**Mid Anglia**

Next month sees our first golf fixture of the year at Royston Golf Club, April 25. This will be, as normal, the qualifying event for the Hayter-Beaver competition. Entries should be sent on the appropriate form to our new fixtures secretary, Richard Saunders, and not to Chris Brook.

Richard’s address is 55 Leys Road, St Neots, Huntingdon, Cambs PE19 1EP. Please enclose a cheque for £20.

Six people attended our all-day safe-lifting course at the Family Golf Centre. Several people turned up in the afternoon, as they thought it was the usual format of an afternoon talk. Our apologies to these people, as it was not shown in the fixture card that it was an all-day course. Next year we will try to get more details of events in the fixture card so this does not happen again.

The National Education Conference at Harrogate was a complete success, with varied topics and good speakers, particularly from overseas, ie America and Sweden. The show itself went well although it was disappointing to learn that the English Golf Union is backing an alternative to BIGGA.

**East of England**

Our fixture list for 1995 is nearly complete, and looks like this:

May 18 – PGM Trophy at Elton Furze GC; June 6 – Purdeys Trophy/Hayter qualifier at Sandlands GC; August 23 – Rigby Taylor Trophy at Carholme GC; September 28 – Lamb Trophy/Rhône-Poulenc Prize at Spaldings GC; October 10 – Secretaries Association v BIGGA East of England at Sleaford.

Our winter education seminar at Kenwick Park (Louth) was given by John Hacker of PSD Agronomy Ltd. This first-class talk on grasses, irrigation and course presentation was enjoyed by all who attended. I expected about ten to 12 members if we were lucky, but in fact 30 attended (not bad for our small section). Our thanks go to Kenwick Park and Ian Morton for allowing us the use of the club facilities.

I heard recently Don Dykes of Carholme GC in Lincoln is to retire in June after 25 years at the club. I am sure he will be missed, but I hope he can attend our days out, especially the golfing day at Carholme in August.

**South West and Wales Region**

What a winter wonderland our trip to the BTME at Harrogate turned out to be. We started off in dry weather conditions which was a pleasant change for our part of the world, even the sun shone in places. After one initial hiccup where our friends from the farthest point south nearly missed the coach – through no fault of their own, I might add – we sallied up to the Fatherland, one minute’s silence was respected. For the first evening, the Leeds v QPR match was on the agenda, and this set the tone for the week when Leeds won 4-0.

What an exhibition! Better than ever and there’s hard to imagine. There is an incredible, almost family atmosphere at Harrogate. Vaught Whitelaw made a point of hoping that it would continue, and that BIGGA was good for golf and golf clubs. The turnout was excellent, and the organisers made sure of continued attendance by having all roads leading from the town closed – due to adverse weather conditions, they said. Seriously though, we were snowed in and could possibly have been home sometime in February.

The seminar programme was the only area which many felt could be improved. It was suggested that maybe we should have the National Education Conference and the exhibition as one, and return to workshops on Monday and Tuesday. This would improve the quality of the seminars even more.

Nothing however could dampen the enthusiasm on the journey home, not even drifting snow and rain. All the talk was about the trip for 1996, a gratifying feeling for those who organise it all. Let us know if you would like to come with us. Get your name down on our list now.

This trip and the conditions for some greenkeepers was a new experience, so please book early.

**Midland**

The first winter seminar – held at Walsall GC – saw 33 members turn up for talks by Mark Radford of E&T Breakwell and Graham Francis of PIL. We would like to thank them both for their talks, and Walsall GC for the use of the clubhouse.

The second winter lecture is to be held at Telford Golf and Country Club on March 31 at 2pm. The speakers will be Andy Cole of the STRI and Peter Jelford of Rufford Top Dressings.

The golf fixtures for 1995 are as follows:

- Spring Tournament/Hayter Qualifier – Kenilworth GC, April 26; Summer Tournament – The Warwickshire, August 27; Autumn Tournament – Maxstoke Park GC, September 25; Christmas Tournament/AGM – Worfield GC, December 7.

