

# Yes, There Actually Were Green Speed Discussions B.S. (Before Stimpmeters)

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*And Remember, the Normal Height of Cut Was About ¼ Inch,  
Sometimes Raised During Hot Weather*

*(Ed. Note: Following is a copy of an article entitled "As We Find Them" from the USGA Green Section Bulletin, Vol. 8, No. 2, February, 1928. It was thoughtfully sent to our Hole Notes office by Jim Latham, Director of the Great Lakes Section of the USGA.)*

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Stepping from the 18th green with the Green Committee Chairman and the Greenkeeper, it was suggested that we "stick around and hear the angels sing. You will hear their daily chant to the Green Committee and Greenkeeper." So there we waited and watched.

One Mr. Average Golfer soon waddled up to attempt what looked like a "dead sure one." In that terrifying silence, which precedes great storms, he went through all the most approved and prolonged preliminaries of sighting and preparing for that momentous tap. Horror of horrors, he missed! We guessed it; the green was to blame. The storm broke!

**"Bill, why in the name of galloping golf balls can't we have some greens on this course? These things would be a disgrace to any cow pasture. There isn't a golfer in the world who could putt on them." Ad Infinitum.**

All this in spite of the fact that the other members of his foursome sank good, long shots and were last seen headed for the locker room with beaming faces not ordinarily associated with "rotten" greens and high scores.

The next group furnished this helpful suggestion: "If you fellows are interested in improving greens, why don't you first find out what the players want? After all, greens are for the golfers and everything should be done to give them exactly what they want."

We beat him to that idea by many years. We had long ago been told "when baby cries, give him what he wants." But we had also learned that to obtain results it makes some difference whether baby is "crying for something" or "just crying."

The greenkeeper suggested that we question a few of the club's best players as to how fast they preferred to have greens. "One of my men is ill and that has interrupted our schedule. Number 16 has not been cut and is very slow today, but this eighteenth is the real 'lightning type.'" The first reply was:

"This green is perfect! Anyone can putt on it. If you could only get all our greens as fast as this one, every player in the city would be clamoring to join this club. Number 16? Is that supposed to be a green? We thought you were planning to let that grow up for hay!"

"Fore!" The next foursome is having a terrible time rolling them back and forth across the green. "Bill, what on earth is the matter with this green? If you simply touch the ball, it goes clear across. No use trying to putt on it. Why don't we have all the greens like 'sixteen' is today? You can really hit a ball on that one without making it roll a mile."

**Now that's settled! All that the green committees, greenkeepers and "those scientific guys" have to do to give the players just what they want (in speed of greens, at least) is to develop some kind of gear-shift. Then if a player "likes 'em fast" he can shift into high, and if he "likes 'em slow" he can shift to low. Bet some of them will want it fixed so they can shift after the ball is struck. Then they'll want a "reverse" so that the one which is "too strong" will roll back at just the right speed—all counting a single stroke.**