CLEVELAND
There was a good attendance for our February meeting at Darlington GC. Gerald Brady, regional manager for Rhone-Poulenc Environmental Products, talked about the new Guardian grass seed coating which prevents damping off and fusarium and the new selective weedkiller Spearhead.

Our membership is now 97. Congratulations, chaps! I hope to see many of you at Weareside GC on April 27 when our Spring Tournament gets under way at 1.30pm. Bring a friend or guest partner, it’s a great opportunity to meet other greenkeepers and have a chat. Our two golf organisations are Bob Lawton and Chris Fiddel.

Saltburn GC has promoted Alan Reed to first assistant.

BRUCE BURNELL.

EAST SCOTLAND
It is with regret that after 17 years as secretary of the east section, I have to announce the resignation of Willie Blair. Willie has been a stalwart member of both SIGGA and BIGGA, giving both his maximum support and time.

I have extra reason to be sorry as without Willie’s guidance I would not have had a greenkeeper. Through the past few years Willie has not had it easy, but has always had a smile and willingness to help other members. I am sure I speak for nearly all members who will miss the shout of “I’ll have a vodka, lime and soda.” Thanks for all the work, Willie, and please don’t be a stranger.

However, BIGGA needs to move on, so a big welcome to Robert Hogarth, our new man at the helm. Please bear with us until we get things sorted out and normal service will be resumed.

PETER ORMISTON, Chairman

GREENKEEPERS ON THE MOVE
...Greenkeepers on the move in east Scotland: Stevie Dixon - Newbattle GC to Kingsknowe GC; Graham Hobbs - Torphin Hill GC to Bathgate GC; Stuart Cruikshanks - Bathgate GC to Deer Park GC; Billy Hudson moves from first assistant to head man at Newbattle GC; Rory Campbell, assistant at Muirfield, takes over as head man at Torphin Hill GC; and Michael Osborne moves from Newbattle GC to Mur- rayfield GC as an assistant.

Dates for your diary: The spring outing at the Glen GC on Wednesday April 12 will soon be upon us. So let’s see a big turnout as this is the second qualifier for the Hayter tournament. Another skittles night has been arranged for you at Right Wing, Willowbrae Road on Friday April 28. I hope to see some new faces at this one. Andy Hastie, course manager at Dalmahoy GC, would like some volunteers for bunker raking duties during the Scottish PGA Championships at Dalmahoy on May 17-21. Anyone interested should contact me on 0721 722832.

EVENTS DIARY

April 20: Westurf, Long Ashton GC, Bristol

May 9: Dreamee ’95, Rockingham Castle Estate, Market Harborough, Leics. Tel: 01604 499662

June 21: South Turf, Metapour Park, South West

July 20-25: The Open Championship, St Andrews

July 31-August 2: National Tournament, St Annes Old Links Golf Club, Lytham

September 15-16: Hayter Challenge Tournament Final, West Lancashire Golf Club, Blundellsands

Thanks go to Scottish Grass Machinery for an excellent tour of their premises and talk on the future of their company, with a super buffet thrown in too. The winner of the SGM quiz was Andy Forrest of Swanston GC. He will receive a sweatshirt and a bottle of whisky, presented by Roy Auld.

ROBERT HOGARTH

EAST OF ENGLAND
As I sit here trying to think of something to write to all of you East of England section members (quite a difficult task because I do not get any information regarding appointments, retirements or any other gossip sent to me), it crossed my mind that our section chairman, David Walden (ICI Greenkeeper of the Year), was probably mid-air somewhere over the Atlantic on his way to the Superintendents’ Show in San Fransico (luckily blighter). Maybe our section might find it easier to nominate someone for the ICI Greenkeeper of the Year award in 1996. Having seen what David has accomplished, we should be inundated with head greenkeepers proposing to follow in David’s footsteps.

A new golf fixture which will take place this year is a match with our neighbours, East Midlands. The first match will take place on our turf. The date and time are to be confirmed.

Membership in our section seems to have fallen off. In the last month I have had ten applications to process. This brings us close to the re-entry sheet, contact Sue or me, and we will send you copies in the post.

I hear Adrian Porter is moving back to Leicestershire to a new job from Crockett’s Manor Golf Club. We wish him well.

Finally, an interesting new technique is being tried by Sean McDade of Harborne Golf Club. Sean is learning ballroom dancing in an effort to cut down on compaction on the greens when changing holes etc. I will keep in touch with Sean and let you know if the technique is working. Seriously, though, good luck with this new hobby.

