Spring holds special significance for golf superintendents in the northern parts of the country. It is a time of reawakening for grass, trees, flowers and—most important—golfers. There are those who rushed the season and found the going rather "squishy."

Superintendents diligently will inspect and assess winter damages such as weather’s ravages, rodent activity, early play on dormant turf that was too soft, vandalism, winter sports, disease and so on. Rarely do these things occur in a pattern that admits of a standard organized approach. Each season demands a fresh individual study of causes, effects and remedies.

Freezing and Thawing — Alternate freezing and thawing is normal for spring in the North but few appreciate fully just what it does to soils and turf. Dense compact soils are loosened and aerated. Shallow-rooted plants are heaved out of the ground where they dessicate unless they are firmed into place by rolling.

Turf freezes at the surface during cold nights. When frozen solid enough to support golfers and their equipment, it is perfectly all right for play to proceed with minimum damage expected. But, when the sun waxes warm and the surface thaws, the soil assumes a loosened, wet (mushy) condition.

Play at this time can be ruinous. Traffic pressures will cement soil particles together, roots will be torn, footprints and wheelmarks will affect late play and the superintendent will be hard pressed to repair the damage.

Topdressing — No other practice on the golf course has gained such universal acceptance for repairing breaks in turf. Low places are filled and turf is smoothed for the golfer’s pleasure. Decomposition continued on page 20