

As Easy as ABC



You never stop learning so, in conjunction with the GTC and lecturers from some of the UK's top greenkeeping colleges, GI has launched a new series which gives the developing greenkeeper the chance to add to their knowledge with some useful advice.

USE YOUR STIMPMETER!

With the popularity of golf increasing, the pressure on the Greens crew for the perfect 18 holes is growing. A significant part of this is to achieve a uniform green speed.

So where is your stimpmeter? Is it propping open the canteen door, or gathering dust somewhere in your office? Really, it's just as important as the Switch or that drainage you installed over the winter.

Constructed of aluminium, and with a V shaped groove along its length it has a notch at one end where the ball will rest. If you place the ball in this notch and raise the end of the meter the ball will release at 20°.

Now, head out to your greens and get some readings. You will need the stimpmeter, 2 tee pegs, 1 golf ball, tape measure, pen and paper.

Step 1: Select an area of the green that is level (ish). Check this by using ball and stimpmeter as a spirit level.



Step 2

Step 2: Mark the release end of the stimpmeter with a tee peg. Lift the other end until the ball rolls.

Step 3: Using the same starting point and repeat with 2 more balls. Make a note of the average stopping distance with your 2nd tee peg (in ft). Record the distance.



Step 4: Next, repeat this process in reverse using your stopping tee peg as the start point, heading back in the direction you came from. Again, measure and record the average distance (in ft).

Use the following formula to get your stimp reading.

$$\text{1st distance} + \text{2nd distance} \div 2$$

The outcome relates to the following chart. (Feet)

Membership Clubs	Tournament Clubs	Speed
7'6"	Less than 8'6"	Slow
7'6" - 8'6"	8'6" - 9'6"	Medium
More than 8'6"	More than 9'6"	Fast

Using your stimpmeter on a regular basis can influence your maintenance regime, therefore improving playing conditions. It important to note that faster greens are not the ideal, rather uniformity over the 18 holes.

HOBBIES

GI is beginning a new feature this issue, finding out what greenkeepers get up to in their spare time. Here's something you didn't know about me...



Name: David Ray
Age: 40
Club: Slinfold Park Golf and Country Club
Position: Course Manager
Hobbies: Managing an Ice Hockey team and diving

In July of this year, I celebrated my 40th birthday, and it has been 28 years since I first tied a pair of ice skates to my feet and did my 'Bambi' like impression on the ice.

This evolved into skating regularly and ultimately playing for the Brighton Junior Ice Hockey team. This would involve playing matches all over the UK. At the age of 15, I progressed into the senior league, still representing Brighton and now playing in international tournaments in Finland, Holland and training with members of the Swedish National Ice Hockey Team.

By the time I was 17, I had been offered a professional contract, to play for Oxford. However, I declined this, and signed a semi-professional contract with Brighton and continued to play for this team until the team folded, (age 23) I then signed a contract with the Bracknell Bees Ice Hockey Team. At this point, I must add that we were training for 15 hours a week on the ice, plus gym work.

I played in their very first televised match, but due to injury, this was to be my very last competitive game (cracked sternum)

Roll the clock forward a number of years, add a bit of grey hair, and a few more pounds, and out of the blue, I received a telephone call from an old team member, Paul Howes.

Paul was trying to get the old Brighton Team back together to play our arch rivals, a Dutch team called the Tillberg Trappers, at their home ground.

Paul succeeded in getting the team back together, unfortunately, we didn't and



lost our game, but had a great weekend. A lot of our wife's and certainly most of our children had never seen their husbands, dads skate, let alone play Ice Hockey.

We all enjoyed playing so much that we have decided to continue playing, in the British recreational league (for old timers) to have fun and try to highlight to the people of Brighton, that Brighton needs to have an Ice Rink.

That is why we play now, to have fun and to try to build a bit of momentum, to help the people of Brighton have a fantastic leisure facility.

Why am I the manager?... well perhaps I got the short straw.

Why do I love playing?... well I'm competitive, I like team sports and as a child I had fantastic balance (which later lead into ski-ing).

The secret to being an excellent Ice Hockey Player, is the same as anything, if you want to be the best, you have to train, train, train.

Why should people get involved in the sport?... to watch a game that is fast paced, has real action, real men (not footballers who fall over a long piece of grass) lots of goals and high tension.

To play Ice Hockey is another story, and I'm not quite sure what I could say to encourage anyone to play, however, I would say that I have had the opportunity to travel Europe and the UK extensively, I have made some fantastic lifelong friends.

With regards to managing my life, well I like to be busy, and one day I would like to look back and say that I made the most of my time, they say you only get one chance.

Since being runner up in Toro Student of the Year Award in 1995, I have made progressive steps up the ladder to my current position and am a great advocate of training and education for all greenkeepers. Just to add a bit of further excitement to my life, I have recently applied and been accepted to undertake a Foundation Degree in Sportsturf Science, via, distance learning with Myerscough College.

Lastly, all of this can only be achieved with the loyal support (and patience) of my wife, Vera. We have great fun, we always ski together, dive together and both love to travel and make the most of our time together.