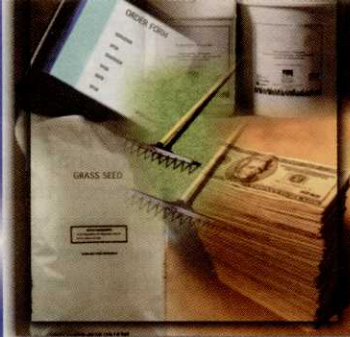


SUPPLIER BUSINESS



BRIEFS

JACOBSEN APPOINTS MAY

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Textron's Jacobsen Turf, Commercial & Specialty Equipment group has appointed Howard May senior vice president of operations. May comes to the division with more than 20 years of manufacturing and operations management experience at various Textron locations. Prior to this appointment, May was senior vice president of operations at Kautex, a Textron company, and was responsible for the facilities in Windsor, Ontario, Canada, and Avilla, Ind. May joined Textron in 1995 in the company's Automotive Trim division.

NECE JOINS BIOSAFE SYSTEMS

GLASTONBURY, Conn. — Daniel Nece has joined the Turf Division of BioSafe Systems as a territory sales representative for the Mid-Atlantic region. Nece will be responsible for business development in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware. Nece has been in the golf course industry since 1995 when he started as an assistant at Riverton Country Club.

FINN CORP ADDS BOWERS

CINCINNATI, Ohio — Finn Corp. has added Marc Bowers to its executive team. As vice president of marketing, Bowers will oversee all strategic planning, distribution growth and marketing for Finn and Express Blower. He will be specifically involved with erosion control related product lines.

FMC REORDERS STAFF

PHILADELPHIA — FMC Corp.'s Specialty Products Business has recently reshuffled its staff. Dr. John Long is the new product development manager for turf and ornamental products. Amy Gabrielian has been promoted to marketing and software solutions business manager. Jim Walter has moved up to marketing and business development manager and will lead efforts to define, develop and implement new marketing programs. Felicia Boone has also joined the staff as assistant product manager.

E-Z-GO revamps utility vehicle line

By ANDREW OVERBECK

AUGUSTA, Ga. — E-Z-GO has replaced its five-year-old Workhorse line with a new family of utility vehicles that will carry the Multi-Purpose Truck, or MPT, nameplate. The more "truck-like" MPT line will be unveiled at the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Show in Atlanta this month.

E-Z-GO will offer the MPT in four different configurations in both gasoline and electric versions that have payload capacities ranging from 800 to 1,200 pounds.

"We realized that we needed to keep the product evolving and improving," said E-Z-GO's Ron Skenes. "It is a competitive market, but these changes are based on feedback we have gotten from customers."

The biggest change will come on the MPT 1200 and 1000 models that feature a roto-molded, polyethylene cross-link load bed

with inserts for tie-downs and racks. The bed also has a gas-assist shock for easier dumping and wall slots for 2 x 4's to divide the bed into sections.

"A polyethylene bed is a better match for the environment that superintendents work in. It will be a lot more durable than metal, steel or aluminum," Skenes said.

Initially, the MPT 800 series will only be available with a steel cargo bed.

E-Z-GO has also upgraded the electric power source on the MPT 1000 to a 48V system. Previous Workhorse models relied on a 36V system.

"With eight six-volt batteries, the 1000 now has more power," said Skenes. "Gas has historically been the biggest seller in this segment, but it will be interesting to see how the 48V system takes off. Superintendents we have talked to are excited about this innovation."

The MPT 800E will still come

with the 36V power system. The MPT 1200 has an 11-hp, 350cc, 4-cycle engine and the MPT 800G has a 9-hp, 295cc, 4-cycle engine.

In addition to the new polyethylene bed and the larger electric power plant, the guts of the vehicles have also been redesigned. The cargo bed frame has been reinforced for more support and the front axle has been widened to improve the vehicle's ride and handling.

Other improvements to the MPT vehicles include improved



The new MPT features a polyethylene cargo bed.

engine performance and enhanced clutch design for better hill climbing and better cold starts.

