower introduced a year ago, the Ransomes spokesman said.

Jacobsen will be showing off a slightly revised version of its proposed electric rider in San Francisco, according to company spokesman John Mielke. The initial unit has been beefed up from a 36-volt to a 48-volt system. Other revisions will be worked in before Jacobsen moves into full production in early 1996, Mielke added.

"We don't see any disadvantage to being second into the market," the Jake executive said. "We're hoping to come out with some better features [than Ransomes]. Once our unit is in the field, we hope to be No. 1 before long."

Jacobsen has five models of traditional walking greens mowers and three riders. The walking mowers include the two- and four-cycle PGM models and the 18-, 22- and 26-inch Greens King units. The 18-inch (designed for undulating greens) and 26-inch (designed for collars, aprons and tees) models are relatively new to the marketplace.

"We're going to OPC [Operator Presence Controls] on our walk behinds," said Mielke of the handle-mounted bar that must be engaged before the mower will run.

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### GREENS MOWERS

## Manufacturers take electric trend seriously

Continued from page 33

Jake introduced its Greens King IV rider with a 16-hp powered Briggs & Stratton Vanguard engine this past fall. Greens King IVs are also offered with a gas-powered, 16 1/2-hp Kohler engine and a 16 1/2-hp Kubota diesel.

Asked if Toro was working on an electric rider or any new riding greens mower, Commercial Products Division Marketing Manager Helmut Ullrich would only say, "We have a new product that will be on display at the show in response to the competition."

Meanwhile, Toro has reintroduced a three-wheel drive rider, the Greensmaster 3100-3WD, with improved traction allowing operators to reach elevated greens or hilly areas. Like its parent, the two-wheel-drive Greensmaster 3100, the new rider features Toro's Turf Guardian Leak Detector for preventing turf damage from hydraulic oil leaks.

In the walking line, Toro will also introduce the improved GR1000 with a smoother clutch and other improvements. The company introduced its GR500 walkers two years ago.

John Deere is updating its standard bearer, the Model 22 Walking Greens Mower, with the improved Model 220. "We took the basic unit, tried to keep the good things and improve on those things we could," Peterson said.

The major improvement is the addition

of an operator presence safety system similar to the operator-controlled bar that must be engaged for most consumer lawn mowers to operate. Other changes include a more powerful overhead valve system; an 11-blade reel increasing the frequency of clip; redesigned controls for more convenient operation; and durability improvements.

"We've retained the external split differential system that allowed the 22 to track so well," said Peterson, adding that the updated unit should be in full production by the GCSAA show.

Deere also manufactures the 2243 Triplex in gas and diesel. One of its major attributes, Peterson said, is the cutting unit's offset design allowing it to groom greens in opposite directions from day to day, thereby reducing compaction.

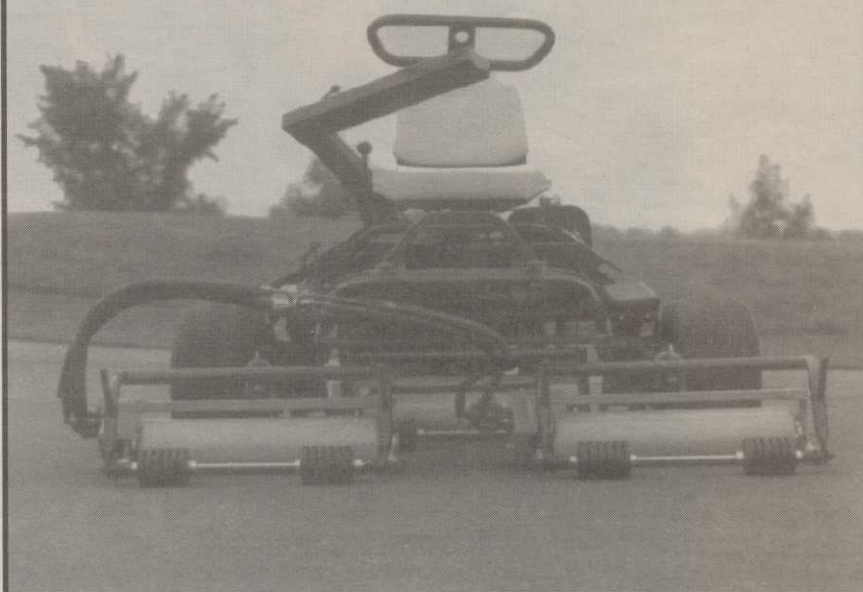
Bunton is sticking with its tried-and-true models in 1995, according to Gary Shampeny, vice president of sales and marketing.

The Louisville, Ky.-based firm offers 19-, 22- and 26-inch walk-behind GS models. The BG61L lightweight triplex riding greens mower is available with Kohler or Briggs & Stratton gas-powered engines and a Kubota diesel motor.

"We also have an optional three-wheel drive unit," Shampeny said. "The technology came out of Japan where they have a lot of hilly slopes. It's great for getting on and off severely sloped greens."

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