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2015 Barbasol Championship pre-tournament notes

Dates: July 13–19, 2015

Where: Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail at Grand National, Lake Course, Opelika/Auburn, Alabama

Par/Yards: 35-36--7,302, par-71

Field: 132

2014 champion: inaugural event

Purse: \$3,500,000/\$630,000 (winner)

FedExCup: 300 points to the winner

Format: 72-hole stroke play

Website: www.barbasolchampionship.com

Twitter: @BarbasolPGATOUR

A look at the 2015 Barbasol Championship

- The Barbasol Championship will be the first PGA TOUR event in Alabama since the 1990 PGA Championship.
- With only eight events remaining before the FedExCup Playoffs, the Barbasol Championship will play an important role in the field for the first Playoffs event at The Barclays.

The Barbasol Championship and the FedExCup Playoffs

In 2014, it took 438 FedExCup points (No. 125/Robert Allenby) to qualify for the FedExCup Playoffs. Below are players in the field that are currently on “the bubble” for the FedExCup Playoffs:

FedExCup Position	Player	FedExCup Points
120	Mark Wilson	391
123	Brian Stuard	377
124	Billy Hurley III	372
126	Scott Langley	365
128	Will Wilcox	358
129	Alex Prugh	353
130	Brice Garnett	352
132	Blayne Barber	345
134	Michael Thompson	339
135	Charlie Beljan	337
140	Ryo Ishikawa	321

A glance at the field:

- The highest-ranked player in the FedExCup standings is Scott Piercy (No. 42).
- Three former major championship winners: Trevor Immelman, Shaun Micheel, David Toms.
- The highest-ranked player in the Official World Golf Rankings is Emiliano Grillo at no. 98. Grillo lost in a five-person playoff earlier this season on TOUR at the Puerto Rico Open.

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- A total of 62 players in the field have won 149 PGA TOUR events. One player in the field has won on TOUR this season (Alex Cejka/Puerto Rico Open).
- Players with ties to the State of Alabama include: Blayne Barber (Auburn), Josh Broadaway (Troy State), Glen Day (born in Mobile, Alabama), Smylie Kaufman (Birmingham native), Patton Kizzire (Auburn), Steve Lowery (Alabama), Ben Schlottman (Auburn), Robby Shelton (Alabama), Heath Slocum (South Alabama), Zack Sucher (UAB), Michael Thompson (Alabama), Brett Wetterich (Wallace State Community College) and Will Wilcox (UAB).
- Two players who competed at the 1990 PGA Championship in Birmingham are in the field including: Billy Mayfair (T5) and Robert Gamez (T49). Arnold Palmer missed the cut at the 1990 PGA Championship. His grandson Sam Saunders will compete in the 2015 Barbasol Championship.

Player Notes

- Steve Flesch won the 1997 Web.com Tour Championship (at that time Nike Tour) at RTJ's Grand National course using an Opelika fire fighter with great course knowledge as his caddie. Flesch won by four shots over Chris Smith who is also in the Barbasol Championship field.
- Two-time heart transplant recipient Erik Compton, who is currently No. 119 in the FedExCup standings, amassed three top 10s in 2014, including T2 at the U.S. Open. Compton has struggled this season with one top 10 in 23 starts on TOUR. Compton played college golf at the University of Georgia.
- LSU graduate David Toms is looking for his first top 10 on TOUR since a T9 at the Sanderson Farms Championship earlier this season. Toms has only missed the FedExCup Playoffs two of the previous eight seasons (2008 and 2013). He is currently No. 146 in the FedExCup.
- Former Auburn golfer and PGA TOUR rookie Blayne Barber enters the Barbasol Championship at No. 132 in the FedExCup standings (Top 125 get into the FedExCup Playoffs).
- Michael Thompson is in the last year of his exemption from winning the 2013 Honda Classic. He is currently outside of the top 125 in the FedExCup standings. Thompson attended Tulane University two seasons until the school disbanded its golf team after Hurricane Katrina. He transferred to the University of Alabama and was the 2008 SEC Player of the Year.
- Nicholas Thompson enters the Barbasol Championship with only one top 10 (T9/OHL Classic at Mayakoba) this season, but is inside the top 125 in the FedExCup standings. Nicholas' sister Lexi won the 2011 Navistar LPGA Classic at Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail at Capitol Hill in Prattville, Alabama to become the youngest winner in LPGA Tour history at 16 years, 7 months and 8 days old.
- Milton, Florida native Boo Weekley is having a solid season on TOUR with five top 10s, including a T2 at the Sanderson Farms Championship and a third-place finish at the Zurich Classic of New Orleans. Weekley spends time hunting in Alabama on his Uncle's land.
- Lefty Scott Langley enters the week on the bubble for the FedExCup Playoffs at No. 126 (top 125 get into the Playoffs).

Barbasol Championship Exemption Notes

- Richy Werenski, winner of the Golf Channel's reality TV competition program "The Big Break," earned an exemption through the show. Werenski is a Web.com Tour member and has never made a start on the PGA TOUR.
- An exemption was also given to the Division I Jack Nicklaus Player of the Year Award, Maverick McNealy. The Stanford golfer is currently the No. 2 amateur in the world. He will make his third career start on the PGA TOUR (T60/2015 The Greenbrier Classic and MC/2014 U.S. Open).
- Former Auburn golfer Patton Kizzire is currently No. 1 on the Web.com Tour money list. He will be looking for his second made cut in his fourth career start on the PGA TOUR (T54/2014 McGladrey Classic).

