



even be called diplomatic, to wit: "I have nothing against 'them' just as long as they keep off my course."

It is difficult to seek out a pro-con exchange on the subject, because most superintendents believe they are violating allegiance to the propagation of enhancing the condition of the golf course at all costs if they even hint of favorable thinking.

There is one exception, though. Ed Van Kampen of the Cordial Greens CC in East Greenbush, N.Y., believes that snowmobiles are no more a threat to the well-being of golf course turf than the golfer who takes hat-sized divots. His views will be explored later.

On the other side of the argument

stands Casey Rowley, the resident superintendent of snow country. Rowley handles the conditioning exercises of the Stratton Mountain CC in Vermont, a much-heralded piece of golfing real estate carved out of the slopes and trails where schussers and snow bunnies cavort every Vermont winter.

Rowley says he hasn't changed his mind about the damaging effects of the snowmobile. In fact, he is so convinced winter sports should find a playground other than the golf course that he posts his layout against skiers!

"You think that's strange?" Rowley said one morning last spring after studying the remains of a parallel

swing in the middle of Stratton's 11th green. "If you can appreciate what a pair of skis can do to a green, try thinking of the possibilities that could arise should snowmobiles run the same course."

Rowley has been confronted by members of the Chalet Owners' Assn. at Stratton to alter his stand against the use of snowmobiles. He refuses to budge. "I am thoroughly in accord with the thinking that any turf which gets compacted is bad business," he insists. "I've told the snowmobile addicts this and don't intend to change my mind. Of course, my superiors might step in with an order. That's up to them."

(Continued)

Snowmobile



Just down the road from Rowley or a couple of ski lifts away resides the "semi-pro, semi-con" view of Paul O'Leary who keeps the grass green at the nationally-famous twin courses of Equinox and Ekwanok.

O'Leary claims he is against the use of snowmobiles at this stage of the disagreement. "I look upon the situation as something akin to the golf car several years ago," O'Leary opines. "Eventually the superintendent had to learn to live with the golf car. I suppose if the snowmobile continues its spiral, he may have to assume the same attitude."

Equinox and Ekwanok are laid out on the doorstep of the Big Bromley ski area. Therefore, O'Leary is surrounded by lovers of the winter outdoors. There is a snowmobile run adjacent to his courses which gives him room to rationalize their presence. If and when they are allowed to roam on the golf course, O'Leary might sing a different tune.

Swinging down from Vermont into the Berkshires, the attitude of the superintendent leans along more tolerant lines.

Harry Tynan, whose domain is the rolling terrain of the Country Club of Pittsfield, Mass., reports that snowmobile activity is high there.

"Our members are a year-round participation group," says Tynan. "We stake out a snowmobile run for them and I find there isn't too much

damage if the operation is controlled. Most of them stay in the roughs. We stake off the greens and tees as out of bounds. So far it has worked well."

Now compare all this, with heavy emphasis on the Rowley condemnation measures, to the complete turn-about of Van Kampen who theorizes that his club would die in the winter if he didn't actively promote the use of snowmobiles.

"I am sick and tired of all this fuss about how much damage a snowmobile can contribute to the condition of the golf course," Van Kampen fumes. "To me the effects of a snowmobile on a fairway are the same as a man kicking cement. Sure, there is compaction, but compaction has a hundred other causes besides the snowmobile."

Van Kampen admits his position as owner-superintendent of Cordial Greens gives a false impression of his attitude toward the tracked monsters. "Yes, I'm interested in sources of revenue for my club," he says, "but I am just as dedicated to the feeling I have for giving golfers a top-conditioned course. In fact, I am stronger about this than many superintendents. After all, I have more to lose if my course isn't in playable shape."

Cordial Greens has handled as many as 240 snowmobiles on a single day. At the end of the winter of 1969-1970 Van Kampen wound up his adding machine and zipped off a

total of 20,000 as the number of machines that had run the Cordial Course. And all of this traffic has meant about a 15 per cent increase in winter revenues at the club. Van Kampen feels this figure is more impressive when one considers that he has always worked at having an active winter program even before the advent of snowmobiles. However, for a club that goes into almost a total slump in winter, accommodating snowmobiles could mean far greater increases.

The adventurous spirit of Van Kampen probably has much to do with his acceptance of the snowmobile. "I have always been one who is willing to take a chance rather than sit on unproven theories," he explains. "I think the average superintendent is convinced the snowmobile is the enemy without ever confronting it. Sure, we have had evidence of some damage, but it has been so slight that I can't see abandoning my whole program."