Our sincere thanks to all at the Pyle & Kenfig GC played host, as is the norm now, to our winter competition and AGM. Although numbers were down on last year, some 40 hardened golfers braved the windy, icy-cold conditions to play over the course as they have never seen it before. For the Pyle & Kenfig GC have recently purchased the leases on the land surrounding the course and this has now allowed them (in case you hadn’t noticed) to remove all of the fences that have kept the greens guarded so well for so long against both sheep and cattle. An enormous difference and a great improvement, congratulations!

Congratulations also go to Paul Robinson and his merry team for the condition of the course. It was so refreshing to see so many new members and so many members present from Dyfed. In fact it was the new members who took the honours: Winner of the winter competition and Vitax Shield – John Borgia from the Vale of Glamorgan GC; 2, Graham Lowe of Glynn Abbey GC; 3, David Gladwin from Carmorthen GC; longest drive – Huw Thomas, formerly of Pontardawe GC; nearest the pin – Gervyn Price, who seems to be on a roll for he also recently won £600 worth of holiday vouchers in a BIGGA competition.

Our AGM followed the golf and attracted 50 members. The meeting went relatively smoothly taking only 50 minutes and for this we have to thank our chairman, Idwal Morris. New officers are Dougie Donne and David Ward who replace the retiring Dennis Archer and Les Hallett.

Our sincere thanks to all at the Pyle & Kenfig GC for allowing us courtesy of the course for this annual event, but especially their captain, Glyn Charles for his kind words during his presentations, Roger Thomas, the secretary, and Don Booth, the chairman whose company I sincerely enjoyed throughout the whole day. I would also like to thank Pat Coombes and her catering staff for what can only be described as a superb Christmas dinner and, most importantly, our sponsors. Our main sponsors were Vitax with Celtic Mowers sponsoring the longest drive and nearest the pin competitions.

There was a great attendance of over 30 for health and safety adviser Richard Monk’s lecture.

**Around the Green**

Keeping in touch with news and comment from the regions

**Events Diary**

April 26: Westurf, Long Ashton GC, Bristol
May 9: Drainage ’95, Rockingham Castle Estate, Market Harborough, Leics. Tel: 01604 499662
June 21: South Turf, Motspur Park, South West London
July 20-23: The Open Championship, St Andrews
July 31-August 2: National Tournament, St Anne’s Old Links Golf Club, Lytham
September 13-14: Hayter Challenge Tournament Final, West Lancashire Golf Club, Blundellsands

**South Wales**

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At Pencoed College. His paper outlining recent updates in the Health and Safety at Work Act provided a good, informative evening for all. Congratulations are in order, firstly to Mr and Mrs Malcolm Rees, owner of Power Cut of Carmarthen, on the birth of their 9lb 5oz daughter Deanne, and secondly to Huw Thomas, formerly of Pontardawe GC, on his appointment as sales rep of RS Birds Ltd. Huw took up his position on January 23. We wish him well with his new career and I’m sure we’ll be seeing a lot more of him. Jamie Probert, 22, is the new head greenkeeper of Pontardawe. Well done!

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you of two tragic events. On January 8 John Walsh, a former head greenkeeper at Southendown GC who learned his trade at nearby Royal Portcawl GC, passed away. John was only 36 and retired from greenkeeping five years ago due to ill health. He fought a long and hard battle against cancer, was well known locally and well respected. On January 14th Christopher Thomas was killed by a train only yards from his house. He was only 20, a student at Pencoed College and an assistant greenkeeper at Southendown.

Dates for your diary: Wednesday April 5 – South Wales annual seminar, Mechanisation on the Golf Course, at St Mary’s GC, Bridgend; Wednesday April 26 – Westurf, Long Ashton, Bath. You should all have received a 1995 fixture card, sponsored by Tacit. If you haven’t or need a replacement, please contact me.

