Bluebell Forest

Center Parcs is adhering to its biodiversity policy by choosing nearly 40,000 native bluebells over an invasive Spanish rival species.

Supplied and grown by specialist Norfolk nursery British Wild Flower Plants, the Bluebells have been propagated from seed collected from existing plants at Sherwood Forest Center Parcs where the Bluebells will be planted and other areas throughout the UK.

Linda Laxton, IWFFP owner and MD says that the seeds were sown 18 months ago into 13,000 pots and have taken two winters to grow.

“The Spanish bluebell is a completely different species compared with our native plant. It’s very vigorous and very aggressive,” she explained.

“Because the flowers are larger than Bluebells the Spanish species were sold by garden centres and are now in danger of taking over. If they are grown in a private garden near woodland there’s a strong possibility that they will interbred.”

Darren Bowsher, Ground Services Manager at Sherwood Forest Center Parcs, said that there was never any question about which species would be chosen.

“The Bluebells are more showy as plug plants, at Center Parcs Sherwood Forest Center Parcs is adhering to its biodiversity policy by

RJ Territory Expands to Include Asia Pacific Region

Ranaros-Jacobsen, has expanded its management territory within the Jacobsen group with the inclusion of the Asia Pacific region and too accommodate David Withers, Managing Director, left, has announced several management changes at senior level.

Alain Prickett, far right, the former Sales Director, has been appointed Managing Director, Asia Pacific, and will be relocating to Singapore in the near future.

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New Fleet for Rochford Hundred Golf Club

The machinery fleet at Rochford Hundred Golf Club in Essex is now almost all John Deere, with new arrivals for 2011 including 4520 compact tractor, a 400CX front loader and an Aercore 800 pedestrian aerator.

These have joined 11 other John Deere machines supplied by dealer P. Tuckwell Ltd of Ardleigh, near Colchester, including greens, fairway mowers, several Gator utility vehicles and another compact tractor.

“We particularly like the quality of cut we get with John Deere mowers,” said Course Manager, Dave Rand.

“I first saw the 7400 TerramCut rotary mower on a greengrocers feedback trip to Germany, and just loved the look of it, so ordered one as soon as it became available and I believe we had the first unit delivered in the UK.

“The oldest trilogy is now used with a GreensTech cassette system and another is mainly used on the tees, but we can change heads between the two newer mowers as required for use on both the greens tee and greens.

“Reliable dealer back-up and parts service is crucial, too,” added Dave.

“John Deere is an established company that has proved over time that it can deliver on its promises, and the dealer is always prepared to help us out with extra loan machines when necessary.

“We’re fortunate in that there has been a big investment by the club over the last 6 to 12 months to improve our greening facilities and equipment, including general refurbishment of the shed area and the installation of a new waste water system, as well as improvements to the clubhouse, including new changing rooms. We’re also looking at a new John Deere irrigation system for commission in 2012.”

Ground Penetrating Radar Survey at Stonehenge

The Geophysics Team at English Heritage has just completed a state-of-the-art survey of the ground surrounding Stonehenge.

This is the first large scale Ground Penetrating Radar survey at Stonehenge and has resulted in highly accurate 3D mapping of the fine detail of objects down to a depth of two metres.

To ensure there could be no possible damage to this world heritage site Multi Channel Radar equipment with the GPR unit on top was towed by a 4x4 JCB Utility Terrain Vehicle hired by English Heritage from specialist UTV vehicle dealers SMH Quads. Dr Neil Liddell, English Heritage’s GPR specialist, said:

“The GPR data set greatly enhances our knowledge of the site, previously gained through a combination of excavation, aerial photography and other geophysical surveys.

“Effectively we’ve been able to create 3D images, ‘time slices’, of any time slice, if you like, through the ground that allows us to be able to see what is hidden beneath the surface.”

JCB ACADEMY OFFICIALLY OPENED BY ROYAL COUPLE

The £22 million JCB Academy has been opened by Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall.

The Royal couple visited the facility in Rocester where they met staff, students and supporters who have contributed to the success of The Academy.

The Prince of Wales, accompanied by JCB Chairman Sir Anthony Bamford and JCB Academy Principal Jim Wade was given an insight into the hi tech resources available to the 170 Year 10 and Sixth Form students. During the visit he was presented with a memory stick which students had designed and manufactured and engraved with the initials TBP.

