

## Record Late Snows Have N. E. Supts. Puzzled

BY HOMER DARLING

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**H**EAVY snow storms in late March created an unprecedented situation on New England golf courses. In the memory of veteran superintendents there never before was as much snow covering turf on April 1 as there was this year.

A total of 36 to 46 inches of snow fell on New England courses after March 17. What to do about this unusual condition and how it might affect turf was the subject of a round table discussion at the April 2 meeting of the New England Golf Course Superintendents' Assn.

Superintendents from central, northern and most eastern New England courses reported from 10 to 14 inches of snow covering their greens on April 1, with many greens blanketed with drifts 2 to 3 feet. Courses on the Massachusetts Cape, and areas below New Bedford reported their greens clear of snow, or practically so. One supt. from the vicinity of Lake Sunapee, N.H. reported four feet of frost and four feet of snow on the level and no kidding.

A show of hands was requested regarding several questions. What to do about all this snow? Sixteen supts stated they would let nature remove the snow without any manual work. Eight were planning to push it off the greens. One supt., finding several inches of ice under the snow, immediately arranged to have a bulldozer clear all greens. Eight supts. planned to use a fungicide just as soon as the snow disappears even though applications were made in early winter.

### Little Damage Predicted

Some men thought there was a showing of undue pessimism and predicted there would be little damage to the greens because of the unusual amount of fungicides used during last season's adverse weather conditions. A few others thought that some loss of turf would be experienced due to snow mold, smothering, rotting, and water-logged conditions. Only time will tell and the boys promised to report on their observations at the next regular meeting May 7.

This report is being written April 5. The last two days of warm sunshine has eaten away the snow much faster than was anticipated. Parts of some greens are now exposed at Juniper Hill. No fatal

snow mold injury is noted on these exposed areas where fungicides were applied but there is a solid mass on the aprons. The same is true on my lawn particularly where the snow disappeared today in the warmer temperatures.

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*Later (April 24) Darling wrote:*

Boston newspapers gave considerable space to the reports of conditions on the district's courses and carried a number of pictures of snow-bound courses.

The publicity was most interesting to the golfing public and very helpful to supts. and club officials who are in need of the golfer's understanding and cooperation. This publicity possibly was the silver lining of the snow-laden clouds as it certainly brought to public attention the problems and work of golf course superintendents, in and out of the heavy playing season.

For the past five years, courses in the Boston section have been opening the last week in March. Fifteen years ago when the winters were more severe, April 19 generally was the official opening date. In the 25 years I've been at Juniper Hill we've opened between April 1 and April 10, except during the past five years when we pushed the opening date up to the last week in March.

### Late Openings

At Juniper Hill this year we opened April 19 but very few courses in central Massachusetts were able to open at that time. They hoped to open the weekend of April 28.

Snowmold damage did not materialize as expected, particularly where greens had been treated with a fungicide in early winter. Those who failed to treat were hard hit. There was a tremendous amount of snowmold on the aprons and in fairways. Even now it is too soon to tell what the real damage may be. The weather has been too cold and backward to start growth on the greens.

It is quite possible that some turf will be lost due to icy water standing so long in low spots on greens. Several supts. say it looks bad at the moment; very little sign of life. One week of warm weather and a few showers will determine whether the bad spots will come through or not.—H.D.

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