PETER LACEY

BUCKS, BERKS AND OXON

Firstly my apologies for the lack of reports during January and February, but the section was fairly quiet and there was no juicy gossip to write about.

One of the outstanding events that did take place was the Turkey Trot, followed by the AGM. This was held at Maple Durham GC near Reading. The format, again, was a Texas scramble. Results: 1, G Walsh, R Lucas, A Cooper; 2, D Childs, D Goodchild, T French; 3, P Reeve, G Patient, B Wall. Thanks to Lachlan Morrison and staff for preparing the course under difficult weather conditions. Thanks also to the catering staff for a splendid meal afterwards.

Two football matches have taken place recently – and once again Berks beat Bucks (6-5) with man of the match Chris Sanders scoring a hat-trick. In the second match Berks/Bucks greenkeepers beat Ellesborough golfers (7-4). Poor old Dale Childs got knobbled and had to come off. Apparently the team played better with Dave sidelined! Man of the match was Gareth Austin (a rock at the back). Once again everybody wanting to represent Oxon phone me on 01494 871671.

The next golfing event is the Spring Tournament at Beaconsfield GC on April 5. This is an 18-hole event to be played in the afternoon. It is also the Hayter qualifier so there is lots to play for. The invitations will be posted along with the season’s fixture card.

LINDSAY ANDERSON

SOUTH WEST

Having just returned from the 1995 BTME at Harrogate, I would like to say what a very worthwhile visit it turned out to be in many respects. There were the educational seminars on many relevant topics from budgeting and finance to health and safety, to turf grass trends, all of which proved very informative.

The trade exhibition, held at the same time, was larger than in any previous year and gave greenkeepers the opportunity to view new machinery and discuss relevant issues with company representatives. Lastly, but just as importantly, there was the opportunity to socialise with fellow members both during the stay and whilst on the coach. Thanks go to Gordon and Marion Child for their excellent organisation which led to a very enjoyable week. To anyone who still undecided about the trip I can strongly recommend it for 1996 and, at a greatly subsidised price thanks to funding from Westurf, what more incentive is needed?

Whilst on the subject of Westurf, may I remind you that this year’s event takes place on April 26 at Long Ashton GC, Bristol. Help is always useful and anyone able to assist in its organisation, before, during and after the show should contact me on 0117 9793127. The popular Five-a-Side football tournament takes place on the evenings of Friday and Saturday. Last year’s event saw Drighlington GC and Tewkesbury GC through to the final.

Keep those records on their toes. Correct results from the last event were: Tewkesbury, 1; Drighlington, 0.

KEVIN GREEN

NORTH SCOTLAND

Granton-on-Spey assistant Neil Sadler is the latest addition to the North Section membership. Keep them coming!

We are running the 200 Club again this year, so please support your section by purchasing a ticket and maybe selling one to someone. This is the major fundraiser for the section and helps to keep outings and other events cheaper for the members.

Two items of note concerning the section to report this month. First up is the announcement this week of the N/W v N/Wales clash of 18-hole event to be played on Saturday 22nd April. The section qualifier for the Hayter Challenge tournament.

There has been more interest in first aid and chainsaw courses in the past few months. If anyone would like to continue the trend, please contact me.

Finally, congratulations to regional board officer Robin Greaves who recently took up a position on the National Board.

KEVIN GREEN

NORTH WEST ENGLAND

The BTME at Harrogate was once again a great success with all the halls full to capacity with exhibitors. It is hoped that the companies which exhibit at Harrogate will continue to do so in future. The EGU, it appears, will be supporting the P&O show at Olympia in 1996, after a change of mind, but this does not necessarily mean that others will follow suit. Speaking to many companies at Harrogate, they feel that BTME has a personal touch that does not exist anywhere else, and I totally agree. With the BTME meeting Andy Peel, a former N/W sectional member who moved to Bull Bay GC in Anglesey, and he asked me to inform his old mates that he now has a son, William, born November 22. Congratulations to Andy and Sarah.