That program is unique for a superintendent. Van Kampen has formed a snowmobile club for his winter friends. He's set up a racing track over the golf course's driving range and figures the action next winter will be phenomenal.

"I'd like to say another thing," Van Kampen adds. "Since I lifted the barrier, my club has come alive during the winter. And my golfers will back me up when I report that the golf course has never been in better condition."

This, then, runs down the pros and cons on the use of snowmobiles. It follows the spectrum from Rowley's "who needs 'em?" reaction to Van Kampen's "their presence is no more harmful than a divot-taking golfer" belief.

One humorous aside to the great debate was experienced in seeking the opinion of Richard Blake, vice president of the Golf Course Superintendents Assn. of America. Blake, who holds the fort at the Mount Pleasant CC in Worcester, Mass., had a personal hand in deciding the snowmobile's fate at his course.

"I decided to try one of the things out," Blake reveals. "I hopped in, got it going and went into a spin. When they pulled me out of the snowmobile, I had three cracked ribs. Personally, I can live without 'em." □



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When fire destroyed the clubhouse at Dellwood CC, the management kept its peak season business from going up in smoke along with its clubhouse

If Fire Hits, Save the Season

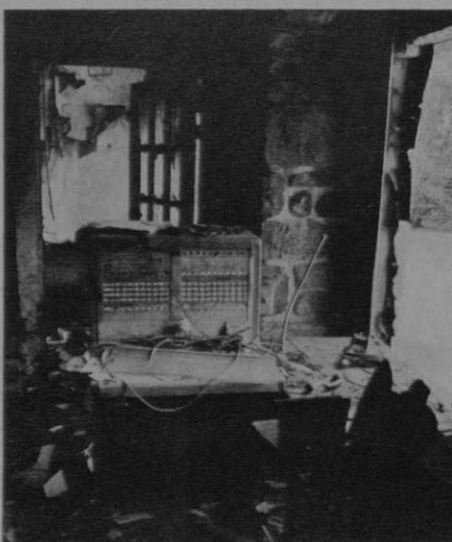


The fire broke out shortly after 10 p.m. on July 1st; by 6:30 a.m. the clubhouse at Dellwood CC in New City, N.Y., was demolished. Lost were the restaurant, bar lounge, offices and card rooms, and hanging in the balance was Dellwood's entire social season.

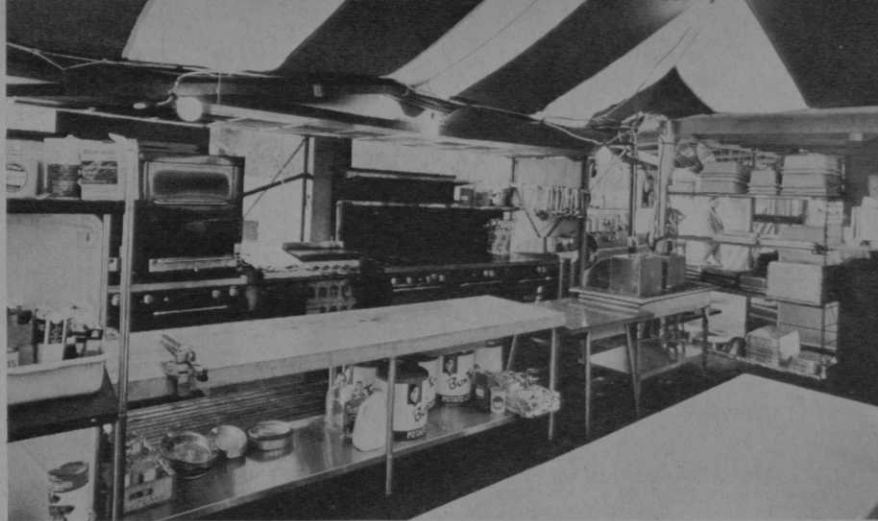
While the fire raged Dellwood's president, insurance chairman, insurance broker and general manager, John Straub, met to decide what immediate course of action should be taken. The decision to do everything possible to quickly put the club back into complete operation was made, with the approval of the executive committee, which met the following day.