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- Entering his sophomore season at Auburn, Ben Schlottman will make his first career start on TOUR. He was the SEC Freshman of the Year and earned 2015 All-SEC first-team (first freshman in Auburn history to be named All-SEC first-team).
- Entering his junior season at Alabama, Robby Shelton will make his second career start in a PGA TOUR event. He missed the cut last season at the U.S. Open.

Tournament Sponsor

Barbasol has a long-standing connection with golf that dates back to the 1920s and 30s, when advertising campaigns featured product endorsements from celebrated PGA TOUR golfers Johnny Farrell and Craig Wood. Today, Barbasol is proud to sponsor the 2015 Barbasol Championship and has wide-reaching involvement across several levels of the sport. The brand sponsors talented professional golfers among the PGA TOUR, Web.com Tour and Champions Tour, and supports collegiate golf by presenting the Jack Nicklaus Player of the Year Award. Barbasol-sponsored professional golfers in 2015 include Ryan Armour, Chad Campbell, Ben Curtis, Chris DiMarco, Kyle Reifers, Brian Stuard, Robert Streb, Bronson Burgoon, Joel Dahmen, Martin Piller, Russ Cochran, Neal Lancaster, and Loren Roberts.

Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail

In the late 1980s, two very important things were on the mind of Dr. David Bronner, CEO of the Retirement Systems of Alabama. First, how to effectively diversify the assets of the state's pension fund; and secondly, how to help the state of Alabama. His philosophy was this: "The stronger the Retirement Systems of Alabama can make Alabama, the stronger the Retirement Systems will be." With that in mind, and borrowing a page from the movie script, "Field of Dreams," Bronner decided to "build-it-and-they-will-come" -- not to a baseball diamond in a corn field, but to a dazzling collection of public golf courses in the great state of Alabama.

Bronner's idea was to use a hot (but clean-burning) vehicle like golf to boost tourism, attract retirees, and spur economic growth within the state. His vision was on a grand scale -- big, really big. "I don't do windows and I don't do just 18s." You see, Dr. Bronner wasn't looking to build just an 18-hole public golf course, he wanted to build spectacular sites throughout the entire state, and all at one time! The Trail now has 26 courses at 11 different sites and offers 468 holes of great golf.

Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail at Grand National

Grand National, by all reports, was the single greatest site for a golf complex Robert Trent Jones, Sr. had ever seen. Built on 600-acre Lake Saugahatchee, 32 of the 54 holes drape along its filigreed shores. Both the Links course and the Lake course were in the top 10 of *Golf Digest's* list of "America's Top 50 Affordable Courses" and all three courses at Grand National are listed among the nation's 40 Super Value courses by *Golf Digest's* "Places to Play". With 12 holes hugging the shore of Lake Saugahatchee, the Lake course is one of the most scenic courses you can find. The quartet of par 3s is as good as any in the nation.

2014-15 PGA TOUR Season Highlights

So far in the 2015 calendar year, 15 of the 28 tournaments have been won by players in the top 25 in the Official World Golf Ranking at the time of their respective victories: Patrick Reed (23), Jimmy Walker (17th at Sony Open in Hawaii, 13th at Valero Texas Open), Jason Day (8), Dustin Johnson (16), Jordan Spieth (10th at the Valspar Championship, 4th at the Masters, 2nd at U.S. Open and 2nd at John Deere Classic), J.B. Holmes (20), Jim Furyk (10), Justin Rose (8), Rickie Fowler (13) and Rory McIlroy (1st at the WGC-Cadillac Match Play and 1st at the Wells Fargo Championship).

On TOUR this season, 15 of the 35 stroke-play events have been determined by a playoff, most recently at last week's John Deere Classic (Jordan Spieth).

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The trend of young winners on TOUR has continued into the 2014-15 season as 12 of the 29 different winners have been under the age of 30, accounting for 16 wins, including:

- 25-year-old Rory McIlroy, with his win at the WGC-Cadillac Match Play joined Tiger Woods (29) and Jack Nicklaus (17) as the only players to win 10 events prior to their 26th birthday on TOUR in the last 75 years.
- 21-year-old Jordan Spieth, with his victories at the Valspar Championship, Masters Tournament, U.S. Open and John Deere Classic, became just the sixth player to win the Masters Tournament and U.S. Open in the same season. He joins the list which includes Tiger Woods (2002), Jack Nicklaus (1972), Arnold Palmer (1960), Ben Hogan (1951, 1953) and Craig Wood (1941). He is the youngest to win two career majors since Gene Sarazen in 1922.
- 26-year-old Rickie Fowler finished birdie, eagle, birdie, birdie to shoot a final-round 66 and finish at 12-under-par at THE PLAYERS to enter a three-hole aggregate playoff with Kevin Kisner and Sergio Garcia, eventually prevailing after four holes. The 5-under-par total over the last four holes is a PGA TOUR record since the TOUR began tracking hole-by-hole scores in 1983.
- 24-year-old Patrick Reed became just the fifth player since 1991 to win four times before age of 25, joining Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson, Rory McIlroy and Sergio Garcia with his Hyundai Tournament of Champions win.
- 24-year-old Danny Lee won The Greenbrier Classic in a four-person playoff. Lee became the youngest ever winner of the U.S. Amateur Championship in 2008 at 18 years and 1 month.

The rookie class of 24 players includes 21 players who began the season under the age of 30. Canadian Nick Taylor, a 2013 graduate of the PGA TOUR Canada and a 2014 graduate of the Web.com Tour, got off to a hot start by winning the Sanderson Farms Championship in October. Rookie members in the top 50 in the FedExCup standings include Daniel Berger (32) and Tony Finau (38).

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