



Expo '90 will feature an additional four acres of outdoor demonstration area. The highly anticipated event is July 29-31 in Louisville.

EQUIPMENT'S DAY IN THE SUN

The most impressive display of turf equipment ever assembled awaits visitors to the annual OPEI Expo in Louisville, Ky. Here are some of the innovative machines to be showcased.

Ask most people what comes to mind when they think of Louisville and they'll probably say Dixieland jazz, paddlewheel boats or college basketball. But for landscape equipment manufacturers and dealers, Louisville means equipment. Lots of equipment.

And this year is no different. July 29-31, more than 500 companies will take up 280,000 sq. ft. of space inside the Kentucky Fair & Exposition Center and more than 14 football fields outside. Their wares include the latest innovations in mowers, irriga-

tion equipment, engines, chain saws, garden tools, snowthrowers, tillers and a variety of other related equipment, products and services for the outdoor leisure and power equipment industries.

More commercial

Expo '90's outdoor facilities will be expanded by four acres to accommodate the rapidly growing commercial equipment market. "Expo has always mirrored the trends in our industry," says Dennis Dix, executive director and chief operating officer of the Out-

door Power Equipment Institute, Expo's sponsor. "The industry is growing rapidly in the commercial area."

Warren Sellers, Expo '90 show director, said there were 185 percent more people who registered as landscapers and commercial mowing contractors at Expo '90 than at Expo '88.

Three years ago, the OPEI tried a trade show called the "Pro Show," which was separate from the OPEI Expo. Although that particular idea didn't work, the OPEI didn't give up hope of reaching the commercial market—not by far.

"There was enough interest among Pro Show advertisers that the OPEI experimented and came up with this demo area idea," notes Nic Smokey, advertising director at **Tecumseh Products**.

Manufacturers happy

"It makes sense," says advertising manager Jack Steinhour of **Woods/Hesston**. "The commercial market is bigger than the consumer (home-owner) market, so this is probably a good move."

The show's indoor/outdoor venue sets it apart in the eyes of many manufacturers as well. "This is the premiere show as far as commercial equipment is concerned," says Dave Buchanan of **Jacobsen Division of Textron**. "The fact that it's grown as much as it has in the past few years is testimony to that. It's a very good forum for getting your product in front of the dealer and landscaper, so it's a very important show for anyone who wants to be a player in the commercial market."

Jacobsen will show off its new 21-inch rear-bagging commercial

mower, its Turfcats T422D four-wheel drive machine, the Crew King floating-deck rotary mower, "plus a few surprises," promised Buchanan.

Howard Day, vice president and sales manager at **Yazoo**, concurs.

"I see the (commercial) market growing, and we are changing some of our methods to reflect that growth," he says. "We're strong in that area and plan to get stronger."

Growth is good

Scag has, so to speak, all its eggs in one basket: the commercial market. And that philosophy is bearing fruit.

"Our growth has been very good," says vice president and general manager Jerry Bailey. "We've even managed to stay ahead of the market's growth rate."

Scag will introduce zero-turn-radius walk-behind and riding mowers, and will have the rest of its equipment available to OPEI attendees.

Ralph Parsons is owner of **Parsons & Son**, which owns Micro-Mower, a manufacturer of attachments for 15 to 35 hp compact tractors.

Micro-Mower will be displaying

two small-arm mowers for smaller tractors. The 92.5, with a 92.5-inch reach, and the 135, with a 135-inch reach. They're working on a small, tow-type three gang flail mower, but it's unlikely it will be available by the OPEI show.

"It's a very attractive show for us," says Parsons, "though it's an expensive show too. It's good because of the number and type of person we reach."

Parsons says Micro-Mower products fill a niche because they work as an attachment to compact tractors, allowing landscapers to take full advantage of equipment that's already in existence.

"I'm optimistic about the commercial lawn equipment market," Parsons adds, "because people need to keep up the appearance of physical facilities. The type of equipment we offer will allow them to do that while taking better advantage of equipment they probably already own."

Ransomes will take advantage of the new commercial demo area to exhibit "some of our larger riders and turf equipment," says communications director Maria Large. "We'll be



able to show a larger variety than ever before, including our turf renovation products."

