



Hillier reveals plans for its “Sail for Gold” Garden at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2008

Sponsor: Skandia

A Golden Partnership – Hillier and Skandia

For Chelsea 2008, Hillier Nurseries and Garden Centres have teamed up with long-term savings company Skandia, sponsors of Britain’s national sailing team - Skandia Team GBR.

“We are delighted to be working with Hillier in our first ever sponsorship deal of a Chelsea garden,” enthuses Tim Sewell, Skandia’s sponsorship manager. “Hillier’s outstanding track-record of 62 Gold Medals at Chelsea makes them ideal partners to highlight British success, particularly in a year when our sailors will be totally focussed on winning medals for Britain.”

Britain is the world’s top sailing nation and led the medal table at both the 2000 and 2004 Olympic Games, and hopes are high that British sailors will continue this trend into 2008.

Synergy – Sailing and Gardening!

There is surprising synergy between competitive sailing and the staging of a Chelsea exhibit. Success and the pursuit of excellence are paramount to both Hillier and Skandia Team GBR, and their achievements stem from tremendous teamwork behind the scenes. And above all, both teams need to harness Nature to their advantage, with Hillier manipulating flowering seasons over months, whilst sailors battle wind and waves in a more immediate race against the clock.

To find out more, Andrew McIndoe, Hillier’s Deputy Managing Director and Chelsea Designer joined the Skandia team at the World Championships in Cascais, Portugal in July 2007.

Design Elements – “Sail for Gold” Garden

“The great advantage of designing a garden inspired by a world outside horticulture is that there is nothing to copy: you have a blank canvas” reveals Andrew McIndoe.

Salt-washed timber, stone, glass, water, and of course sails are key elements in Andrew’s design. Silver and blue foliage, grasses and coastal plants will feature strongly in the textural planting, in drifts and waves.

Andrew is working closely with Organicstone to create circular paviours in tones of gold, silver and bronze inspired by Olympic and Chelsea medals. The wave-patterned stone sets that pave the courtyards, promenade and streets of Cascais influence the walkways in this Chelsea garden. True to the Organicstone philosophy, the paviours will be made from 100% recycled materials using low-energy processes.

Softly moving grasses and glass waves will float between the pathways, and water will cascade down a spectacular glass sail sculpture created by Mehrdad Tafreshi, introducing movement and sound into the garden.

Red floribunda roses, frothy white spiraeas and blue ceanothus will be planted to link the patriotic Skandia Team GBR colours into the garden context against a backdrop of brightly painted beach huts.

Forest Garden will be supplying decking and edging from their sustainable timber range.



Plant Highlights

Details of the Chelsea planting scheme can be found from April 2008 on the Hillier website www.hillier.co.uk, and consumers can buy the highlighted plants online or from Hillier Garden Centres.

NEW: Star of Britain

Hillier Nurseries is promoting a stunning bold, crimson floribunda in honour of Skandia Team GBR's sailors Iain Percy and Andrew Simpson, who compete in the Star Class. The 5.75L potted rose will be available from www.hillier.co.uk or at Hillier Garden centres from 20 April 2008 priced £8.99. Star of Britain rose grows to 80cm tall x 60cm wide and has a light perfume.



NEW in November 2007: Help for Heroes



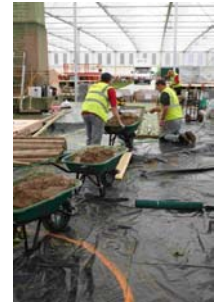
Launched to raise funds for the "Help for Heroes" campaign, this lightly scented floribunda bears a profusion of red double blooms on glossy dark green foliage from June through to the first frosts. The rose is available now from www.hillier.co.uk bare rooted for £8.99 plus P&P, or by Easter in a 5.75L pot online or at Garden centres priced £12.99. £5 from the cost of every rose will be donated to charity.



10 days to build up; 10 hours to break down!

Despite working on the largest site in the Great Pavilion, the Hillier team will take just 10 days to assemble the exhibit, which will feature 3500 plants and trees of all sizes.

The majority of Hillier's Chelsea plant stock will live on planted in Hillier customers' gardens, for early on Sunday morning on 25 May 2008 Hillier's Sunningdale store will hold a Chelsea sales bonanza, selling off the award-winning plants. This Hillier tradition attracts queues of bargain hunters every year!



Picture Editors

Britain's top sailors and 2004 Gold-medallists will be launching the Star of Britain rose at 1030H on Monday 19 May 2008 at the Hillier exhibit GPD14, on The Monument Site in the Great Pavilion.

Skandia Team GBR sailors will be out in force during Chelsea Week to talk to press and visitors about their aspirations for medal glory.



Updates

Follow progress on Hillier's "Sail for Gold" Garden online at www.hillier.co.uk. Click on Hillier at Chelsea and then choose from the Designer Diary, Press Room and Chelsea Live sections.

GMG Briefing Day: Journalists are warmly invited to Hillier Nurseries in Hampshire for the Garden Media Guild's Briefing Day on 3 April 2007. On an exclusive tour of the hardy plant and container trees nurseries, you will have a glimpse behind the scenes as Hillier prepares for the Chelsea Flower Show, and an insight into what continues to set Hillier apart as the largest and most successful grower in the UK.



Notes for Editors

Based in Hampshire, Skandia enables investment choice through a range of innovative solutions for pensions, investments and protection.

Skandia Team GBR is the British national sailing team from which sailors are selected to join Team GB – the British Olympic Association's Olympic team which will compete across all sports at the Beijing Games.



Also based in Hampshire, Hillier Nurseries was founded in 1864 and has won Gold Medals at the Chelsea Flower Show every year since 1945. A family-owned and managed company, Hillier runs a hardy plants nursery, the UK's largest tree nursery and a network of 13 garden centres with a focus on plant range and quality and gardening advice. Hillier Gardening Club has the largest membership of any garden society other than the RHS with 190 000 members.



To request interviews, hi-res images or further media information, please contact:

Liz Anderson 01952 501594 liz@lizanderson.co.uk
Andrew McIndoe 01794 369061 AndyMcIndoe@hillier.co.uk

Hillier Nurseries Ltd, Ampfield House, Ampfield, near Romsey, Hampshire SO51 9BQ
www.hillier.co.uk



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