Chris Haspel is returning to greenkeeping this month. Chris, who has worked for Richard Campey for the last couple of years after leaving Oaklands GC, is moving to a 18-hole golf course in Denmark as head greenkeeper and his wife Koby will also be involved with the business organising golf holiday packages etc. Good luck in your new venture.

This year’s regional seminar will be at The Tytherington Club on Thursday March 16, so if you have forgotten please ring me and I will fit you in.

The Spring Tournament is at Wilmslow GC on Thursday April 13. This tournament is also a qualifier for the Hayter Regional Final. Entries, including £10 deposit, must be in by Friday April 8. Send them to: Paul Pearse, 1 Swan Close, Poynnton, Stockport, Cheshire SK12 1HX. Proper dress is essential both on the course and in the clubhouse. The N/W v N/Wales clash of the titans is at Northop GC on Tuesday May 2, tee-off 1.30pm. I require a team dedicated to winning (and enjoying a good day out), so if you fit the description ring me on 0151 7243142.

BERT CROSS

CLEVELAND

The new 9-hole course at Hallgarth Golf and Country Club near Darlington opens for play on
The Spring Tournament at Wearside GC, Sunderland. If anyone can help in finding a venue, then please contact Don Wilson on 0181 449 0541.

The quiz between Cleveland BIGGA and Teeside IGT at Durham was excellent, resulting in a good win by Cleveland led by Kevin Heslop from Brancemouth GC. Thanks to Terry Charlton and Barry Giennell and all the staff from sponsors Turfcare of Leadgate, Co Durham.

The Spring Tournament at Wearside GC, Sunderland, is on April 27. BRUCE BURNELL.

LONDON
I would like to thank the GTC for organising the effective speaking course that was held at Porters Park GC. The two-day course was conducted by Frank Newberry and was extremely informative and beneficial. I would like to thank Frank for all his help and congratulate Jim Cassidy for his presentation at this year’s BTME. It was evident that Jim had understood Frank’s training concepts and it was a pleasure to see Jim (The Axeman) perform so well.

It was nice to see such a good turnout from the London Section at this year’s show. The quality of speakers at the conference was excellent and the evening entertainment was equally good. The weather turned very cold midweek and the heavy snow that fell caused quite a few problems for the town centre. The main one being no taxis to the nightclubs! The music pumped well into the early hours at Jimmies Bar and was the haunt for many a greenkeeper. A good snowball fight occurred after the Wednesday night visit and I don’t know if the London Section beat the Mid- Anglia Section, so it will have to be decided at this year’s annual general meeting.

The week was excellent and the company even better so make a date for next year and I will hope to see you all there.

Finally, I would like to say that all the golf venues for 1995 have been set and have received the Huxley Bowl entry forms. Be sure to return entries before the closing date to avoid disappointment. On June 6 Kingswood GC will play host to the Cresta Cup.

DEVON AND CORNWALL
Hopefully you will find this report under the right section’s heading as I have been known to forget which section I belong to!

Just over 50 members attended our first meeting of the new year, which was our section semi-final held once again at the superb venue of Fingle Glen. Only a dozen members took to the course for the morning’s Zeneca Challenge competition which was played over the well-prepared 9-hole course.

As usual, the trade supported the section by taking up stands in the reception area which proved very successful once again. Our thanks to Avoncrop, Barenbrug, Devon Garden Machinery, Fisons, PJ Flegg, MST, Rigby Taylor, Rolleys, Vitax and Willcocks for taking trade stands.

After an excellent lunch, Richard Minton of Zeneca presented the golf prizes to: T Gooch (Torignton) 21pts; C Rawlings (Padbrook) 19pts; E Barber (Teign Valley) 16pts.

