

Superintendents at de luxe courses smiled through the tears of their own troubles as they referred to some excellent greens at country-town courses where there wasn't enough water to allow over-watering, and at heavily played public courses where traffic wouldn't permit much watering of greens. When greens at these sparsely watered courses went off color, or cloudbursts and hot, humid weather knocked the greens out, or poa annua went out, players at those courses were inclined to regard the damage as an act of God and didn't blame the supt.

Also helping to ease the situation at these courses where greens are lightly watered is the fact that fairways there generally are unwatered and the contrast between greens and fairway color isn't conspicuous.

Water System Modernization

Fairway and greens hoseless watering systems have been a tremendous boon to golf in increasing play, reducing labor costs and, notwithstanding perils of excessive watering, improving course condition. But now there's been so much learning about watering a great many of the watering systems need modernization. The most common fault in the system is inadequate size of piping, the superintendents said. They add that the irrigation engineers know this but the cost factor prevents correct installations. The superintendents added they seldom could do anything about correcting this as the decision on cost was made by officials, not by superintendents.

What club officials and members don't appreciate about golf course watering is that it has to be done at the right time and in the right amount, and is governed greatly by drainage. At most of the first class courses in the Chicago district fairway watering is needed about every three days in the summer. Then, the superintendents agree, it should be done on all 18 fairways at the same time. The rain does it that way. When the fairway is watered the second day after a rain it's too wet. Or if water is applied to a fairway or green five hours too late the damage of delay may be extensive. With the necessity of keeping poa annua through the summer the importance of correctly timed watering to the proper extent is emphasized. Cases were related of sun cooking turf when the grass was watered only a few hours before it was dry enough to need moisture.

But despite the delicate problem of

watering, the superintendents said they'd much sooner have a dry summer so they could control the weather than a summer with intermittent rains.

Scattered showers drive the superintendents gray-headed. One course may get a cloudburst and another course ten miles away won't have a drop of water. The rain complicates the maintenance program and condition and players will wonder at the difference in condition of the two courses and blame the superintendent whose course shows damage from the thunder shower and boiling weather.

During this discussion several superintendents referred to a course they'd seen where moisture oozed up when one walked on the greens. They said they hesitated to mention this indication of over-watering to a competent superintendent because of the possibility of an early morning downpour that day.

Attitude Toward Advice

That brought up the interesting subject of how frankly to talk to each other about the other fellow's work. "We don't want to get too touchily 'ethical', like some doctors, about our profession," one highly successful superintendent said. "The main reason we do well on our jobs is because we can handle problems. Anybody can take care of a course where and when there are no problems. Like anybody else in this puzzling, worrying business, I have made mistakes in thinking and guessing for the right answer to some of my problems. Anybody — whether it is some young fellow in the business or an old-timer at a little old 9-hole course — who can suggest something that might make

THE OLD TOOL HOUSE

By John L. Counsell
Supt., Salem Country Club,
Peabody, Mass.

*Still stands the old tool house by the
side of the road,*

*Like a patriarch tattered and worn,
With a roof that is wrinkled and
walls that are bowed,*

Awaiting the Judgment morn.

*The storms of New England have
dealt it cruel blows*

But will it surrender? Never!

*Around it the junk pile mountainous
grows*

*For the old shack will be there
forever.*