The restoration of telephone, gas and electric services was an immediate concern because it was felt that

In total ruin: All that remains of Dellwood's clubhouse are the stone walls and foundation.



without these vital utilities, the whole rebuilding effort would be hampered. Within 12 hours after the fire these services were restored. A temporary telephone service was installed on the lower floor of one of the hotel buildings, which had become a temporary office. With telephones available, the club's many suppliers could be immediately contacted to deliver necessary equipment. In addition, the normal communication service for members was maintained; messages were even delivered on the golf course via the instant communication network (see April GOLFDOM, p. 52), which provides through a citizen band radio, communication from a base station in the office to staff members equipped with transceivers. Also, the network was supplied to other staff



This temporary kitchen (left), set up in a tent, handled dinner for over 300 people.

members, such as pool manager and pro shop manager, who were given walkie-talkies, which were connected to the base station located in the temporary office.

The temporary office, Dellwood's management soon realized, would be better utilized as card room facilities; therefore, two 10-foot by 50-foot field office trailers were rented for temporary office space. These trailers will continue as offices until the new clubhouse is completed.

The day after the fire, club officials decided to locate the temporary restaurant and bar facility in a portion of the parking lot. They also decided, after investigating such possibilities as inflatable bubbles and temporary wood structures, that a circus tent-type installation consisting of three tents would be best. These tents, one 20 by 30 feet for the kitchen, one 40 by 100 feet for the dining room and one 30 by 30 feet for the

bar, were installed the Wednesday after the fire.

To the tents the utility company brought gas lines and electric power. In the bar tent, carpenters fashioned a complete bar made of two by fours and paneling. From Canada, within two days, came 600 yards of indoor/outdoor carpeting which was used throughout the dining room and the bar tent. This was laid and nailed directly to the asphalt pavement, giving the interior a very comfortable feeling. A bandstand was built and a PA system installed.

Because the parking lot is slightly

General Manager John Straub (right) surveys temporary dining room. These tent structures (below) became Dellwood's clubhouse, and the trailers became the nerve center for communications and clubhouse business.



pitched to allow proper drainage, a paving company was called in to build a curving around the tent perimeter to prevent rain from entering. Throughout Thursday and Friday, as each piece of equipment arrived, it was immediately set in place and a plumber or electrician made the necessary connections.

One problem arose after the kitchen equipment was installed. The 20 by 30 foot tent proved to be too small, so the carpenters were asked to build extensions. Their work doubled the kitchen area.

By 5 p.m. Saturday, July 10th, everything appeared to be in order, when it was discovered that the dance floor had not been built. Hurriedly, 12 sheets of three-quarter inch plywood were nailed together and a roll of vinyl flooring was purchased and glued to the plywood. Before the glue had dried, a dinner dance for 300 people was well underway.

With organization and cooperation the Dellwood people turned a disaster into one of the most fun-filled seasons in the club's history. □



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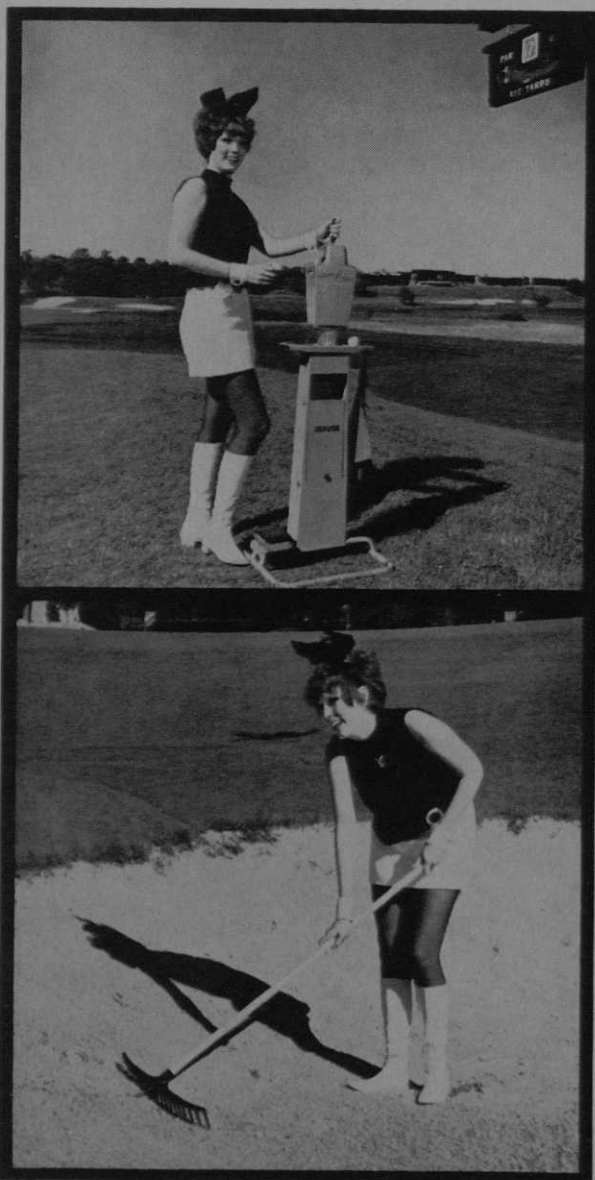
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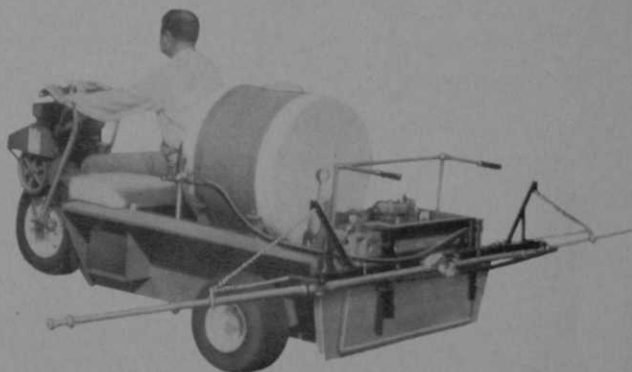


