



Event	Interview
Interviewee	<u>Dr. Oleg Vorobyov</u> General Director Ukrainski Gazony www.ukrgazony.com
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Eunite Ukraine (EU): What is the core business of Ukrainski Gazony? How long has your company been active in Ukraine?

Oleg Vorobyov (OV): Ukrainski Gazony (in English Ukrainian Lawns) was established in 2003. Our main business activity is turf rolls production. At the beginning of our business we had 15 ha, but as of today we have expanded it to 127 ha. Our plans for this year cover further expanding of our land area approximately by additional 160 ha. Our fields are located in Kiev and Zhytomyr regions.

Ukrainski Gazony belongs to a group of companies that also runs Agrintel Company (import/export of machinery, fertilizers, seeds), garden center Artvill (ornamental plants, landscape development), and Green Technologies (transplantation of big trees, until 18 m height).

Starting this year Ukrainski Gazony has launched a new business direction – the turn-key football pitches development, which includes drainage, irrigation, heating etc, and of course grass installation.

EU: Where was your grass installed?

OV: Our grass has been installed at Dynamo Kyiv Stadium (also known as Lobanovskiy Stadium), Kharkiv Stadium Metallist and training field, 8 training fields of FC Sharkhtar (Kirsha Training Center). On top of that our grass is being used for repairing of Donbass Arena pitch.

We also export our grass to neighbor countries, i.e. we have supplied grass for playing fields of FC Sheriff (Moldova) and FC Zestafoni (Georgia).

EU: Do you have foreign business partners? If yes, what are the sectors of your cooperation?

OV: For production of our turf rolls we use seeds of American producer Jacklin Seed by Simplot. Professional fertilizers we also take from Simplot Company. Seeds and fertilizers additional we pack to the boxes and supply its for retail companies. All machinery and equipment that we use for our turf production are also supplied from USA and/or Canada. We made our decision on a favor of North American suppliers, as we believe that turf as a Product has been developed mainly in that region.

Talking about our ornamental and outdoor plants, our garden center Artvill supplies these from Europe, mainly from Italy, Belgium, and Germany.



EU: What are your business plans for future?

OV: Development of Kiev and Lviv EURO 2012 football fields has been entrusted to foreign experts. Local knowledge is to be applicable more for training fields' development. Thus our company plans to supply grass for 4 training fields that had been listed among EURO 2012 team base camps.

Also talking about export potential, I would like to highlight growing demand for our turf rolls from neighbor countries, especially from Georgia.

As I already mentioned, starting this year our company has introduced new service and now we offer turn-key football fields development.

Until now, only one Ukrainian local company was offering similar services, and, in any case, Ukrainski Gazony was installing turf for those projects. We have bought all needed equipment already to do pitch soil preparation (including all ground works, drainage etc). So now, our potential customers have an opportunity to get a turn key solution of football field (including grass) from one hand.

Next to football fields we supply our turf rolls for golf fields and participate in the full range of the works on golf including hydroseeding. Our grass is of very good quality.

EU: How do you evaluate future prospects of further development of Ukraine sport infrastructure after the EURO 2012?

OV: Football is a very big passion in Ukraine. EURO 2012 will leave a very nice heritage for Ukraine public.

End of last year I was in South Africa, and visited there some stadiums that had been constructed for Football World Cup 2010. Today some of those stadiums already face problems of low demand for their services and high maintenance costs. Probably it happened because of relatively low interest of public for football compared to cricket.

I am sure that this will not happen in Ukraine. Football is very popular in our country. Unfortunately financial resources in Ukraine football world are relatively low compared to Western Europe. All our football clubs are subsidized today, none of them bring real profit to their owners (taking into account all funds invested in them). Leading football clubs have enough budgets to upgrade their sport facilities on a regular basis and keep them in good operational state. For instance FC Shakhtar upgrades 1-2 of its training fields every year. I really hope that some day in coming future more football clubs of Ukraine will become able to invest into their sport infrastructure development. Good infrastructure will make a strong contribution for Ukraine Football development in general.

EU: Where do you see potential need for foreign input within Ukraine sport infrastructure development?



OV: Taking about our business, foreign input is needed in a field of machinery and seeds. As I already mentioned our company imports these products from USA and Canada.

This year we would like to visit our colleague, Dutch turf rolls producer – Hendriks Grasvoden. This company has developed special equipment for wide rolls production, up to 240 cm wide. It is about twice wider than is being produced today locally in Ukraine. This know how could be very interesting for our market, but at the same time production of wide rolls involves certain difficulties having fields with turf grass plantings very flat, since as wider rolls we aim to have – more flat field should we prepare for seeding there grass for future turf rolls. Ukrainian companies produce today turf rolls of up to 1 m wide.