NEW ENHANCE R ‘PRIME’ JOINS RANGE

Vitax America launched Enhance R Prime, a zero phosphate formulation which seeds the area of the Enhance R range of fertilisers, winner of the JCF’s “Best New and Innovative Product” award in the Fertiliser and Pesticides category.

Especially developed for Turf Managers who require a zero phosphate product Enhance R Prime, 5-0-4 (Hosco 2MgO 7E) shares all the benefits of its fellow formulations, Enhance R Tank Mix and Enhance R Autumn and Winter, being a 4-in-one combo of conversional fertiliser, slow release organic fertiliser, Amino Acid and a natural bacterium.

Commercial Director for Vitax, Daniel Wilkinson says that the expansion of the Enhance R range is indicative of company policy and future goals.

“The last year has seen us expanding all divisions of the business. We developed the Winditch Arrow rotary转发 wheel invermecator for Vitax Supaturf, embarked on a new joint venture with Vitax Grower and Unifade electronic technology.

“The equipment, including general refurbishment of the shed area and the installation of a new waste water system, as well as improvements to the clubhouse, including new changing rooms. We’re also looking at a new John Deere irrigation system for commission in 2012.”

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A productive first month

My sense of relief after Harrogate Week, in respect to believing I might get a short rest, was very quickly replaced with a sense of foreboding as I considered my schedule for my first month as Chairman.

Finding time to sit and reflect on the month and share that with you in this column has been one of the many challenges, as well as ensuring I spend enough time with the team at Elmwood, and the team at BIGGA HQ.

I knew I would need the Editor on my back chasing me for copy, and I'm writing this in the early hours of the morning in my hotel room at the Golf Course Superintendent Association of Ireland’s Conference, in Trim, Dublin.

My first visit was to the Golf Course Superintendent Association of America Conference in Orlando. As well as the obvious benefits of the networking opportunities and education available, Sami and I met with GCSSAA Education directors to share experiences and explore opportunities to enhance our Continental Professional Development programme.

We also met with the GCSSAA Board to continue negotiating a Strategic Agreement which could advance both our missions and promote cooperation and goodwill between our Associations. This has triggered further discussions with other national Associations who all recognise the benefit of such cooperation.

I met with Michigan State University, who have agreed to digitalise fully all BIGGA publications, past and present, into searchable online content within their “Turf Grass Information File”.

This provides an extensive resource for research and education. We are negotiating access rights for our members and this will bring a significant additional member benefit to you.

I took the opportunity to visit the renowned Sawgrass TPC. Unfortunately the Scottish weather had followed me, much to the disgust of my playing partners. I can claim however to have had a 3 at the famous 17th, unfortunately with my fourth ball!

Back home for a few days and I enjoyed a good night’s entertainment at the Scottish Golf Awards, hosted by the SGU. BIGGA plays its part in the Scottish Golf Education Group, alongside SGU and other golf bodies to ensure we make our educational opportunities available to all relevant stakeholders, and avoid duplication. A similar group is now formed in England. More to follow!

Back at work I had an interesting meeting with Steve Isaac and Stig Backen, from the R&A, and further discussions with Jonathan Smith, from GEO.

Both organisations are committed to working with BIGGA in order to ensure that resources are made available to help Golf Courses and Facilities manage more sustainably.

The controversial “sustainable” word rears its head again, but please do not jump to conclusions, ie “frasie”, and consider the true meaning of the word. Evidence of this cooperation should soon be available through the website, and in future editions of Greenkeeper International and/or seminars.

I attended an excellent evening seminar from Headland Amenity at the Central Section combined with a committee meeting and spent some valuable time with my family, and then it was off to Iceland for the FEGGA conference and International Seminar.

I did not know what to expect, but I was impressed by the commitment shown by the Icelandic Association and the evidence of the cooperation between them and all their Golf Bodies to ensuring the success of their event.

Their enthusiasm and commitment to education was infectious and I returned for more optimistic about the future of the Golf Industry providing we can embrace some of that philosophy.

In Iceland 10% of the population play golf, and this is a huge achievement for such a young golfing nation. The fact that the Country’s President saw fit to talk at the evening reception shows the respect afforded to them as part of that collaborative group.

Collaboration within the golf bodies will ensure that the important input the Greenkeeper can bring to the sustainability of each golf operation is recognised and valued.

Straight off to Edinburgh Airport, and I’m now at the Irish Conference, which from what I’ve seen today reinforces a common theme from above.