KIM BLAKE

MIDLANDS
When I went up to Harrogate for BTME, it snowed heavily, and I thought it was great – as long as it did not come south. Having had so much rain in February, I was beginning to wish for 4ins of snow, to give the greens a break from the constant golf! Mind you, I have heard those two favourite comments over the last few weeks: “Why isn’t the course open, we’ve had no rain?” and “The course should be closed, it’s far too wet!”.

I hope Midland Section members have entered the Zeneca Premier Greenkeeper Award, if not, ring HQ for details.

I would like to welcome all our new members, including: Roland Broadley, Andrew Minshall, Scott Whale, Ian Turley, Kevin Treagartha, Craig Roberts, Robert Rowson, Ray Harvey, Mark Shaw, Andrew Davies, Paul Dawson, Richard Erratt, Craig Tidmarsh, S. Palethorpe, Ian Hughes, Paul Sewell and Mark Kite.

New trade association members are: Nick Bennett, George Attwood-Harris and Ivan Toon.

If anybody did not receive a fixture list and entry sheet, contact Sue or me, and we will send you copies in the post.

Toon.

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KIM BLAKE

NORTH SCOTLAND
I wish I had kept my big mouth shut about the weather! Yes, it has still been very mild, but we have had more rain in the north this winter than I can ever remember, especially in the last few weeks. Even here at Tain on sand we have had to open up and rebuild drains long forgotten as they never had to do much. I fear for greenkeepers on inland clay-based courses. Let’s hope for a good early spring.

New memberships are beginning to roll in now; here are the latest: Alastair Ross, Royal Dornoch; George Atiken, Peterculter; James Morrison from Turriff who actually works on a course in the Arabian Gulf; and Roderick Ogilvie, the proprietor of Broughty Landscapes. Keep them coming.

In the February magazine you would have read about Royal Dornoch head greenkeeper Robert Patterson’s eventful winter with winning a set of golf clubs followed by breaking his ankle playing squash. Well, what they didn’t mention was his amazing hole in one earlier in the winter at the 8th hole of his home course, which even off the winter tee measures 350 yards! Can any greenkeeper...
claim a longer hole in one, I wonder.

In response to repeated requests for a section dinner/disco, the committee in the guise of Hugh Maclatchie and Dougal Duguid have arranged it for Friday November 24 1995 at the Westhill Hotel near Aberdeen. The cost will be £12 per head and a good deal for anyone wishing to stay over is bed and breakfast for £20 per head. Tickets go on sale at the spring outing at Newmacher next month. This may seem early but we need to know if there is a demand for this night as if we have to cancel, the earlier we do it the less it will cost the section. If you want to go, you can book your ticket in May and pay sometime over the summer, at least we will have an idea about the numbers early on.

Hopefully this will become an annual event, it is up to you. We are currently looking into the possibility of holding our AGM in the afternoon of the 24th at Westhill Golf Club, with golf before, details to follow.

Finally, have you sold your 200 Club ticket yet? Remember, the first draw is next month with golf before, details to follow.

The recent trip organised to St Andrews proved very successful although the golf museum closure was somewhat disappointing. A good day was had by all, with a break away from the constant rainfall on this side of the country. Our thanks go to tour guides Gordon Moir, Eddie Adams and Mark Brunton. Thirty-five people turned up for the event, it just goes to show people are interested in what's happening elsewhere.

The spring outing has been arranged for April 25 at Lanark GC. This was at short notice, so thanks indeed to Lanark and their head greenkeeper for responding so well.

On a sad note, Tommy Young of Kilmalcolm passed away in December. Tommy was head greenkeeper there for ten years, and a past chairman of the West Section. He was an honorary member at the club and a past champion in 1949 and 1959. Our thoughts are with his family.

Finally, I'd like to wish Alistair Connell of Cawder GC every success in his new position at Collingtree Park. Alistair has proved a valuable member of the section over a long time and he will be greatly missed, not for his football skills, I might add.

If anybody has any information to pass on, then please call me on 041 9425554.

If you wish to enter the Huxley Bowl this year, at least we will have an idea about the competition can get under way, thus avoiding finishing late in the year.

Forthcoming dates: May 4 - Spring Tournament and Hayter qualifier, Blackmore GC; June 6 - The Cresta Cup at Kingswood Golf & Country Club; June 21 - South turf Exhibition, Motsup Park. Those of you interested in the dinner-dance at Reigate Manor Hotel will be pleased to hear that it has been booked again for November after last year's success.

