

OUTLOOK

By Bruce F. Shank, Executive Editor

Iron country restarts furnaces to capture commercial turf buyers

There is new life in the turf equipment business as I discovered on a recent trip to Iron Country. Distributors are restocking, manufacturers have new models in the testing stage, and turf managers are looking.

What is more, one manufacturer, not currently serving the commercial turf market, is about to announce a complete line of turf equipment this fall. I promised I wouldn't tell you who. And, two more companies would jump in if the distributor network wasn't so complicated.

Don't assume Jacobsen and Toro will get caught by surprise. Their engineers are busy with new models. More importantly, they are going a step beyond to provide new technology for the turf equipment market. Roger Thomas, vice president of Jacobsen, told me, "What we have coming is a unique type of mower technology, one which will be ours, not the same as every other manufacturer." Toro has sold distributors of new entries for this fall.



Ed Devinger, turf equipment sales manager for Reinders, updates the editor during Reinders Show in Waukesha.

Ransomes and its Bobcat line are aggressively attacking the golf and municipal markets. Sensation has new energy since Gilson took it over recently.

I can't tell you everything now. You'll have to read the whole story in June.

Finally, I'd like to thank Bob Reinders and Ed Devinger of Reinders Turf Equipment of Milwaukee for helping me find my way through part of Iron Country. Their enthusiasm matches that of the manufacturers. Something must be going right for them and as a result, for the turf industry as a whole.

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