They face the same difficulties we all do in golf, they have a sense of urgency, and they recognise that collaboration within the golf bodies will ensure that the important input the Greenkeeper can bring to the sustainability of each golf operation is recognised and valued.

A shortlist has been provided over 40 applicants for the CEO position and the Board will shortly commence the interview process.

Well it’s been a very busy month, which I hope will be productive going forward for the Association. I’m partial to a small Guinness and I think I’ll now indulge in a small nightcap with the others downstairs.
Tee off in style with Eagle’s top quality timber tee accessories...

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Collaboration within the golf bodies will ensure that the important input the Greenkeeper can bring to the sustainability of each golf operation is recognised and valued.
For many years the role of Chairman of Green and Green Convener has been seen as the poisoned chalice at private members clubs with few exceptions a short-term appointment or a “must do”. There is a case for moving on to be Club Captain.

Many readers will remember Jim Arthur, the wily Agronomist’s thoughts on the Green Committee, when he constantly reminded clubs that “the best committees consist of an uneven number, and three is too many!”

He added:

a committee of one, gets things done
a committee of three, will wait and
a committee of nine, wastes endless time
a committee of more, is avoidable bore!

While there are nearly as many proprietary golf clubs in Britain as private members clubs, where often, it is a General Manager or the owner who will have direct contact with the Course Manager / Head Greenkeeper, there are still hundreds of clubs where Chairman of Green and Green Convener are elected as the direct link between the Directors, members and the Course Manager / Head Greenkeeper.

The GTC is looking to work closer with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America at the Home Unions in association with IGBOA, in a position to improved communication between employers and the Course Manager and the starting point has to be better guidance and courses designed and delivered by the GTC’s Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers.

In previous GTC columns within GI, the GTC has promoted the SGI’s ‘Practical Guide for Green Convener’ and this booklet will form the basis for structured workshops to assist delegates to fully understand their role to liaise with subjects as diverse as fencing and fungicide.

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Learning & Development

Sami Collins, Head of Learning & Development, with an update on education issues

In Brief

David explained the GTC’s training and development framework and how the GTC is working with The Golf Industry Show, which requires both

employee and employer to take a level of responsibility to ensure they are competent in the role they have been elected to carry out?

David, the GTC Chairman, has just written an article and in the opening paragraph states: “It has always been a strange anomaly that Golf Clubs appoint a highly qualified Head Greenkeeper to a specialist role and then tolerate highly unqualified members telling him where he is going wrong. Whereas, they are quite happy to accept a doctor’s, solicitor’s or stockbroker’s view of things, golfers are quick to express themselves knowledgeably (so they think) on subjects as diverse as fencing and fungicide.”

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The guidance can be viewed on the SGI’s website www.scotscottage.org/ files/Green_Convener_2008.pdf or hard copies are available from the GTC or SGI.

The GTC is also aware that there are classes available from various bodies in the past but clearly there is still much work to be done in this area and local provision appears to be the starting point.

Thank you to our Gold and Silver Key Sponsors
Greenkeepers Training Committee

David Golding, Education Director, with a monthly update from the GTC

For many years the role of Chairman of Green and Green Convenor has been seen as the poisoned chalice at private members clubs with few exceptions a short-term appointment or a “must do” prior to moving on to be Club Captain. Many readers will remember Jim Arthur, the wily Agronomist’s thoughts on the Green Committee, when he constantly reminded clubs that “the best committees consist of an uneven number, and there is too many!”

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The GTC is looking to work closer with the Green Convenors to discuss this space with employers and the Course Manager and the starting point has to be better guidance and courses designed and delivered by the GTC’s Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers.

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The booklet can be viewed on the SGU’s website www.scottishgolf.org.uk/Green_Convenor_2008.pdf or hard copies are available to Gold and Silver Key Members from the GTC or SGU.

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The future for the Home Unions lends itself to engaging the support of the County Unions to promote these types of workshops.

Another thorny subject is Health & Safety, which requires both employer and employee to take a level of responsibility to ensure they are competent in the role they have been elected to carry out.

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Last month saw me packing my bags and making my way to Orlando, for the Golf Industry Show, in the company of our Chairman, Andrew McFarlane.

With a packed schedule of events and meetings, as well as the trade show, it proved to be a busy week leaving both Andrew and myself wanting some new feit!
Kubota Makes the Difference

“Our award-winning pitch is all thanks to our Kubota ride-on mowers” – that’s the message from Glen Bellis, Manager of Harefield United. The Middlesex-based club purchased a Kubota G21 ride-on mower and quickly scooped the title of Best Pitch in the Spartan Premier Division before going on to win the Steps 5 and 6 National Award category in the FA’s 2010 Groundman of the Year Awards.

