

Davis: 'Arms race' for fast greens is bad for golf

By
[Will Gray](#)

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[Mike Davis](#) has been the face of the U.S. Open for six years, during which the championship has often been defined by its quick and difficult putting surfaces. But speaking at U.S. Open media day Wednesday, Davis shared his view that the faster-is-better approach to green speeds should stop.

"I will say, and we've said this publicly before, too, this notion that good greens have to be fast greens is bad for golf," said Davis, the USGA's CEO and executive director. "It's just not good."

Green speeds have been a focal point at each of the last two U.S. Opens. Many players were outspoken about the [plotchy surfaces](#) at Chambers Bay in 2015, while slick conditions led in part to a penalty that [nearly cost Dustin Johnson](#) the title last year at Oakmont.

Erin Hills will host the tournament for the first time next month, and Davis doesn't anticipate any issues on greens that he described as "wonderfully conditioned."

"I can't remember coming into a U.S. Open where the greens were this smooth," he said. "When you hit a putt, if you get it on the right line, the right speed, it will go in here, and we don't expect to see many things hit and moving sideways."

Davis notes that the greens at Erin Hills next month will be "fast," and the organization's course setup style has likely contributed to the growing trend toward slick surfaces. Despite those points, Davis reiterated that courses should re-think their approach on the greens when it comes to everyday play.

"It's costing the game more money to keep greens fast. It compromises in some cases the health of the greens. It compromises the architectural integrity of the greens sometimes. It certainly hurts [pace of play](#)," Davis said. "We would just say that, taking off our U.S. Open hats for a second, that this arms race to get fast greens is not a good thing for the game of golf."

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