



# One hot ticket

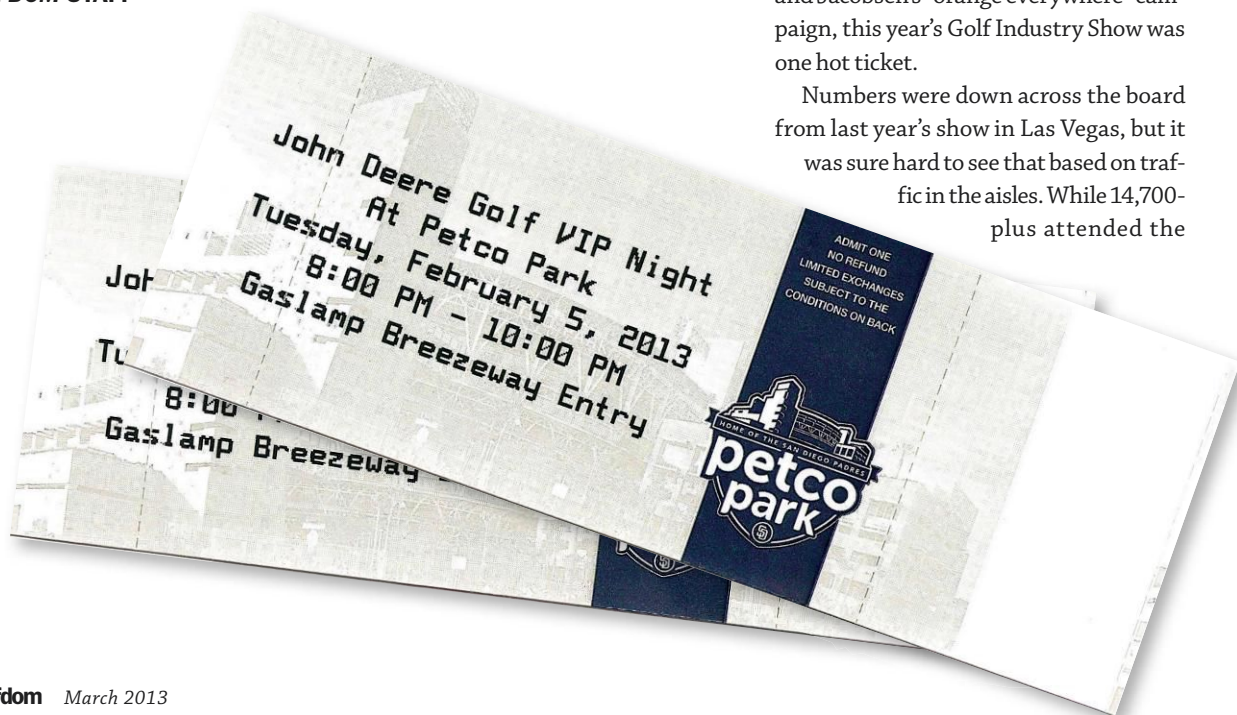
Though GIS attendance numbers dipped, there was still plenty to enjoy for those who made the trek West.

BY GOLFDOM STAFF

Ask any of the 13,000-plus who attended the Golf Industry Show in San Diego. This was a show not to be missed.

From John Deere's VIP tour of Petco Park, home of the San Diego Padres, to Valent's three-hour cruise and Jacobsen's "orange everywhere" campaign, this year's Golf Industry Show was one hot ticket.

Numbers were down across the board from last year's show in Las Vegas, but it was sure hard to see that based on traffic in the aisles. While 14,700-plus attended the





At the 2013 GIS, John Deere Golf took just about everyone out to the ballgame. OK, so the San Diego Padres were still a few weeks away from Spring Training, but GIS attendees got to 'touch 'em all' just like the big leaguers at this special event.

last two shows, this year's show saw 13,192 attendees. Qualified buyers were down from 7,068 in 2012 to 6,018 this year. Exhibitors and the size of the show itself were fairly constant — 517 exhibitors and 172,900 square feet in San Diego compared to 540 exhibitors and 177,300 square feet last year in Las Vegas.

Count Turfco's Scott Kinhead in that group of people who liked what they saw at the show despite the final numbers.

"We've been slammed with people the entire show. There have been tons of guys here to see our new topdresser and new seeder," Kinhead, executive vice president, Turfco, said. "This has been a really good show. There's a different level of energy and excitement."

Here's some quick-hit coverage of what we saw this year. We'll have a thorough report on products we saw in next month's issue.

The Golf Industry Show returns to its most heavily attended location in 2014 when it heads back to Orlando on Feb. 5th and 6th. We'll see you there.

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## Deere donates \$1 million

**John Deere will donate \$1 million over five years to The First Tee, further emphasizing Deere's active commitment to the game of golf and the career development of professionals in the golf maintenance industry.**

Besides supporting The First Tee network, funds will be used to create and launch a golf maintenance career-oriented youth development program, in conjunction with the PGA TOUR. Local chapters of The First Tee will partner with the Tour's Tournament Player Courses to provide the opportunity for high school-aged participants to learn about topics in agronomy and golf course maintenance careers.