The accolades came after the club’s committee took the decision of cancelling the existing groundcare contract in order to maintain the two pitches for themselves. With this in mind, each committee member personally contributed to the cost of buying the ride-on mower. It was chosen because of its 21 hp Kubota engine and tight turning circle, which when combined with its light weight, means it can now both pitches quickly and efficiently without marking the turf.

Glen said that everyone at the club is absolutely delighted to have won the two awards:

“To be honest, we weren’t happy with our pitch, so we decided to buy the Kubota and maintain it ourselves. Our aim was to improve pitch quality so our teams could enjoy better facilities and game play – we never dreamed that we’d go on to win two awards within two years of doing it. If you don’t do it, you won’t be found out and you won’t survive very long.”

What’s more, it’s diesel, so it’s economical to run too.”

Sanli Building Business Across The Irish Sea

Outdoor power equipment specialist Sanli is continuing to spread its wings with the appointment of new sales and service dealers in Ireland.

Now responsible for looking after domestic and professional customers in southern Ireland is Dublin Grass Machinery, based at Castlereagh, Dublin. The company, which has a number of sub-dealers located primarily in the Irish Republic’s Leinster province chose to offer a selection of Sanli products to customers, as well as provide after-sales service.

Mullarkey, who have been dealing with Sanli products since their arrival in the Irish market last year, have now been appointed as Sanli’s York Depot & Service Dealers in Ireland.

The Irish Sea

“A division of Johnston Gilpin of Lisburn, Co. Down, Sanli Building has appointed Mullarkey as York Depot & Service Dealers in Ireland.”

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The accolades came after the club’s committee took the decision of cancelling the existing groundcare contract in order to maintain the two pitches for themselves. With this in mind, each committee member personally contributed to the cost of buying the ride-on mower. It was chosen because of its 21 hp Kubota engine and tight turning circle, which when combined with its light weight, means it can now both pitches quickly and efficiently without marking the turf.

Glen said that everyone at the club is absolutely delighted to have won the two awards:

“To be honest, we weren’t happy with our pitch, so we decided to buy the Kubota and maintain it ourselves. Our aim was to improve pitch quality so our teams could enjoy better facilities and game play – we never dreamed that we’d go on to win two awards within two years of doing it. If you don’t do it, you won’t be found out and you won’t survive very long.”

What’s more, it’s diesel, so it’s economical to run too.”

Sanli Building Business Across The Irish Sea

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"Our award-winning pitch is all thanks to our Kubota ride-on mower" – that’s the message from Glenn Bellis, Manager of Harefield United. The Middlesex-based club purchased a Kubota G21 ride-on mower and quickly scooped the title of Best Pitch in the Spartan Premier Division before going on to win the Steps 5 and 6 National Award category in the FA’s 2010 Groundsman of the Year Awards.

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“To be honest, we weren’t happy with our pitch, so we decided to buy the Kubota and maintain it ourselves. Our aim was to improve pitch quality, both in the landscape and local authority industry for up to a full day’s work on a single charge and at the same time guarantees use with no odour, no pollution and virtually no noise making them a truly environmentally friendly product.

“Turfgrass already plays an important part in the designed landscape by providing the green open spaces which many people – especially city dwellers - long for,” says Brian Robinson, Director of Research at Rigby Taylor.

“A new breed of slow growing carbon capturing turf has been launched in joint venture by Irthult, Paynes Turf and Rigby Taylor. In addition to its ability to lock up carbon dioxide, Carbon Capture Turf grows at a slower rate than other grass varieties, thus reducing maintenance costs and producing fewer clippings. Supplies of the new turf are available from this spring. "The grass already plays an important part in the designed landscape by providing the green open spaces which many people – especially city dwellers - long for," says Brian Robinson, Director of Research at Rigby Taylor.

Kubota Makes the Difference

Sanli Building Business Across The Irish Sea

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New for Etesia

Etesia UK has appointed Phillip Gibson as Southern Area Sales Manager covering South Wales, the South East and the South West areas. Phillip’s new responsibilities include liaising with the company’s marketing department, providing product advice, demonstrations and assistance to customers and dealers, as well as attending shows and exhibitions. He is also responsible for the sales, advice and demonstrations for the complete range of Pellenc lithium-ion battery powered products.