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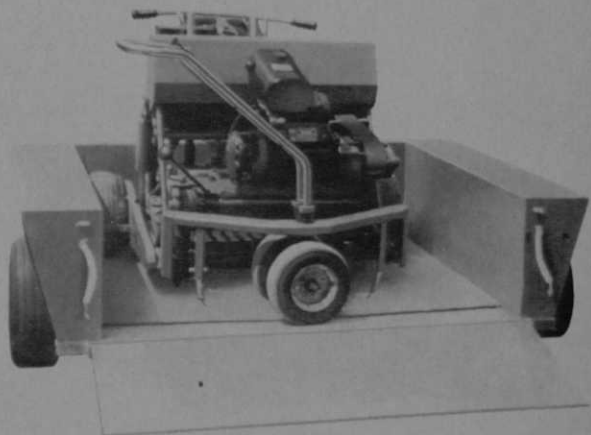
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What the superintendent does this fall will greatly determine what condition the course will be in next season

Start Thinking Winter

By William Smart

A few years ago, superintendents in the snow belt area were often asked, "What do you do in the winter?" Today, the question is more likely to be, "Where do you go in the winter," implying that superintendents go south for the winter. Although many do for a few weeks, the average superintendent is more likely to be inspecting the back nine to see how the drainage is or checking on possible snow mold or perhaps seeing what the snowmobiles have been up to. The turfman who properly prepares his course can make this tour with peace of mind. He can even stop to enjoy the landscape. It is ironic that the end product brings enjoyment to many, but the man responsible seldom has the time or inclination to stop and take in the scenery.

The post seasonal work on the nation's golf courses is done to prepare for the next season. This period in the northern section of the country would be roughly from Labor Day to hard freeze or snow fall.

Priority should be given to turf culture: promoting or continuing the healthy growth of the present turf. In most cases this is best done while the fall growth is still active.

The basic tools are the soil cultivators, the vertical mowers, fertilizer and top dressing. The tools are basic, but the methods are varied and depend on past or present problems. But after renovation, especially on greens, turf culture is carried out without any true idea of what is actually needed. For example, I have seen year-old Penn-cross greens aerated and vertically mowed when the problem was a thin but uniform turf that felt "hard" underfoot and ball marked badly. The proper approach should have been to encourage more top growth and top dressing to form "body" and stimulate the growth of thatch, which in this case is desirable. Old greens tend to have too much, new greens too little. Maintaining level thatch at one-half to three-fourths inch is essential for healthy greens.

The same program on old grainy, thatchy greens with poor root structure (the Penn-cross mentioned had excellent roots in a high sand mix) would only aggravate the condition. One approach would be to aerate to encourage root growth and use the vertical mower on a very light setting several times throughout the fall, us-

ing only enough nitrogen for good health until the thatch problem is under control.

Another common practice which seems to be misunderstood is the disposal of the cores brought up by one of the more common turf tools. Unless the soil in the greens or tees is so deficient that it is actually toxic to turf, it is far better to shatter the cores with a vertical mower and return the restructured soil to the green. It is estimated that this coring brings up from two to three yards of soil on an average green. This is two to three yards of top soil at no cost and less labor than if the cores were picked up by hand.