WEST SCOTLAND

Spring is upon us with the sun shining and grass growing non-stop. Who's kidding who? Well, you never know, maybe next year.

The recent games night arranged at the Claremont Bowling Club once again proved a successful evening. The winners on the night were D Mowatt (once again!) and S Taylor, with runners-up S Ballantyne and S McGeachy. Our thanks for this good night go to John Scott (Nairn Brown) who organised everything including those tasty pies. Thanks also go to the Claremont members for allowing us the use of their club.

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STUART TAYLOR

BUCKS, BERKS & OXON

I hope, by the time this report is printed, the rain has stopped and the golf courses are dry enough to put machinery on.

Once again the section has been fairly quiet with very little news to report. This gives me the opportunity to thank several active members of the committee who recently resigned. Firstly, Simon Edwards for balancing the books over the last year as treasurer, and also Bernie Wall and Lachlan Morrison for carrying out all golf administration duties.

Over the past four years it has become very difficult to obtain golf courses for our events, because clubs are reluctant to give up a valuable business day. It's down to time and effort from Bernie and Lachlan that we've had some splendid venues. Due to public demand, there will be a five-a-side football tournament on Sunday April 30 at Wycombe Sports Centre. Entry will be £10 per team. It is hoped this will be well represented - the more teams, the better the event. If you are struggling to make up a team of greenkeepers, then persuade some of your friends to join in. If this event proves to be successful, then a league will be formed next winter.

On the education side, we are putting together a seminar to be held soon and details will be posted in due course.

Before signing off, congratulations to Dave Goodchild and Katie on the birth of baby 'Augusta' in December.

LINDSAY ANDERSON

SOUTH WEST

Welcome to several new members who have joined the ever growing section over recent months, amongst them Neil Taylor from Mendip Springs Golf Club, and Michael Fawceet of Marlborough Golf Club.

Whilst on the membership theme, it was pleasing to see so many new faces at Lansdown Golf Club when we held our winter competition and lecture. Support for section events is slowly increasing, so for those who haven't got involved yet an open invitation is extended to all. If you don't play and would like to participate in the day, ring me prior to the event and I could possibly arrange a course walk with a member of staff from the respective club.

It is always difficult to arrange a winter competition during February. After all, who wants dozens of greenkeepers scrutinising their course during periods of bad weather? A call from course manager Guy Woods the night before the Lansdown event highlighted the problem. He reported that it was snowing heavily but at worst there would be 18 temperarities. The day's weather though proved somewhat better with a strong breeze and virtually no snow left. Considering this and previous months' weather, the course was in excellent condition, with fairways, tees and greens all cut. Thanks to Guy and his staff for the time spent in preparation, to Lansdown for allowing us course courtesy and to the caterers for a tasty lunch. The results were: 1, M Newman 35 pts (back 9); 2, S Frankom 35 pts (back 6); 3, S Sage 35 pts; 4, N Perkins 34 pts; 5, P Godwin 32 pts (back 9); 6, C Tozer 32 pts. Thanks to Avoncrop and BS Mowers for their generous prize donations. The day was wound up with a talk by Andrew Venables of Fairways on wildlife management of a golf course.

Nominations are now being taken for this year's Zeneca Premier Greenkeeper of the Year Award. This extremely worthwhile competition aims, in Zeneca's words, "to find the greenkeeper who gets the best from his or her course with the facilities available." First prize is a visit to the GCSAA Conference in the USA. The closing date for applications is May 31 1995. If you are interested, give me a ring on 0117 9793127 for an application form.

Finally, another reminder that Westurf takes place at Long Ashton GC on April 26. Your full support should guarantee another successful year.

KEVIN GREEN

DEVON/CORNWALL

Members were treated to all extremes of
weather from snow to warm sunshine during the morning's round of golf at our February meeting at Wrangaton GC. Numbers for the day were disappointing but those who were able to attend enjoyed the hospitality shown by the club with excellent food and the course made playable after all the recent rain by head greenkeeper Gerald Ayliffe and his staff. Congratulations, lads!

After an excellent lunch, John Palfrey of Avoncrock presented the golf prizes and Avoncrock Trophy for the morning's bogey competition.

Result: 1, Tony Gooch (Torrington) -1; 2, Brian Ridgeway (Fingle Glen) -2; 3, Nigel Tyler (Ruffords) -3.

