**GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL GREENS EVALUATION**

All the information listed below is contained in the excellent publication **Bowls South Africa: Level 1 Greenkeeping.** We have expanded on the content in places to make the evaluation of your greens even easier.
Marks are only allocated to Section B which deals with the health of the green i.e. the playing surface. No marks are allocated to Section A (pegs, banks, ditches etc.) nor to Section C (speed and draw). However, note that Clubs should NOT apply as potential hosts of National and District events if their greens do not conform to the regulations listed under Section A.

***SECTION A: LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS***

**PEGS OR STRAPS**

**Pegs** Must conform to the Laws of the Game and must be correctly positioned on top of the bank (not more than 100 mm from the face of the bank) or flat against the bank. The pegs or straps should not be more than 25mm wide. Pegs should be clearly visible.
Pegs are placed on top of the bank while straps are positioned against the bank. Anything placed against the bank must not be of a material which might injure or divert the bowl or jack.
They must clearly define the boundaries of the rink or the 25m mark.

**BANKS**

**Banks** Uniformity on all four sides is the primary consideration: same height, angle, and texture
The grass making up the bank must be healthy with no bare patches or weeds intruding.
The upper edge must be sharp and not rounded.
The bottom edge must not be undercut.
The top of the banks should be, at least, 230mm above the surface of the green.
The banks can be vertical and set at 90 degrees to the surface of the green or have a slope of not more than 35 degrees off the vertical.

**DITCHES**

**Ditches** Can be between 200 mm and 380 mm wide.
The ditches can be between 50mm and 200 mm deep but preference for depth that allows bowl to be seen (between 100 – 150 mm).
Within the above limits there must be uniformity re depth and width on all four sides.
Regular top-dressing results in the surface of the green rising in relation to the ditchboards. The GKP should not allow the surface to become more than 10mm above the ditchboard.

**EQUIPMENT**

**Condition** of Steps and Ramp.
**Availability** of Speed Board, Records and a Wind Indicator.
**Condition** of Horizontal and Vertical mowers and Bank Cutter.

**EVALUATION**

In evaluating banks and ditches, place a tick in the appropriate column.

***SECTION B: THE PLAYING SURFACE*** **(Total of 100 Points)**

In Section B there are 3 main categories, Green Surface (60 points), Pests (10 points) and Levels (30 points), each representative of one or more aspect of a GKP's management programme.
Each item should be scored on its own and the grand total will serve as a reflection of the GKP's ability to produce and maintain a green of the required standard.

**1. THE GREEN SURFACE 60 Points**

A GKP is expected to provide his members with a playing surface which is **completely** covered by a mat of **even thickness** throughout, which allows the bowl to run at an acceptable speed without compromising the health of the grass – a balancing act between "leaf area" and speed.

Weak/bare areas (10): In many ways this is similar to grass cover. However, the influencing factor here is the degree of wear and tear that is visible along the margins, as well as signs of other stressed areas on the green. Allocate 8 - 10 for the absence of any bare or worn areas, 5 – 7 depending on the extent of the bare areas, and below this is if large portions of the green are stressed. Clubs should be severely penalized where there are signs of the green being scalped i.e. cut too low.
Inspectors can be lenient if there is evidence that the GKP is trying to correct the problem (planting of sods etc).

Mat thickness (10): Here we are looking for a mat of consistent thickness throughout. With many of us having Heinz greens, this is difficult to achieve. Signs of grooming to counteract the effect of the coarser grasses should influence the score positively. Allocate 8 - 10 where the mat is consistent throughout, 5 to 7 where the thickness varies but is not too spongy, and below this where the mat is too thick and there are no signs of grooming or thinning out.

Foreign grass (10): Most of us will have different strains of grass on our greens, as mentioned above. A score of 8 to 10 would be exceptional! Most of us would score between 5 and 7 and even lower if there are no signs that the GKP has managed the turf correctly, via grooming, verticutting and mowing.

Appearance (10): Players naturally prefer to play on a green of the same colour and texture throughout. Once again, few of us are likely to score 9 or 10. Reasonable uniformity will deserve between 6 and 8. A mottled green will score 4 to 6, and even lower if there are signs of poor mowing practices.

Smoothness (10): This is possibly the easiest of the categories to test and score. The jack should be thrown in a number of different directions across the green and the degree of bumpiness noted. For a 9 or 10, there should be no signs of bumpiness. This should only be tested after the green has been cut and prepared for play/inspection.

Run off (10): Another category that is easy to score. Use your stimphmeter, placed parallel to the ditch at a distance of 30 cm, to run the jack down and record its path. Any radical movement towards the ditch along any of the sides will incur a penalty of 2½ points.

**2. PESTS AND DISEASES 10 Points**

Fungi/disease (4): The absence of any fungi/diseases obviously earns 4 points. This evaluation is likely to change seasonally, where moss/algae and/or Fairy Rings are present. Fusarium is another fungus which is climate related. If there are signs that the GKP has treated the outbreaks, mark leniently.

