

The USGA Stimpmeter®

By Blake Meentemeyer, agronomist, West Region

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Using the USGA Stimpmeter regularly helps monitor putting green speed and smoothness as well as the effects of management programs. Surface smoothness can be observed as a ball rolls from the USGA Stimpmeter to its eventual resting place. Ball roll is influenced by surface management practices such as light vertical mowing, grooming, brushing, changing the mowing height, altering the frequency of clip, rolling and overall mowing frequency. These practices influence how a ball rolls by altering the amount of friction between a golf ball and individual leaf blades. Data collected using the USGA Stimpmeter can then be used to communicate the effectiveness of management programs to members, course officials and golfers. An absolute green speed value is not always needed, and should not be [posted](#) every day.



Green speeds are directly related to the amount and orientation of leaf tissue that comes in contact with a golf ball as it rolls across a green.

At the 2016 U.S. Amateur at Oakland Hills, the USGA Stimpmeter was used to monitor the effects of brushing, mowing and rolling frequency on putting surfaces. It was also used in the evening to measure how much green speeds decreased during the day due to leaf growth. Surface management programs will also be monitored using the USGA Stimpmeter at these 2017 USGA Championships in the West Region:

- U.S. Women's Amateur, San Diego Country Club (Aug. 7 to 13)
- U.S. Amateur, Riviera Country Club and Bel-Air Country Club (Aug. 14 to 20)
- U.S. Senior Women's Amateur, Waverley Country Club (Sept. 9 to 14)
- Walker Cup, Los Angeles Country Club (Sept. 9 to 10)
- USGA Women's State Team, The Club at Las Campanas (Sept. 26 to 28)

Given the amount of turf stress typically observed during August and September, surface smoothness will be more important than absolute green speeds during these USGA Championships in the West Region.

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