



2009 HP BYRON NELSON CHAMPIONSHIP

TPC Four Seasons Resort May 18-24, 2009
Irving, TX

FedExCup Pts: 500 Purse: \$6,500,000
Par/Yards: 35-35--70/7,166

Third-Round Notes – Saturday, May 23, 2009

Weather: Mostly cloudy, with a morning low of 70 degrees. Afternoon highs reached into the lower 80s with NE winds 5-10 mph..

Due to expected inclement weather on Saturday, the third round began at 7:30 a.m. off Nos. 1 and 10 tees in groups of three. The last group began at 9:30 a.m.

Four-time PGA TOUR champion Rory Sabbatini followed up a second round 6-under 64 with a 5-under 65 in round three.

Looking at his accuracy-related numbers wouldn't lead one to see Rory Sabbatini as tied for the lead through three rounds. In round three, he hit just seven of 14 fairways, and in rounds two and three he hit just 11 of 18 greens in regulation. The key has been his putting. Through 54 holes, he has needed just 77 putts and is currently ranked T1 in that category.

Rory Sabbatini, who won the 2007 Crowne Plaza Invitational at Colonial, has previously held at least a share of the 54-hole lead eight times. He most recently held a 54-hole lead at last year's Valero Texas Open before ultimately finishing T8

Rory Sabbatini is competing in his 11th HP Byron Nelson Championship dating back to 1999. His previous best finish here was a T3 in 2007.

Matching Rory Sabbatini in round three was John Mallinger. Like Sabbatini, Mallinger began the day tied for the 8-under lead and finished the day tied with Sabbatini at the top at 13-under.

John Mallinger is playing in just his third HP Byron Nelson Championship. He missed the cut in 2007 and finished T31 in 2008.

John Mallinger is playing in his 15th PGA TOUR event of the season this week, having missed just four cuts so far this year. The recognition factor elevated greatly for Mallinger two weeks ago when three sub-par rounds at THE PLAYERS Championship at the TPC Sawgrass earned him T3 honors.

The third-round leader/co-leader has gone on to win 15 of 20 events (75 percent) on the PGA TOUR this season, most recently Zach Johnson at last week's Valero Texas Open. Last year, the third-round leader/co-leader only won 22 of 46 events (48 percent).

The PGA TOUR has had just four playoffs so far this season, but two of them have occurred in Texas Swing events. Paul Casey claimed the Shell Houston Open over J.B. Holmes with a bogey-5 on the first playoff hole, while Zach Johnson won the Valero Texas Open over James Driscoll with a birdie on the first extra hole.

The hottest start of the day in round three belonged to PGA TOUR Sophomore Dustin Johnson. Johnson, who began the day 1-shot off the lead at 7-under, birdied five of his first seven holes to get to 11-under. Johnson will leave Texas after the 2009 swing with good memories. One week after firing a career-low 8-under 62 in the third round of the Valero Texas Open, he finds himself T3 after a third round 4-under 66.

Dustin Johnson drove his ball into the water on the left side of the 10th fairway. As opposed to taking a drop at the point of entry, he was taken by cart to an equi-distant location on the other side of the lateral hazard in the 11th fairway. From that point, he managed to nestle his third shot to three feet and easily save par.

Marc Leishman, who began the day at 3-under, played his first eight holes without posting a par in round three. Beginning on the back nine Leishman went birdie-birdie-birdie-bogey-bogey-birdie-birdie-birdie. It wasn't until the 18th hole (his ninth) that he leveled out with a par four. Leishman made the turn at 6-under.

Marc Leishman is playing his 13th event as a PGA TOUR rookie. The Australian has now played 38 rounds with Saturday's third round 7-under 63 marking the 11th time he has shot in the 60s. It was also his lowest round of his PGA TOUR career. Leishman ranks T73 in third-round scoring this year with 69.83. He has shot over par just once (1-over 71/Round 3/The Honda Classic) in the third round.

Marc Leishman has already tasted success in Texas. Leishman won the Nationwide Tour's WNB Golf Classic in Midland, TX last year. His 11-stroke victory tied the Nationwide Tour largest-winning-margin record set by Chris Smith at the 1997 Omaha Classic. Last week he finished T5 at the Valero Texas Open, shooting four sub-70 rounds.

Through the first three rounds this week, Marc Leishman has played the front-nine bogey free.

After a second-round 7-under 63, Texas native Justin Leonard remained in red figures in round three with a 4-under 66 to get to 6-under for the tournament. Leonard rallied in round-two with that 63 after posting a first-round 5-over 75. The 12-shot swing was the best improvement since Arron Oberholser bettered an opening-round 4-over 74 with a 10-under 60 in the second round in 2006 for a difference of 14 strokes.

Nicholas Thompson made the most of having a job for the weekend. Thompson, who made the cut on the number (1-under 139), fired a 6-under 64 in round-three and currently resides T17.

Bogey-free rounds were posted by John Mallinger (65), Jeff Maggert (65), George McNeill (66), Nicholas Thompson (64), John Senden (65) and Kris Blanks (66).

Here's how the remaining past champions of the HP Byron Nelson Championship fared through three rounds:

2005 winner Ted Purdy	74-65-66—205	T49
2003 winner Vijay Singh	70-67-69—137	T40
2000 winner Jesper Parnevik	67-68-69—206	T23
1987 winner Fred Couples	69-66-67—202	T11

Scoring Averages at the par-70 TPC Four Seasons Resort:

	Front 9	Back 9	Total	Cumulative
Thursday	35.381	35.858	70.858	---
Friday	34.773	34.857	69.630	70.246
Saturday	34.068	34.081	68.149	69.841

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