Insects (3): marks will be lost where there are signs of ants, mole crickets, maize beetles etc.

Weeds (3): Also a seasonal problem. The presence of winter grass (despite treatment), Carrot Top and Clover will earn penalties but again one needs to take into account efforts by the GKP to combat the weeds.

**3. LEVELS 30 Points**

A level profile carried out within the past two years should be available at all clubs. Should the profile be older than 2 years, this section will be severely penalized by external evaluators and a mark of 10/30 awarded.
GKPs are encouraged to use the Cubitt Programme. This involves taking 324 (18 x 18) readings at 2m intervals and entering them in the programme which will provide the score ex 30.

***SECTION C: SPEED AND DRAW***

**1. SPEED** The speed of a green is accepted as the time (in seconds) a bowl takes to run 27.0 m
In South African conditions the following descriptions are recognized:

- Too Slow - Running at less than 11.5 secs over 27.0 m
- Acceptable - Running between 11.5 – 14 .0 secs over 27 m
- Too Fast - Running at more than 14.0 secs over 27.0 m

To determine the speed, note the distance a bowls jack will run off a standard small stimphmeter as supplied by Bowls SA or by noting the time taken for a hand-delivered bowl to run a distance of 27 metres to rest.
The table below shows that a jack running 5.0 m off the stimph is deemed to be equivalent to a green running at 11.5 secs over 27.0 m (acceptable) and a jack running 7.0 m off the stimph is deemed to be equivalent to a green running at 14.0 secs over 27.0 m (acceptable/fast).

**Equivalent Distances off a small stimphmeter to seconds over 27.0m**

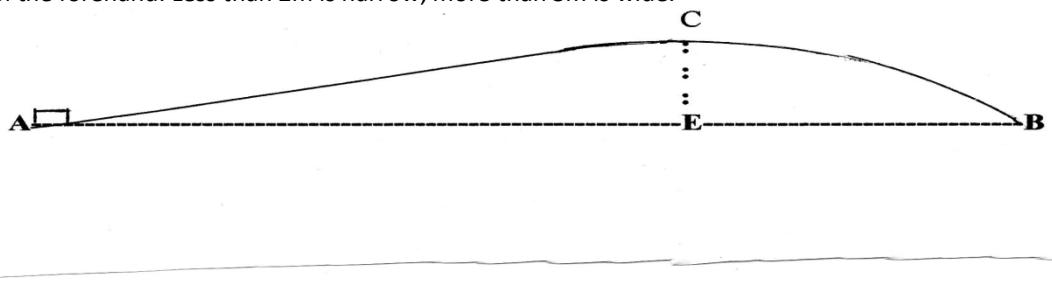
| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.50 – 3.85m | = | 10.00 secs | 6.20 – 6.60m | = | 13.50 secs |
| 3.85 - 4.20m | = | 10.50 secs | 6.60 –7..00m | = | 14.00 secs |
| 4.20 – 4.60m | = | 11.00 secs | 7.00 – 7.50m | = | 14.50 secs |
| 4.60 – 5.00m | = | 11.50 secs | 7.50 – 8.00m | = | 15.00 secs |
| 5.00 – 5.40m | = | 12.00 secs | 8.00 – 8.40m | = | 15.50 secs |
| 5.40 – 5.80m | = | 12.50 secs | 8.40 – 8.80m | = | 16,00 secs |
| 5.80 – 6.20m | = | 13.00 secs | 8.80 – 9.15m | = | 16.5 secs |

**2. THE DRAW AND WEIGHT**

Determining whether there are any inconsistencies in the draw and weight is the most difficult of all the assessments a GKP will do when inspecting a green. At the same time it is probably the one which affects the players most. All the players expect is consistency and predictability in the draw.

To measure the draw, the procedure is as follows -

A member of the inspection team delivers a bowl on the backhand towards an imaginary jack at **B.**
Another member of the team will take up position about 18 m from the mat along the projected line the bowl will run.
This member will study the run of the bowl and place a marker at the widest point ( **C )**
When the bowl has come to rest the person delivering the bowl will line up an imaginary line from the point of delivery to where the bowl has come to rest ( **AB)**
The person who marked the widest part of the draw at point **C** will now measure the distance from Point **C** to **AB** i.e line **CE** .
**CE** will be the "width of the draw". **Record this distance.**
Repeat on the forehand. Less than 2m is narrow, more than 3m is wide.




**3. COMPACTION**

In order to complete the evaluation form, it is necessary to determine how compacted the soil is across all parts of the green. If you struggle to push a probe into the green deeper than 40mm, mark accordingly. If the compaction varies from one part of the green to another, record this under "Comments".

Suggestion: If you enrol the help of your greens staff and another interested Club member, the evaluation of a green should not take longer than 20 – 30 mins.