Rain Bird to unveil Eagle wireless rotor

AZUSA, Calif. — Rain Bird Corp.'s Golf Division is set to introduce its Wireless Eagle Rotor to the golf market this year. With wireless technology now reaching the golf market, superintendents will be able to eliminate extensive amounts of underground wires and electrical connections associated with

conventional irrigation systems.

The new Rain Bird rotor uses

the same technology as its Eagle line, but the rotor is controlled

without the use of remote satellite or decoder technology.

"As implied by the name, the Wireless Eagle Rotor eliminates the need for all types of wire," said golf structural development manager Steve

Sakurai. "It needs no power wire,

no communication wire and no station wire.

"The elimination of these lines can help courses in high-lightning areas from experiencing downtime," he added. "It also allows for maximum flexibility in the location and placement of rotors."

The rotor is powered by an internal battery, which is recharged by a solar panel integrated into its case. Installation is the same as a conventional rotor, minus the electrical wiring. The rotor is installed on a swing joint and then programmed with its

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The new Wireless Eagle Rotor

Kubota files trademark infringement suit against Kioti

TORRANCE, Calif. — Kubota Corp., of Osaka, Japan, and its affiliated United States distributor Kubota Tractor Corp. have served a legal complaint upon Kioti Tractors manufacturer Daedong Industrial Co. Ltd. and its U.S. distributor Daedong - USA Inc.

Kubota filed charges of trademark and trade dress infringement and unfair competition in United States District Court in Fresno, Calif., on Aug. 19, 2002. Kubota's efforts to resolve the lawsuit prior to formal service on Dec. 4, however, were unsuccessful.

The lawsuit alleges that Kioti has engaged in trade dress infringement by using Kubota's dis-

tinctive orange color, and in some cases Kubota's distinctive hood design as well, on its competing models of tractors. The lawsuit further alleges that Kioti has been responsible for statements indicating a current relationship between Kubota and Kioti with respect to tractors when, in fact, no such current relationship exists.

In the lawsuit, Kubota seeks, among other things, injunctive relief against Kioti's use of the Kubota color and hood design and against false or misleading statements by Kioti. Kubota also seeks monetary damages, including treble damages and punitive damages based on Kioti's allegedly willful and/or intentional misconduct.

Market still developing for underground reel

By ANDREW OVERBECK

COLUMBIA CITY, Ind. — Former superintendent David Mihailides and Reelcraft Industries are pushing forward with their underground hose reel product for golf course and sports turf applications.

Mihailides invented the hand-watering device in 1999 while superintendent at Boulder Hills Golf and Country Club (now called Foxwoods G&CC) in Rhode Island. He then incorporated DGM Syringing Systems to distribute the product that has since sold more than 400 units.

Mihailides signed a deal with Reelcraft in April 2001 to market and manufacture the product and left his superintendent's position in hopes of making his invention pay off. He is now working to build brand and market awareness for the product.

"It is my hope that this becomes a specified product with both new irrigation systems and renovation

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Textron takes Jacobsen name, introduces new products

Continued from page 1

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 clip frequency. It uses snap-in/snap-out sealed battery packs and is lighter than a comparable gas-line-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 un-



The E-walk has two 48V electric motors

dulation 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. ■

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Mihailides, Reelcraft developing market

Continued from page 24

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 fit-

tings 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.



The pressurized, retractable hose is hidden underground.

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. ■

Wireless rotor

Continued from page 24

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.

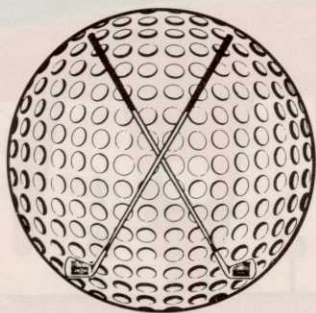
According to Sakurai, the wireless rotor will offer many advantages when it comes to renovation work.

"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." ■

— Andrew Overbeck

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