

## BLEC USA TO STEC: NEW NAME, SAME PHILOSOPHY

**F**ollowing up a conversation at the STMA Conference, we emailed Jason Sentell, business development manager for STEC, Inc. about the new company led by owner David Taylor.

**SportsTurf:** How does your business model differ from other equipment manufacturers'?

**Sentell:** First, we run a "lean" operation. We prefer to deal direct with many of our customers, instead of distributing through a dealer network. We do have dealers and independent reps, but we choose to not distribute through the larger equipment and tractor "houses."

When you deal direct, there is not a long chain of people for information to become misinformation. As the factory, we are accountable for how our machines are advertised; we state what they can do and then stand behind it. Also, we cut out the middleman. We only employ multi-talented people, a theory of more output with less input, and this greatly reduces overhead. We can maintain larger stocking levels and ultimately pass savings to the customer.

Secondly, we stick to the model we have set. We only deal in equipment that is specialized. If we cannot start with at least 33% market share, we have no business in it. We want to be pioneers and trend setters, not copycats. We are a specialized equipment company and that is what we stick to.

Lastly, we make everyone here accessible, even the owner. Our customers can speak with whoever they need to in order to get their questions answered and problems solved. We treat all customers equally, from major league teams to municipal groundskeepers.

**ST:** How does the process work when a customer comes to you asking for customized equipment?

**Sentell:** With any customized equipment comes a customized situation. We have no set process, other than that we are extremely receptive to the needs of the

customer and have a very hands on approach. We try to factor in all things before we produce equipment, but from time to time there are those who have a very specific need. When this happens, we can either fabricate here, or help coach them through what they can do. However, it isn't always an extra piece of metal that the customer needs. Many times they need flexibility or customization in other areas, like purchasing.

**ST:** Give some examples of the different types of equipment that STEC has

available and possible customizable features for them.

**Sentell:** Since We DO NOT have mowers or aerators. We DO have specialized drainage equipment, trenchers, dethatchers, sand injectors, surface strippers, stone barrier tillers, seeders, self-loading topdressers, and laser graders. We really like two phrases: "one pass" and "modular."

Most all of our machines have options that can be added, depending on need. We want to give you the choice to only pay for the features you need, but have as many add on features as possible. Usually we custom order machines set up to your requirements. We want to have equipment that no one else has, with every option you can think of. ■

## SCARBROUGH'S NEW FIRM INTRODUCES SILI-CAL SS

**SILI-CAL SS (Super Soluble)**, a new formulation designed to enhance turf resilience and upright growth, is now being offered through Silico Turf LLC. The company was launched this year by long-time turf industry marketer Sheree Scarbrough to fill the need for silicon-based supplements for sports turf, golf greens and fairways.

"The new SS formulation has been improved so that the pellets dissolve much more rapidly," said Scarbrough. "We're using a silicon source that is quite simply the most soluble form in the market. That means more is available to the plant more quickly. Our customers will really notice a big difference."

Scarbrough was most recently with Excell Minerals where she spearheaded introduction of another silicon-based product and gained experience in both the production and distribution aspects of that segment. Prior to that, she was sales and marketing manager for EarthWorks, Inc., and held other sales positions in turf distribution in Ohio.

"I'm delighted to be aligned with someone as energetic and experienced as Sheree to put our products into the hands of turf managers around the country,"

said Mark Elizer, the developer of SILI-CAL.

SILI-CAL SS is a 29-23-3 (Si-Ca-Mg) blend created to strengthen turf cell walls and improve nutrient uptake. On sports turf, SILI-CAL SS significantly increases wear tolerance, one of the toughest challenges for sports turf managers. In golf, superintendents are increasingly relying on it to enhance and maintain fast and firm conditions, particularly on greens under stress from low cutting heights, weather and disease.

A typical SS greens program consists of a 25-lbs/1,000 square feet springtime application followed by two 10-lbs/1,000 applications at 30-day intervals. The product is easily mixed with a fertilizer application and the calcium in the formulation both increases uptake and replaces the need for a separate Ca application.

"After 12 years of working with turf managers who struggle with building resilient turf, I've learned just how critical it is to replenish silicon on a regular basis," said Scarbrough. "There are volumes of research from places like the University of Florida, Penn State and Cal Poly that support the concept, but we just haven't had the right product in the market to do it quickly and effectively until now." ■



## New controller + ET system

Hunter Industries' Pro-C Conventional (PCC), the smart, fixed station controller, is now available prepackaged with the Solar Sync weather-based evapotranspiration (ET) system. Installation is simplified, as the Solar Sync module is prewired and mounted inside the PCC controller. Just affix the Solar Sync sensor to the roof to enjoy on-site schedule adjustments. The Pro-C and Solar Sync combined make an effective, economical, ET weather-based irrigation system that saves water.

[www.hunterindustries.com](http://www.hunterindustries.com)

## Cub Cadet CSV 050

Cub Cadet's all-in-one chipper, shredder, vacuum is powered by a 173cc Cub Cadet OHV Engine and features a 24-inch vacuum width, 1.5 inch chipping capacity, an 8:1 debris reduction ratio and a two bushel, felt-lined collection bag with turn locks. This multi-tasking machine also features a 7-foot on-board vacuum hose to efficiently collect leaves and any other lawn debris. The chipper consists of one hardened-steel blade while the shredder boasts six hardened-steel flail knives with a final stage shredding screen made of formed steel. Cub Cadet's CSV050 also comes complete with a 2-year residential warranty

[www.CubCadet.com](http://www.CubCadet.com)



## Gravelly Turf Stadium 80

Gravelly offers the Stadium 80 sprayer, part of the Gravelly Turf line, to its ever growing line of turf machinery.

The compact design of the Stadium 80 has an 80-gallon, low profile tank designed for maximum visibility. A lockable spill tank lid with anti-siphon fill and low center of gravity helps prevent chemical spills. Available with an engine-driven Silver Series roller or 12-volt electric diaphragm pump, the Stadium 80 also features a spray gun, 25-foot hose and a low-maintenance, 10-foot, three-way folding boom with electric on and off controls.

[www.ariens.com](http://www.ariens.com)

## Dirt Medic by Newstripe

Newstripe has added the Dirt Medic infield groomer specifically designed for use with garden tractors, light utility vehicles and ATV's to fill and level Little League to high school infields. Dirt Medic weighs only 200 pounds and has a 4-foot wide grooming path with 10-inch pneumatic wheels for easy transport. A single hand crank adjusts both the angle and depth of the harrow teeth and reversible cutting bar from the driver's seat without the need of tools or electrical connections. The optional broom kit creates a smooth, finished surface. Dirt Medic is backed by a 36-month warranty and costs less than \$1,600.

[www.newstripe.com](http://www.newstripe.com)



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