The last 12 months has seen an increasing number of operators now using Pellenc products. Pellenc is the only manufacturer in the world to be able to produce machines that can be used in the landscape and local authority industry for up to a full day’s work on a single charge and at the same time guarantees use with no odour, no pollution and virtually no noise making them a truly environmentally friendly product.

Suzuki GB Appoints New ATV Dealers

In a busy year promoting their All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) range, Suzuki GB PLC has appointed three new official dealerships in the UK. The new dealers are Brian Keys Tractors of Dromore, Omagh, Northern Ireland, Ground Control, attended a series of open evenings held to give domestic and professional customers an insight into the technology that’s on offer, and virtually no noise making them a truly environmentally friendly product.

The Irish Sea

CARBON CAPTURING TURF

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What’s your number?

Our regular and random profile of an industry figure continues with this month’s lucky number...
Yorkshire’s true links

Scott MacCallum visits Cleveland Golf Club and meets a man who leaves no stone unturned in making his home-town course as good as it can be.
Yorkshire’s true links

Scott MacCallum visits Cleveland Golf Club and meets a man who leaves no stone unturned in making his home-town course as good as it can be.
It is an interesting fact, well it certainly was to me, that Cleveland Golf Club, in Redcar, is the only true links course in Yorkshire.

That piece of information was one of many which emerged from a meeting with Course Manager, Ian Pemberton, whose enthusiasm for the job is quite infectious.

Ian moved to his home-town club four years ago, from the inland Bedale Golf Club, and since then he has barely taken a backward step in ensuring that the course develops.

“The club has a great history. It was founded in 1887 and really is a sleeping giant,” said Ian.

“I would say that I have managed to get a lot further forward than I could ever have hoped in the four years I’ve been here, I told them could ever have hoped in the four years I’ve been here, I felt that I was zapped that in about two and a half.”

Looking around the course you would find no reason to suggest that Ian was exaggerating.

His first task on arrival was to take improvements to the rough, an area which had been causing problem for some time.

“The rough had become unmanageable over a number of years. It was overgrown and unkempt, too many balls were being lost and as a result play had slowed and green fee revenue had fallen off.”

“Aesthetically it looked unsightly and, from a wildlife point of view, it was stifling the fresh growth because it couldn’t get through,” he explained.

Ian and the team brought in an Amazone flail mower and got to work.

“It was a laborious task and it took two years to get it where we wanted, but it was very worthwhile. We now have improved the native flora and fauna and turned it back into proper links rough,” explained Ian.

While this work was being carried they had worked hard on improving the club’s practice ground and also looked at the 18th and 10th fairways, which were, by his own admission, “wall to wall chickweed”.

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Ian Pemberton, Course Manager

“We had some samples taken and the potash levels were non-existent – there just wasn’t any potash in them at all – and the balance was never going to allow anything to grow.”

“We corrected that with a potash feed, very low in nitrogen, and then over-seeded with pure fescue and up to now we’ve been very pleased with the results.”

But the biggest project Ian and the team have undertaken over the last three years has seen a significant change to the look of Cleveland Golf Club, while also seeing the development of an innovative project which has brought additional revenue into the club.

It originated in 2002 when Persimmon Homes purchased land from the local authority, on which three of the holes were laid out, with a view to building luxury houses with spectacular views of the North Sea.

In anticipation of the work going ahead three new holes were built out on the dunes, the 14th, 15th and 16th, which certainly haven’t taken anything away from the quality of the course and in the case of the 15th, a par-3 over water, provided a hole which would grace many courses.

“The planning process for the houses took a long time during which time I arrived. I felt that would could take advantage of the building process and acquire some of the sandy soil that would be removed for foundations and move it on to the golf course.”

“Keith Rutherford was looking for an area in which to dispose of soil and brick and we were looking for the material to create character and definition to an area of the course around the 3rd and 4th holes which was fairly featureless and full of small peaks and hollows, making it very difficult to maintain.”

Ian’s aim was to create an inland dune and build new trees with the material with the added bonus that the club would generate income from the material brought in.

“It’s a win-win situation for us,” said Ian, who admits to being the driving force behind the project.

“The Chairman of Green, Dave Atfield, has been extremely supportive during this process, but he sometimes hides when he sees me coming at him with another idea,” joked Ian.

That 20,000 tonnes has enable Ian to build a huge inland dune, five to eight metres high, to add definition to the right side of the 3rd hole and a backdrop to the