The grapevine has reported that Richard Minton of Zeneca has been ousted from top spot of the order of merit for touring trade members by Nigel Tyler. We await Richard's response!

To conclude a most successful day, our afternoon educational talk on 'preparing your case for capital expenditure' was presented by Keith James of ING farm finance.

The section thanks Wrangaton GC and all their staff for making our day so successful, Keith James who made the long trip to be with us, and John Palfrey and Avoncrock.

Finally, I look forward to meeting you all at Westurf. It's the best in the West and it's free. It will be held once again at Long Ashton GC, Bristol, on Wednesday April 26. All your main local and national dealers will be there to answer your questions, you will also be able to see the latest machinery being demonstrated on the large demonstration area which includes a golf green. With all the latest turf care products on show, you can't afford to miss Westurf '95. It is RAC signposted and parking and admission are free.

RICHARD WHYMAN

CENTRAL SCOTLAND

Following last issue's sad news about the death of our only life member, John Henderson, this month's report also begins on a sombre note. David Cameron, head greenkeeper at Ladybank GC, Fife, has died at the age of 32. David was also a long-standing member of the section and a dedicated greenkeeper who could always be found on his beloved Ladybank.

I am sure I can speak for every member of the section in extending our sincerest condolences to his family.

On a happier note, it's a big welcome to the following new members to our section. John Palfrey and Avoncrock.

On a sunny day earlier this month, the committee had the pleasure of visiting the excellent new golf course at Mount Pleasant GC.

The feedback from those who attended was very positive with a general request for a follow-up programme. On behalf of those attending I would like to thank the industry sponsors for the day - Rowes of Chichester, Romsey Garden Machinery and Rolawn.

The winter social programme for '95/96 is being prepared and your thoughts for suitable events are requested. Please send your ideas to me at 45 Constable Close, Sholing, Southampton SO19 1EN.

We were all pleased to hear of the appointment of Jeff Drake as head greenkeeper at the Hampshire GC. Jeff worked for many years at Salisbury and South Wilts and Erlestone golf clubs before joining the Hampshire in September 1993 as deputy head greenkeeper.

The committee has been asked by Bob Young of Sparsholt College to emphasise on all members and especially head greenkeepers/course managers the importance of supporting our trainees. It is incumbent on us all to give them our support!

ALAN MITCHELL

NORTH WEST

As I write these notes, the rain, as usual, is lashing down and I am trying to remember when we last went 24 hours without rain or snow. This winter must have been a nightmare for anybody involved with the maintenance of turf. The grass has hardly stopped growing, conditions are so wet that even normal winter maintenance cannot be carried out.

Let's hope the weather is fine for our golf match against the North Wales section at Northop GC on Tuesday May 2, tee off 1.30pm. A team of 16 is required so if you are available, please ring me on 0151 7245412.

A few movements to report this month. Stephen Worthington has moved from Prestbury GC to take over as head greenkeeper at Macclesfield GC, Peter Cross has moved to West Derby GC as assistant greenkeeper, and Andrew Mannion is moving from Warrington GC to Southern Down GC in Mid-Glamorgan as assistant head greenkeeper.

BERT CROSS

BROCKET HALL

Brocket Hall course manager John Wells, star of last month's magazine, gave 20 Mid Anglia section members a guided tour of the course.

He went into the history of Brocket Hall and the difficulties faced when setting up a new golf course with predominantly sand greens.

Thanks to John and the management of Brocket Hall for allowing us to see the course. It is disappointing, however, bearing in mind the location to see so few people there.

We are looking to secure Brocket Hall as the venue for our Autumn Tournament towards the end of October. As soon as this is confirmed, I will let you know.

Our Spring Tournament goes ahead on the 25th of this month at Royston. The format will be 18 holes in the morning (medal), which will be the qualifying competition for the Hayter-Beaver Challenge, followed by 18 holes stableford in the afternoon.

Several changes to the rules of the Lodgeway Fourball competition have been decided. These are: 1, The main draw to be drawn out of a hat (not regionalised); 2, 8 leagues; 3, Quarter finals to be drawn; 4, Semi finals to be drawn – to be played on a neutral course decided by mutual consent among the competitors. If the two teams involved agree the committee will decide the venue; 5, The final will be played over 36 holes unless exceptional circumstances intervene; 6, All matches to be played to a win.

Ashridge GC is confirmed as the venue for this year's Texas Scramble/Christmas Tournament, to be played on Friday December 1.