Our afternoon seminar was held in the Zeneca sponsored conference room, with members being treated to two excellent papers – Jim Arthur on ‘Grass Identification’ and Jenny Rolph on ‘Dealing with pressure at work’.

Question time finished the afternoon programme which was of great educational value to all who attended. Our thanks to Jim Arthur and Jenny Rolph for their papers, to Bill Pile, Fingle’s course manager, and his staff who made our day so successful, and to Zeneca and the other companies who sponsored the day.

On behalf of all the section members who took advantage of this year’s regional package to BTME at Harrogate, I would like to thank Gordon and Marion Child for once again organising a superb educational trip. I would like to hear your views on the package you would like to see the region arrange for next year.

Members, please note our last meeting of the season will be held at Mullion on Wednesday March 22. This will also be our Hazend quailifier so please make sure your entries are returned to me with correct monies by the closing date.

Your help is needed to promote this year’s Westurf Trade Show on Wednesday April 26 at Long Ashton GC, Bristol. Many of you will know groundsman and committee members of your local sports clubs, so why not invite them to the show? Anyone in the turf care industry will be most welcome. We also need your support at Westurf so I look forward to meeting you all on our stand.

RICHARD WHYMAN

AYRSHIRE
Our AGM saw the end of Derek Wilson’s two-year reign as chairman. Derek reflected on the continuing rise in our membership and the renewed interest in attending not only the golf outings but also other aspects of section business such as the STRI day at Ayr College and the AGM. He then invited new chairman Ian McNab from Dunfrries and County GC to take over the chair. Ian thanked Derek on behalf of the section for his efforts of the past two years, then spoke about his hopes for his term of office, particularly in the field of more training lectures during the winter and better communication with our members within our very spread-out area.

We had a tenpin bowling night at Saltcoats for the Christmas get-together and although the turnout wasn’t what we hoped for, everyone enjoyed it. This year’s golf day, just scraping home from Harry ‘What are these holes for?’ Diamond, with several others just behind. This was great entertainment, with fabulous prizes, so don’t miss the next one.

An excellent turnout of over 70 greenkeepers and club officials attended our STRI day at Ayr College and certainly got their money’s worth as the talks were well presented, informative, and sometimes contentious, which certainly got the conference room talking. Although not agreeing with many of the points made by the speakers, it still made for a very good day.

I’ve just returned from the BTME and, as usual, thoroughly enjoyed it, with the only reservation being the lack of choice at the meals on Sunday and Monday nights. Thanks again though to all those involved in the organisation and here’s hoping it continues for many years to come.

Our spring outing this year is a first-time visit to Kilmarnock Barassie GC, a fine 18-hole parkland course on the Salway Firth with some great views if you’re not playing well. Details will be out shortly, so let’s have a good turnout.

DUNCAN GRAY

NORTHERN REGION
Having just returned from Harrogate, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone from the Northern Region for their help on the regional stand and also door duty. Special mention must be given to David Milbourn, Andy Smith and Mick Hannam who ‘mucked in’ when I was struggling to find staff due to the weather.

The regional stand proved very popular as a meeting point and also for our patrons to meet members. It was also good to see David Hannam over from Switzerland and Alan ‘Lofty’ Loftus who is returning from exile to work at Fiskay.

International relations were also fostered with the presentation of a flag from the Swedish Greenkeepers Association and also an approach from the Ontario Greenkeepers Association who are seeking to twin with our region.

Once again BTME was an excellent and very well-attended show (especially considering the weather). I look forward to seeing everyone again for many years to come in HARROGATE!

BOB LUPTON

NORTHERN SECTION
The Spring Tournament is our first golf competition of the year and is also the Hazend qualifier. Any member wishing to take part should contact me as soon as possible as numbers are limited. To all new members wishing to take part it will be held at Hessel GC on April 12.

