



# MEMORANDUM

**TO:** COUNCILLORS, GROUP & ASSOCIATION SECRETARIES,  
& CLUB SECRETARIES

**FROM:** John Drummond, Chairman RVBA Greens Committee

**SUBJECT:** **RVBA TIMING RAMP**

**Date:** 6 October 2008

**RVBA REF:** **MSC 107/08**

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The RVBA timing ramp was introduced in 1992 for use on grass and sand filled synthetic greens, with the conversion chart calibrated to reflect the delivery of a bowl to approximately 27 metres to ascertain the pace of the green as per Law 1.3.25.

The ramp has provided an improved method of timing as opposed to the human error factor when using the stop watch and provided results that enabled consistent comparisons of different greens.

Despite conjecture from some bowlers that the ramp came up with faster times than the stopwatch it is apparent that this has not really been the case with grass and sand infill greens.

However, with the advent of woven and needle punched synthetic carpets being installed we have become aware that there is a discrepancy in the timing of these type of greens, sometimes up to 2½ seconds.

This is a significant issue for clubs and the RVBA, and a program of testing is now to be undertaken with the RVBA ramp, stopwatches and the World Bowls ramp in order to come up with a solution. The originator of the ramp - a Physicist, together with an Engineer, and members of the RVBA Greens Committee will be involved in this project.

It seems that the problem with the woven and needle punched synthetic carpets in particular, stems from the light weight of the sphere being used on this softer carpet, resulting in it "skimming" over the surface. A heavier sphere or unbiased bowl will be tested in order to obtain a uniform result from the use of the ramp including accurate timing, so that an updated chart can be produced for use in the timing of all types of greens.

It is expected that the tests to be undertaken over the next few months will resolve this issue.

The current method of timing greens is by use of either the stopwatch or with the RVBA Timing Ramp.

When the proposed testing is completed there will be consideration of the proposal that the timing ramp to be the only approved method of timing the green.

Meantime, it is recommended that clubs with needle punched synthetic carpets use the stopwatch for timing of this type of green rather than the RVBA ramp.

John Drummond  
Chairman, RVBA Greens Committee