Matches against the Midland Section and the London Section are currently being arranged for later in the year.

New members to welcome include: David Smith, Alan Smith, Duncan Flower, Ian Turnbull, Chris Slimm – all from John O'Gaunt GC; Peter Tiffinery from Weston Turville GC; Thomas Hooper from South Beds GC; Ian Cropper from Hanbury Manor; Thomas Bowden from the Family Golf Centre; David Wright and Gareth Knight from Brocket Hall; Stephen Burrett from Knebworth GC; Brian Nolan from Kingsway GC; Anthony Perkins from Verulam GC; Mathew Towlader and Michael Cuminum from Welwyn GC; and Timothy Lower from Delapre Golf Complex.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Colin Robinson on his appointment as course manager at John O'Gaunt GC and Steve Mason on his appointment as course manager at Mount Pleasant GC.
**SHEFFIELD**

More than 60 members attended our March meeting. If it takes a woman speaker to bring members to lectures, maybe I should look into booking more females. On the serious side, thanks to those of you who did turn out on such a bad day to hear Valerie Holt of the National Rivers Authority.

Seems I just about got it right to have a lecture about water as many of our courses seem to have been closed more than open this winter. But not those in and east of the Doncaster area which seem to have missed most of the bad weather as up to March this year my course has only been closed four days.

Getting back to the lecture, my thanks to Valerie – we all learned a lot from her talk and slides about rivers, ponds, conservation, bore holes and dykes on courses. One could tell by the questions and reception she got at the end of her lecture how popular her talk was.

New members include: Giles Brackenbury (Chesterfield GC), Michael Clegg and Paul Mason (Hallamshire GC), Leigh Platon (Leeds Hall GC), Stephen Currie and Steven Lacey (Hickleton GC) and Christopher Sims (Scunthorpe GC).

**RON ULLATHORNE**

**SOUTH WALES**

Firstly, members who went to Harrogate on the Westurf-sponsored trip have asked me to pass on many compliments to the organisers, Marion and Gordon Child. Once again, it was superbly organised and a thoroughly enjoyable four days. However, there were a few minor hiccups. No names mentioned, but there were four members who went to the wrong hotel to attend the AGM and by the time they realised that they had made a mistake they were snowed in! But if there was a prize for the best gaff it would go to the gent (you know who you are) who, in a hurry, made a mad dash to the toilet, to relieve himself of the previous night’s curry, only to realise after a few minutes that he had dashed into the wrong toilets – yes, the ladies. It was a further few minutes – 35 in all – before he plucked up the courage to make a dash for the exit, with fingers crossed that he wouldn’t come face to face with a female.

A marvellous exhibition and a superb trip – get your names down early to secure a place on the coach next year.

At Cowbridge, Mid Glamorgan, RS Bird Ltd launched the new Ransomes E-Plex and G-Plex before a crowd of well over 150 who had gathered in the firm’s newly revamped premises. Courage provided the liquid refreshment and BBC commentator Alex Hay provided the entertainment. It was a marvellous evening and our sincere thanks go to all at RS Bird, especially Jeff and Roger Bird.

A few days later at Pencoed College, Amenity Land Services presented a day’s ‘turf conference’. Topics included overseeding of golf greens, contract spraying, fertilisers and new products, including Farmura’s Inhibitor and Rhone-Poulenc’s Spearhead. The attendance should have been a lot better for this enjoyable, informative day. Our thanks to Farmura, Sharpes, Atlas Interlates, Rhone-Poulenc but mostly to ALS.

The following evening at Pencoed, David Ward, course manager at Royal Porthcawl, gave a talk entitled ‘Course preparation prior to the 1995 Walker Cup.’ It was so good to see not only so many people but so many new faces in attendance. An enthralling presentation was given regarding the great links of South Wales, where planning started some five years ago. David covered the building of a £6million sea defence, bunker rebuilding (all 96), tee enlargements and re-positioning, as well as an ongoing intensive coreing and aeration programme. A thoroughly educational and enjoyable evening, thank you David.

On the move: Andrew Jenkins, formerly of the Southerdown and Langland Bay golf clubs, has taken up his new position of first assistant at the Clyne GC where Anthony Bull has been promoted to deputy head greenkeeper.

Dates for your diary: April 19 – Spring Competition/Hayter qualifier, Creigiau GC, 1pm prompt; April 26 – Westurf, Long Ashton, Bristol.

PETER LACEY