One of our sponsors, Rhône-Poulenc, has told me it will be providing fleecy jackets as nearest-the-pin prizes for all our tournaments this year. Our thanks to them.

I would like to congratulate Pat Murphy on his 25 years’ service at Shipley GC. I hope they appreciate your hard work over the years!

MARCUS CORDINGLEY

SHEFFIELD
As our committee member Ian Collett has

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moved from his post at Brough and taken up his new job with Turf Grass Services International, the position of section correspondent has fallen to yours truly and I will try to keep members up to date with all section news. If any member has any information they want mentioning please contact me on 01405 765322. We at the Sheffield section wish Ian all the very best and thank him for all his work on the committee in the past.

At our February meeting members had the pleasure of having Neil Thomas, executive director, give a very interesting talk on BTME and the Association in the past seven years and hopefully where we are going to the year 2000. The education officer, Ken Richardson, talked about the Master Greenkeeper Certificate, Zeneca and Toro awards, BIGGA videos, the library, management courses and the N/SVQs. The attendance was quite good but could have been better.

I have spent a lot of time arranging speakers for lectures next year and have got some excellent people lined up, ie Jon Allbutt, Nick Bissett, Duncan McGillivray, John Hacker and Inturf. All the committee asks is that members support these lectures.

Congratulations go to Robert Needham on his appointment as head greenkeeper of Hickleys GC. Other places include Paul Bentley (Dere and Totley), Andrew Brathwaite (Holme Hall), Damian Kidd (Buxton and High Peak GC), James Neve (Brough GC) and Robert Townsend (Sickleholme GC).

Golf dates arranged: July 3 – National Tournament, Cavendish GC; September 25 – Autumn Tournament, Coomoor GC.

RON ULLATHRONE

CENTRAL SCOTLAND

The Spring Tournament is also the qualifying event for the Hayter Challenge Tournament. To qualify for this event a national handicap is required, so, if you don't have one, get three cards in before April 13. Due to the ever increasing numbers at our golf events, it has been decided to have an additional category, which means we now have 1st, 2nd and 3rd class sections. (With a bit of luck we might start a veteran's section, then I might stand a chance!)

While I am on about golf, here's a date for your diary: the Autumn Tournament will be held on Thursday October 12 by courtesy of Muckhart GC. Details of other section events will be circulated as soon as dates are confirmed.

Membership of the section is still on the increase and it is a pleasure to welcome Kenneth McIntosh, Kenneth Harper and James McLean as our newest members and I look forward to meeting them at some of our section events in the near future.

Following the huge success of our five-a-side football tournament last year, word is out that another section wishes to challenge us to a full 11-a-side match. (Did they have a spy at our event?) Hopefully this can be organised and if it is I will report on the outcome as soon as possible.

JOHN CRAWFORD

KENT

It is nice to see that the BTME is now so big that it has had to extend into a fourth hall. It took me some time to find it as it is separate from the main building, but diligent detective work and a nose for a good ale enabled me to find the Pump Room. I shall refrain from mentioning any incidents directly but suffice it to say the scope for bribery is enormous, especially amongst those hardy members, both greenkeepers and trade alike. Let's hope that it can continue as an independent entity.

I have not as yet received any details of either future BIGGA events or news from around the region and so it only remains for me to wish everybody well with the current inclement weather and hope that by the time this appears all thought of floods etc are gone.

RICHARD PAGE

EAST MIDLANDS

This month sees us throwing off the winter blues and launching into the spring programme - no more peace for some time now. But we will be pausing on March 14 to enjoy the section seminar at Sparsholt College.

This year's golf fixtures will be starting soon with the Spring Tournament at Corshampton Golf Club. Please send entries early this year as we will be closing the list ten days before the event so that players can be contacted prior to the day. Send entries to new tournament organiser, Mark Webb of Alresford Golf Club, at 12 Lime Road, Alresford SO24 9LD or phone 01962 733061.

ALAN MITCHELL

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