Tecumseh will be taking a "getting-to-know-you" approach. On display will be products from the company's Tecnamoter Division, which manufactures Italian engines that are being shipped to the U.S. Its lines of X-L engines and possibly a complete new line of heavy duty engines will also be demonstrated.

Woods will have its riding mowers and intermediate walk-behinds on display. "Our machines are strictly for large-area mowing," notes Steinhour.

Targeting markets

Teledyne Total Power finds the commercial demo area especially suited to its marketing tactics.

"Our target market has always been the professional, the person who uses engines eight hours a day, six days a week," says director of OEM sales Art Porter. "And it would be nice for that end user to demand our power. This is an opportunity to get that message out."

Teledyne will display its full line of Wisconsin Robin engines.

Bunton's Mike Packer, whose company will be displaying its complete line of walk-behind, self-propelled units, sees the commercial market growing at a much faster pace than the home market.

"It's been an upward trend for the past five years. The homeowner mar-

ket simply isn't growing at a double-digit pace like the commercial market.

"Louisville is an especially good show for us," he adds, "because of the amount of distributors and dealers there."

Packer predicts that in the coming decade landscapers will see increasingly sophisticated equipment that is more productive, yet costs the same or less.

Expanded lines

Meanwhile, **Giant Vac** is enjoying the fruits of an expanding product line

year, buyers are cautious spending money, but with the added products we're doing well."

While Jean Evans, secretary treasurer of **Magic Circle**, in Coatesville, Ind., is not sure what exact models will be on display in Louisville, she is sure that the Louisville show is one not to be missed.

"It's a very good show for us because it's where you get a large audience of dealers and distributors, plus quite a few landscapers," says Evans.

Sure to be included in Magic Circle's display are Dixie Chopper's ZTR (zero turning radius) models. They've

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—Dave Buchanan
Jacobsen Div. of Textron

that will include mulching mowers in the future. At Louisville this summer, however, it will demonstrate outfront mowers from 36 to 60 inches, commercial all-welded push mowers 19 to 21 inches, thatchers, leaf blowers and truck loaders.

"We've added new products that have strengthened us," says Giant Vac president Herman Diehl. "This

developed a new drive system and filed a patent for their all-hydraulic, no chains mowers.

Evans notes that every year her company "grows a little bit more."

As for future trends? "I see zero-turning-radius mowers as a definite trend that's going to take over," says Evans. "The idea and number of companies pursuing it has grown tremendously over the past 15 years. Some people continue to hang on to the tractors, but they're becoming fewer and fewer."

Steiner, which positions itself at "the top of the line" of consumer equipment, is rapidly expanding—with its dealers—its commercial line. According to company president Bill Mason, commercial sales is now one third of total sales. He says landscapers will have a chance to use two-wheel drive outfront and four-wheel drive articulated Steiner mowing units.

Goossen Industries is touting its Chopper bale-chopper for mulching, a Vac-N-Load system and a Rake-N-Vac. Though the company markets primarily to cities and municipalities, notes spokesman Lawrence Vitosh, it will also be "leaning more toward the commercial market."

Yamaha is planning to inundate the OPEI show with its full line of trimmers, brush cutters, blowers, edgers and more, says marketing coordinator Charlie Sovacool. "Most of our products are geared toward commercial users, and it's a competitive industry. We're just trying to carve our niche," he notes. **LM**

More equipment at Expo '90

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — With the addition of four acres of commercial equipment, the seventh annual International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Expo will feature its most extensive showcase of products yet.

The July 29-31 show at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center here is expected to draw more than 22,000 people from all over the world. It features the latest innovations in mowers, sprinkler systems, chainsaws, engines, patio furniture and other outdoor leisure products and power equipment.

"As the commercial segment of the show grows, we expect to see an ever-increasing representation by commercial end users, plus dealers and distributors who carry commercial products," says Expo '90 show director Warren Sellers.

There will be 550 indoor booths and the equivalent of 14 football fields of outdoor demonstration area. In addition, there will be six free seminars to help dealers and retailers increase their efficiency, sales and profits. The sessions will cover customer service, merchandising, the commercial market, effective selling, rentals, Yellow Pages advertising, extended warranties and pricing.

Pre-registration for the show is free; it is \$10 at the door. For more information, call Expo '90 at (800) 558-8767 or, in Kentucky, (502) 473-1992. □