"This donation will continue to help those kids enrich their lives throughout



"At The First Tee, we rely on strong partners like John Deere Golf to help us carry out our ambitious efforts to reach 10 million additional young people between 2011 and 2017," said Joe Louis Barrow, chief executive, The First Tee.

the U.S. in the game of golf and enlighten them on the opportunities within our industry," Steve Vincent, John Deere Golf's North American sales manager, said. "The intent of this is to reach out to over

10 million youth and help them learn the lesson of life."

"We're going beyond the game of golf to behind-the-scenes," Mark Ford, John Deere's strategic marketing manager, told *Golfdom*.



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# On the water front

One USGA agronomist puts reclaimed water debate front and center.

**Brian Whitlark, agronomist** with the USGA Green Section Southwest Region, took the stage at the 2013 USGA Education Conference in San Diego, Calif., to talk about alternative water sources for golf course irrigation. And he shined the spotlight most on recycled water.

"Recycled water is a seriously underutilized resource in the golf industry," Whitlark said, citing a 2009 GCSAA survey that found 12 percent of U.S. golf courses are using recycled water for irrigation. "Clearly, there's a huge potential for us to embrace the use of recycled water and reduce our demand on potable water sources."

Formerly known as effluent water, recycled water is treated and cleaned at a sewage treatment plant then pumped through a pipeline to a golf course, where it's used for irrigation.

There are a few reasons why courses don't use recycled water, some of which are viable and some of which aren't, Whitlark said. He rebuffed those who don't use it just because they already have an available water source.

"I'm afraid that doesn't fly," he said. "That's too short-term thinking. We need to be forward thinking. We have to assume that 10, 20, 30 years from now that drinking water source is not going to be available at our golf course."

Even the saline content of reclaimed water is a surmountable hurdle, Whitlark said, and one he's seen courses in his Southwest territory overcome.

But that doesn't mean reclaimed water isn't problematic. It can be expensive, Whitlark acknowledged, and some courses — especially older ones — simply don't have access to a recycled water source.

"In many cases it may cost millions of dollars to get that plumbing to their golf course," Whitlark said. "This is a significant hurdle and one I think state legislators need to address if they really want golf courses to reduce their demand on potable water sources."

Whatever the challenges, it's quite possible for courses to have green, firm conditions while reducing their water use, Whitlark asserted. "I'm of the mindset that we can have our cake and eat it too."

Brian Whitlark says act now to save water for the future.



## Toro and Rounds 4 Research get exclusive

**The Toro Company presented** the Environmental Institute for Golf with a check for \$50,000 at the GIS, creating an exclusive partnership with the program. Rounds 4 Research is an industry initiative specifically aimed at increasing funding for turfgrass research.

"Research is the lifeblood of both environmental and economic advancements in turf management," says Darren Redetzke, vice president for Toro's Commercial Business. "Toro's commitment to Rounds 4 Research will complement our past and current support for the EIFG and GCSAA, and aligns with our philosophy that investing in research ultimately improves the customer experience. This is a vital program for all sectors of the golf industry."

Rounds 4 Research allows GCSAA chapters to participate as fundraising partners on a national level. Golf facilities can support the effort by donating rounds of golf that will be auctioned online to generate funds.

As the exclusive partner for Rounds 4 Research, Toro's commitment will allow the EIFG to bolster its research efforts. Since 1988, Toro has invested well over \$1 million to support scientific research, advancement in education, and scholarships for future turfgrass professionals.

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## Orange everywhere

**On pedi-cabs.** On muscle cars parked in a line across from the convention center. On T-shirts being handed out to passers-by.

There was “orange everywhere” at the

GIS, thanks to a guerilla marketing effort made by Jacobsen. The company, debuting six new or enhanced products, including the LF510 fairway mower, was visible all over the Gaslamp Quarter of San Diego.

“Our goal for this year’s Golf Industry Show was to blanket San Diego in Jacobsen orange,” said Chris Vernon, vice president of product management and market-

There were orange Dodge Chargers all over the Gaslamp in San Diego. But we didn’t see Bo or Luke Duke anywhere.

ing for Jacobsen. “Based on the increased booth traffic, heightened interest and level of engagement with customers, our efforts exceeded all expectations.”

## Petco Park VIP tour

**Though it was off-season** for the San Diego Padres, GIS attendees streamed steadily into the ballpark.

They didn’t have club seats, or even bleacher seats. They had something better — field access. As in, all access.

John Deere Golf hosted a VIP night on Feb. 5. And two days later, Luke Yoder, director, field operations, opened the gates for GCSAA members who wanted to learn more about how Yoder and his crew maintained the field.

