



Labeling how far it is to the green from sprinklers within 100 yards is very helpful for players with modest clubhead speed.

MAKING YARDAGE ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL

BY JOHN DANIELS | AGRONOMIST, CENTRAL REGION

A great way to speed up play and increase golfer satisfaction is listing the distance to the green on the top of irrigation sprinklers. While this is certainly not a new idea and many golf courses provide this information on their sprinklers, not all courses provide distances on heads that are less than 100 yards from the green. This omission can be frustrating for players with slower swing speeds – such as females, juniors and seniors – who could benefit from knowing whether they are 75 or 65 yards out in the same way that players with faster swing speeds benefit from knowing whether they are 175 or 165 yards out.

Based on data from the [2018 Distance Report](#) published by the USGA and R&A, we know the average driving distance of an amateur female golfer is 148 yards. Therefore, yardages on sprinkler heads over that distance would only be used if a player is trying to lay up to a preferred length. For golfers who drive the ball 148 or less, understanding the distance between 100 and 50 yards from the green is arguably more

valuable for scoring as this is the range where the majority of their irons come into play. There is no reason that a player with a faster swing speed should be able to quickly determine their distance by glancing at a nearby sprinkler when considering which club to use while other players are left guessing how far out they are or worse, having to pace off the distance all the way from the 100-yard marker.

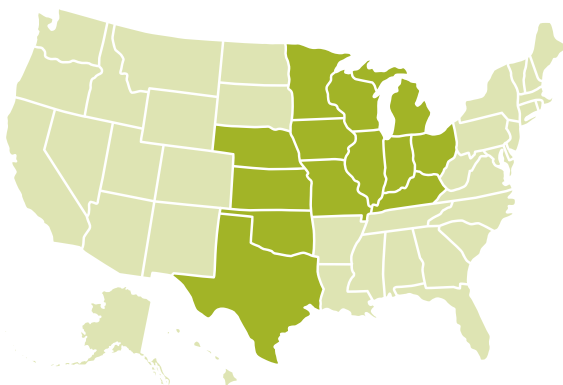
Even though distance measuring devices have become quite common these days, a large percentage of players and caddies still rely upon yardages marked upon sprinklers for help with club selection. This information is particularly useful for distances where a player will make a full swing and the club selected will determine the length of carry, but such information can also be useful for shorter “feel shots” too.

Marking the distance to a green from a sprinkler doesn’t require much time or expense and could be as simple as writing on top of the sprinkler head with a paint pen or purchasing a custom cap that easily affixes on the top of the sprinkler. There are numerous companies that specialize in such yardage marker caps and tags that can fit any model of sprinkler. Regardless of how the sprinklers are labeled, golfers will benefit from more easily accessible yardage information.



For information on the USGA’s Course Consulting Service Contact the Green Section Staff.

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