

INDUSTRY

Slow-play study: Watch tee-time intervals

» Your timing is off if you're talking pace of play during the (labored) U.S. Open, but we'll risk it because the most comprehensive pace-of-play study ever just landed on our desks. The Three/45 Golf Association, founded by USGA committeeman and author of "Golf's Pace of Play Bible" Lou Riccio, used golf-cart GPS data from more than 40,000 rounds over 175 courses to deliver fairly encouraging results.

On average, the study found, we play in less than four-and-a-half hours (4:17). Almost 29 percent of all rounds recorded, including private, took less than four hours. Sixty-three percent of rounds took less than 4:30. Only 10 percent of rounds, most of them public, exceeded five hours.

Riccio's study determined, not surprisingly, that you play faster in the morning (4:02) than in the afternoon (4:21), faster Monday to Thursday (4:13) than you will Friday to Sunday (4:23), and fastest of all on Wednesdays. (Doctors know what they're doing!)

More important, you play faster at courses that maintain intelligently phased tee times than ones that pack in every player they can. "This study shows that the emphasis on player behaviors may be quite misplaced," says Riccio. "Tee intervals must be fixed first. If the highway is crowded, it doesn't



Royal Portrush GC

matter if you're a Corvette." These findings carry additional weight because they're based on actual rounds—data provided in this case by GPS Industries, which supplies GPS service to courses.

We wish the study had considered green speeds. Riccio believes that every foot over a Stimpmeter measurement of 10 adds 10 minutes to your time, but most golfers know it can be much deadlier at 12 or 13, especially in stroke-play events. It would be beneficial to know what our green speed "obsession," as colleague Geoff Shackelford calls it, costs us in time and tedium. Especially after we've watched our heroes putt Pinehurst greens measuring 12.5. —*Bob Carney*

MISCELLANY

Royal Portrush GC to host British Open

» The R&A announced June 16 that Royal Portrush GC in Northern

Ireland will host the British Open, possibly as early as 2019 depending on infrastructure development and course changes. The only previous Open in Northern Ireland was in 1951. ... Five of the world's top-ranked amateurs, including Nos. 1, 2 and 4 on the World Amateur Golf Ranking, were set to make their pro debuts the week following the U.S. Open. Former Stanford stars **Patrick Rodgers** (ranked No. 1) and **Cameron Wilson** (No. 4) along with Alabama product **Bobby Wyatt** and 2013 U.S. Amateur runner-up **Oliver Goss** have turned pro for the Travelers Championship in Cromwell, Conn. Defending U.S. Amateur champion **Matt Fitzpatrick** (No. 2) will make his professional debut at the Irish Open. ... The USGA announced that **Pinehurst No. 2** and **No. 4** will host the 2017 U.S. Amateur Four-Ball Championship.

LIPOUTS



ZACH JOHNSON

"That's why I play golf, for social media."

↓
The 11-time PGA Tour winner reacting to questions of whether he knew he was trending on Twitter after making a hole-in-one on the par-3 ninth during the final round at Pinehurst No. 2.



KEVIN NA

"I heard he played the No. 3 course."

↓
The U.S. Open participant and eventual T-12 finisher commenting on Martin Kaymer opening with consecutive 65s at Pinehurst No. 2.



NATALIE GULBIS

"I was nervous to come out here... I didn't want to bother anyone."

↓
The LPGA player voicing concerns about making an appearance on the practice tee during the final round of the U.S. Open.



MARTIN KAYMER

"I did like it... Some are very pretty... It relaxed the atmosphere."

↓
The 2014 U.S. Open champion and two-time major winner reflecting on the presence of LPGA pros on the putting green while he warmed up for the final round at Pinehurst No. 2.