when we thought we could sit back and re-
cuperate we were hit by two of the worst
summer weeks we ever had to endure. It
was enough to make strong men weep,”
Weiss continues. “and I saw quite a few
on the verge of tears.”

The Lehigh supt. goes on to say that
from late August on there was a great deal
of renovation carried on for the second
time during the year in order to bring
courses back to something like normal.

“But what worries practically all of us,”
he adds, “is that while we may know most
of the remedies, we don’t know how to
prevent the many troubles that hit us in
1959. As one not too cheerful supt. said,
‘What if we’re in a cycle of tough weather.
What if we have to go through this again
next year and the year after?”

Advice From Noer

Perhaps O. J. Noer, in two articles that
appeared in GOLFDOM in 1959, has some
of the answers. In May (p. 29), writing of
winterkill, Noer said: “When moisture and
temperatures become favorable for growth,
recovery should occur. There is no rea-
sion to become excited. Patience is the bet-
ter approach. Recovery of established
grass is apt to be as quick and more sat-
sactory than renovation and re-seeding.
But a way must be found to impress these
things on club members.”

In October (p. 51), writing of sum-
time turf loss, Noer said: “The natural re-
action in a year like this is to condemn
the grass and turn to something else. This
may be best for some but not necessarily
for everybody. As assessment of perform-
ance and scrutiny of management prac-
tices is justified. In those places where
turf survived in good shape, we may find
the answers. Management in these loca-
tions may be a helpful guide to others.”

This may seem to put Noer in a league
with Service and Al Schardt. Only the
trouble is that members don’t understand
or don’t want to recognize that what Na-
ture destroys in a hurry it is very slow to
heal.

Work With Nature

Schardt, in fact, hints that Nature prob-
ably resists the supt’s impulse to speed its
healing process. “The trouble with many
of us,” says Al, “is that when things start
to go wrong we panic. The first thing we
think about is saturating the turf with fer-
tilizer or chemicals to snap it back. I’ve
seen more turf ruined in my 45 years
through over-control than through lack of
attention.

“I’m willing to work with Nature,”
Schardt continues. “I advocate moderate
and frequent treatments rather than heavy
dosages. Fertilizers and chemicals should
be used as boosters and not in the hope
that they are overnight cure-alls.”

More important than growth stimula-
tors or controls, Al Bertucci opines, are the
few key men a supt. has who are willing to
work overtime during critical periods and
are just as concerned with saving the turf
as he is. “If you have fellows who will
stay on in the evenings when temperatures
are more favorable for mowing, fungicide
spraying and watering,” Bertucci notes,
“your chances of at least minimizing dam-
age are fair. Without this kind of help
you are going to lose your turf in a hurry.”

It Was a Nightmare

So far as 1959 is concerned, Frank P.
Dunlop of Baltimore CC remembers it as
a nightmare. Turf was weak after the win-
ter’s desiccation and when spring turned
out to be hot and dry, recovery was furth-
er retarded. By mid-July his course was
starting to come around but 23 days of
hot, humid and wet weather in the last
days of July and in early August com-
pletely upset the recovery schedule. Poor
drainage took its toll. Dunlop had taken
some steps to forestall catastrophe by in-
stalling tile drainage under greens, but
this is a long range program and enough
hadn’t been done to avoid trouble on the
large scale. Baltimore CC greens are now
being overseeded with Penncross and fair-
ways are being converted to U-3 Bermuda
because it is felt that these two grasses will

(Continued on page 69)