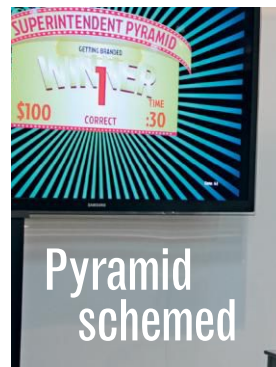
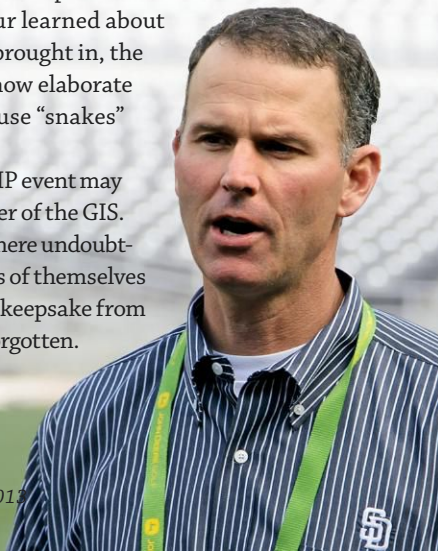
“For the GCSAA we did a couple things, we timed a calcium nitrate application with the rain we had a week ago,” Yoder told visitors to the field. “It’s been fun to get it ready for the big show.”

During the Deere event, visitors were treated to ballpark snacks, live music and plenty of photo ops on the field.

Attendees on Yoder’s tour learned about the outfield fence being brought in, the field’s height of cut and how elaborate mowing patterns can cause “snakes” in the turf.

The John Deere Golf VIP event may have been the show-stealer of the GIS. The hundreds who were there undoubtedly got a few good photos of themselves on the pitcher’s mound, a keepsake from a GIS that won’t soon be forgotten.

Yoder hates snakes. Not reptiles, but field snakes, that create bad hops.



Seth seems to be saying, “Not following” as Craig MacGregor struggles to give clues.



**We’re both thrilled** and ashamed at the same time.

*Golfdom* EIC Seth Jones, along with sales manager Craig MacGregor, took the stage at the BASF booth in San Diego to play “Superintendent Pyramid” — based on the TV game show “\$100,000 Pyramid” — to win some money for Disabled American Veterans.

The train derailed when MacGregor failed to get Jones to guess “Taylor Made.” As the clock wound down to zero, Jones suggested MacGregor pass to a new word. “Dude, I already passed to a new word,” MacGregor groaned. Talk about not being on the same page, these guys weren’t even in the same book.

Their grand total of one — *one!* — correct answer got them \$100. But, thanks to BASF’s generosity, an additional \$1,000 was thrown in and the team still got to say they won \$1,100 for charity. Not bad for a parting gift!

PHOTO CREDIT: RYAN BOCKMULLER

## UMass tops in Turf Bowl

**Students from the University** of Massachusetts-Amherst were the grand champs at the 19th Annual GCSAA Collegiate Turf Bowl.

The team was awarded \$4,000 cash and the opportunity to volunteer at The Players Championship this May, courtesy of John Deere Golf.

UMass topped nearly 70 other teams from 35 universities across the country, scoring highest in a written and hands-on competition covering every aspect of turf management.

The Turf Bowl is more than a test of knowledge, however. It also builds teamwork, inspires school spirit, and in the words of test preparer Leah Brilman, “drives what students are doing and where they’re going.”



## // COOL PRODUCTS //



### Toro partners with GreensPerfection

The Toro Company has entered into an agreement with GreensPerfection to manufacture and market greensmower brushes developed by Rod Lingle, CGCS, for Toro's complete lineup of Greensmaster walk and riding greensmowers. Under this agreement, Toro is the only original equipment manufacturer to offer Lingle's GreensPerfection brushes on its equipment.

The Toro/GreensPerfection brush offerings combine mowing and brushing into one single step. The brushes work in concert with the rotating design, which causes less damage to the turf and provides more lift to the grass blades than traditional groomers, the companies say. In addition to lifting leaf blades to a vertical position for a superior cut, it also throws sand and debris to the front of the mower instead of into the reel to help maintain reel sharpness. The brushes leave a dramatic striping pattern for enhanced aesthetics.


“Partnering with Toro just makes sense,” Lingle says. “Our brushes have been used with great success on greens, tees, fairways and approaches. Now, with Toro's manufacturing expertise and market reach, they will be available to many more golf courses that could benefit from the technology.”

### A Rain Bird's eye view

A long-trusted provider of efficient irrigation products, Rain Bird is now offering golf courses yet another environmentally-conscious solution: the WT-M 50 kW wind turbine.

“We know that courses using significant amounts of power to operate irrigation pumps and other electrical fixtures and appliances need a way to reduce their energy costs. By offering irrigation products and wind turbines, Rain Bird will be able to help these golf courses save both water and energy,” says Mason Sorenson, Rain Bird's wind turbine senior sales manager.

Specifically designed for golf course environments, these turbines help courses decrease both their energy costs and their dependence on local utilities. The smallest turbine is similar in size to a mature oak tree, standing approximately 100 feet tall with blades that spin in a 63-foot diameter.

“This is a totally new direction for Rain Bird, but it makes sense from a sustainability standpoint,” says Dave Johnson, Rain Bird's director of corporate marketing. 



Identifying insects and plant diseases was just part of the Turf Bowl challenge, which covered everything from business skills to practical knowledge.

# Golfdom

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