The point of all this is that superintendents should focus on an actual problem and take only the necessary steps to correct it. The modern turf tools as well as their uses are well known. Unfortunately the way they are used is not as efficient as the machines.

One final point on turf culture is timing. Turf that is in poor health or is semi-dormant from heat or cold, for example, will not respond well to cultivating tools. For best results the operation should be done when growth is



good. Fertilize a week or more ahead of planned work. Timing is equally important where there is a *Poa annua* problem. Open the soil in any manner at time of optimum *Poa* germination and the population will increase. Aerate when the *Poa* is seeding and it will find a ready-made seed bed on the greens, tees or fairways. Sometimes a delay of a week or 10 days will make a difference. Or use one of the herbicides that inhibits the seed.

Usually, part of the fall is given over to construction on the course, and this is as it should be. This is the only time it should be considered. Spring is short and usually wet. Summer, for obvious reasons, is worse. Construction should always eliminate or control a problem and make maintenance more efficient. This is the quickest and best way to give golfers a better course. Too often, however, money and time are expended on course features that are merely window dressing. Car paths, tree plantings, shelter houses or new traps are all very desirable, but cannot be considered in the same light as draining fairways or an inadequate watering system or supply or outmoded construction.

The actual preparation for winter in the Mid Hudson Valley area takes place around Halloween. All course furniture, such as benches, markers, ball washers and flagsticks are brought inside for protection from vandalism. Necessary items are put out the following day. Many courses have an old but serviceable "second set" that is used from that point until permanent snow. Markers are moved off tees where possible or kept in the front position for spot repair in the spring. I have never felt that cups in the fairway in front of the greens (or winter greens) were necessary on a private course that gets very light play in the fall. Others may not have that fortunate situation. I know of at least one course that has cups in permanent positions in the fairway in front of the greens. They are used any time wear or damage to the greens is

possible. They are also in use when the green is being mowed or renovated; the players at this private club seem to accept it with good grace.

October often has bright dry weather; the water system should not be drained until danger from freeze is imminent. It actually takes quite low temperatures to damage underground piping. Pumps can be drained and primed as needed or a heat lamp can be hung in the pump house. It is very important to go into the winter with good moisture in the ground to insure the health of the new fall roots. It's also good insurance against dessication. One last watering before shutdown will have the golfers wondering about your mental health, but it may save some turf and can do no harm.

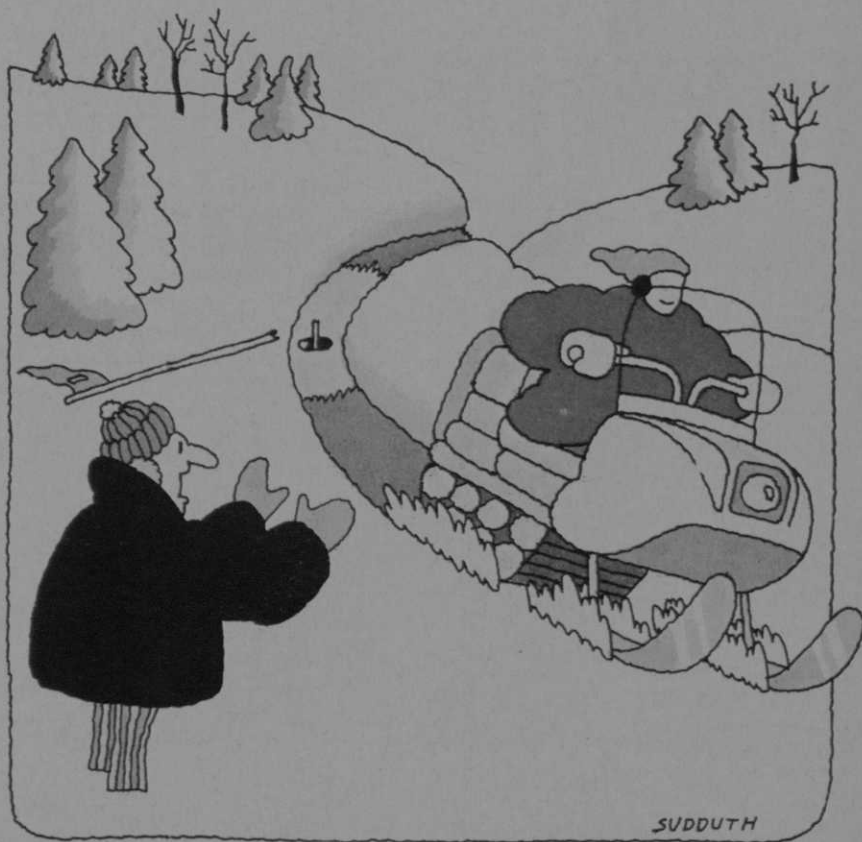
It has been the custom to forego spraying fungicides until after Labor Day. Now more and more turfmen merely lengthen the interval on both tees, greens and fairways. To inhibit late dollar spot and

