



## DALLAS '94 — *The Future Course Of Golf*

By Chad Eberhardt

This year's 65th International Golf Course Show should prove to be a benchmark for the way golf course superintendents operate their facilities for many years to come.

Year after year, the trade show provides certain new and improved products that sweep through the show floor like wildfire.

Remember how greens rolling systems took everyone by storm last year in Anaheim? I don't remember seeing quite as many of them this year. Their presence was certainly overshadowed by many other new attractions.

The headliner had to be the electric powered equipment. Both Jacobsen and Ransomes unveiled their own version of a battery powered triplex. Superintendents flocked to each booth to find out what all the commotion was about. Critics and supporters were captivated by the chance to peek into the not so distant future.

Electric powered equipment was the talk of the town!

There were many other technologies worth mentioning that didn't draw as much attention for various reasons.

Perhaps the most interesting advancement in our industry received the least amount of notice due to floor location.

Back in the southwest corner of the showroom was a no-frills booth with nothing but various makes and models of cutting head units and quite a few brightly colored rollers for those units. The booth was sandwiched between a soil amendment booth and a metal cooler stand booth.

Like the majority of those in attendance, I did my best to avoid any eye contact with salespeople in these areas. The peddlers in these types of booths get all over you like flies on flypaper if you give them any chance at all.

**Fortunately**, something caught my eye at the no-frills booth. A small 4x5 aerial photo of this year's Rose Bowl was all it took to catch my attention. I was history!

Neither of the opportunistic salesmen missed a beat. One of them asked if I saw the game. I made sure they were well aware of the fact I didn't just see the game—I was there!

Neither of the men knew much about the details of the football game itself. They both knew exactly what I was talking about when I commented on Wisconsinites being wary about fraudulent schemes from now on.

Our conversation led conveniently from events surrounding the Rose Bowl festivities to the actual preparation of the field. The French company that they represented, JJB, made its American debut in helping to prepare this past Rose Bowl.

JJB developed a revolutionary rear roller that, get this, applies a portion of one's yearly fertilizer requirement directly to the turf every time the mower goes out.

With five different "concentrations" available, the portion applied is dependent upon which roller ordered. The solid roller design is made of a "space age" non-degradable fertilizer source polymer." Remarkably, it never wears out!

I rattled off obvious shortcomings of their product that came to mind. They answered all my initial questions without much trouble. I still had my doubts! I took all their literature to read when I had some free time.

Later that afternoon, I found time to read through JJB's literature and spec sheets. I did find out that JJB stands for Joyeux Jour de Blagues. (Yeah right! Get your own translation for that one. I can't even pronounce it!)

The "roller fertilizer" was designed in France by a "groundskeeper" at a turf horse track. It came about as a response to many horse owners complaints about the fertilizer the "groundskeeper" was using.

French veterinarians determined that the fertilizer was causing "hoof rot." The "groundskeeper" explained that the American-made fertilizer tended to be extremely "clumpy" and therefore very concentrated.

The man concurred with the vets and owners that the use of granular fertilizer had to cease. After all, million dollar horses don't just grow new hooves!

The demand for high quality turf never subsided. Along with a friend from the French Space Research Institute, the "groundskeeper" developed the current JJB Rear Roller Fertilizer.

I visited the booth again on Sunday with added interest and a new list of questions.

The salesmen never once felt neglected about the lack of attention from the majority of those in attendance at our show. They were still riding a tidal wave from the splash the JJB roller made at Expo '93 in Louisville last July.

Besides, many superintendents had stopped by their booth and indicated a general dissatisfaction with "clumpy" fertilizers. They had gained confidence that it wouldn't be long before the golf course industry discovered their product.

I had gained confidence in the JJB roller after having a discussion with Frank Rossi about the product. Frank indicated that he had already arranged to work directly with Joyeux Jour de Blagues. A cooperative study will be initiated on how the JJB Roller Fertilizer can be applied to our industry.

This new concept in fertilization could have an even bigger impact than electric equipment in the way golf course superintendents operate their facilities.

Don't miss your opportunity to learn even more about our exciting future. Call (800) 277-3665 and ask for the Joyeux Jour de Blagues literature in case you overlooked them in Dallas. 🌱