perhaps nip snow mold in the bud, the last one or two sprays can be made at the recommended winter rate. The turf colorants can be added to these sprays to add eye appeal for the late fall golfer.

Specific material for snow mold is usually put on frozen ground before the first permanent snow. This can be tricky. For example, last fall in this area the unexpected snow came early on barely frozen ground and stayed until spring. The granular material can be applied for lasting protection a bit earlier than sprays. The extra expense is minor compared to spring renovation should the disease get started. I spray every time the ground is clear after snow has lain for a few weeks—as much as four to six times a winter.

Dormant fertilizer application seems to be coming into its own for many and good reasons. The timing here is between Thanksgiving and Christmas. There is no chance of promoting growth with

(Continued on page 70)



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Thinking Winter

(Continued from page 69)

this application. I have noted that top dressing applied late in the fall on greens and tees will give healthy, not lush, growth for a week or two longer due to the dark material absorbing the rays of the weak sunlight. This same operation can boost growth in early spring, and for the same reason. This latter is somewhat impractical because of the difficulty of thawing and wet ground and the usual lack of winter course help. The later top dressing is recommended by Al Radko of the United States Golf Assn. as an insurance against dessication. Rates should be heavy to moderate. It provides an insulation against deep cold and wind.

Late fall is the best time to use a root pruner or converted sub-soiler to break or cut roots that intrude into greens or tees. I had excellent

results by using a modified sub-soiler on a three-point hitch. The tractor's pulling power was increased by simply hitching a four-wheel drive vehicle to the front of the tractor—a small amount of hand work is necessary to repair the gash. It is hardly noticeable by opening day the next season.

Those courses with a history of poor drainage should make every effort to correct the situation permanently, but in any case all drains should be clear and working. A simple but somewhat laborious expedient is to walk the course after every fall rain and cut temporary slots through the turf to aid run-off. These walks can make the difference of a week or two in spring opening day.

Vandals and trespassers can be a problem in winter. Although turf damage is rare on frozen ground, property damage is greater in the absence of golfers and workmen. Posting signs will deter some. Out buildings can be secured with half-inch plywood sheets over windows and doors. These can be fastened with king size wood screws or lag-bolts. All unused roads should be blocked with a chain or obstruction put in by a front end loader.

Another practice that is changing is the custom of applying lime on frozen ground. Most spreader contractors now give the option of truck or tractor application. Most courses prefer tractor drawn spreaders. If by chance the large heavy trucks are used, mark all surface water-line fittings with a wooden plasterer's lath. It only takes a small effort, and some applicators insist on it. I think that everyone knows by now that spreading costs nothing. One only pays for the lime. If the fall is exceptionally long and pleasant, it would pay to get a head start on spring by painting out buildings, shelters, bridges and the like.

Another small effort that pays dividends is to drive in a pipe or heavy stake beside each drain (surface run-off) so it can be found easily during flood conditions or mushy melting snow.

As with all human endeavor, the superintendent who plans ahead will find that he is actually working less and enjoying it more. □

Winter protection for turf

Dr. James Beard, Michigan State University crop scientist and GOLFDOM columnist, has recently conducted extensive research to find a way to provide protection for turf areas during the winter. Beard used a cold chamber and wind tunnel to create winter conditions testing 16 different types of coverings.

Three of the coverings that performed best were a vicose-rayon fiber cover, a vicose-rayon-polyester cover and an excelsior blanket. Other coverings which protected against water loss and provided good spring green-up included a cloth-like plastic material, a fluffy fiberglass mat and polyethylene sheets. However, these failed to adequately protect the turf from low temperatures.

Beard also studied a plastic sprayed on shrubbery to prevent water loss during transplanting. However, it was inadequate.

According to Beard the coverings studied could save considerable money for people in the turf industry by eliminating spring rehabilitation expenses without sacrificing high quality turf.