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2015 PGA Championship Media Notes

(The 42nd of 43 events in the PGA TOUR Season)

Dates: August 10-16, 2015

Where: Whistling Straits, Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Par/Yards: 36-36—72 (7,501)

Field: 156

Format: 72-hole stroke play

FedExCup Points: 600 (to the winner)

Purse: \$10,000,000 (\$1.8 million to the winner)

Defending Champion: Rory McIlroy

Cut: Following the first 36 holes, the field of 156 players will be reduced to the low 70 scorers and ties.

Playoff: In the event of a tie for first place after 72 holes, there will be a three-hole aggregate-score playoff. If a tie still remains, it becomes a hole-by-hole sudden death.

What the winner of the PGA Championship receives

- \$1.8 million; 600 FedExCup points; replica of Wannamaker Trophy
- A lifetime exemption into the PGA Championship
- Five-year exemption on the PGA TOUR
- Five-year exemption into The Masters, U.S. Open, Open Championship and PLAYERS Championship
- Berth in the 2015 PGA Grand Slam of Golf
- 1,200 points toward berth on the 2015 Presidents Cup Team (provided American-born)
- 30 points toward the 2015 PGA Player of the Year Award

Additional Benefits for Finishers at the PGA Championship

- The top four scorers and ties are eligible to compete in the 2016 Masters.
- The top-30 scorers and ties are exempt from local qualifying (but not Sectional) for the 2016 U.S. Open.

PGA Championship and the FedExCup

With just two weeks remaining before the start of the FedExCup Playoffs, the PGA Championship will once again play a pivotal role in the shaping of the Playoffs fields.

- 2014 winner Rory McIlroy jumped from No. 3 to 1st in the standings and ultimately finished third.
- 2013 winner Jason Dufner jumped from No. 62 to 14 in the standings and qualified for all four Playoffs events
- 2012 winner Rory McIlroy jumped from No. 8 to 2 in the standings and qualified for all four Playoffs events.
- 2011 winner Keegan Bradley jumped from No. 24 to No. 4 and qualified for all four Playoffs events.

Additional FedExCup Notes

- Forty-nine of the top 50 in the FedExCup standings are in the PGA Championship field. Chris Kirk is out due to injury.
- Eleven players aged 30 and under are currently in the top 30 in the FedExCup standings.
- Four-time winner this season Jordan Spieth has led the FedExCup standings since winning the Masters.

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Together, anything's possible.

- Two players that qualified for the 2014 FedExCup Playoff finale, the TOUR Championship by Coca-Cola, are outside the top 125 entering the PGA Championship: 2010 PGA Champion Martin Kaymer (160th) and Geoff Ogilvy (148th).
- Defending FedExCup champion Billy Horschel is 47th in FedExCup points, with 859.
- Hunter Mahan is the only player to have competed in every TOUR Championship by Coca-Cola since the inception of the FedExCup in 2007. Mahan is currently outside the top 30, ranked 75th (622 points).

How the PGA Championship was won in 2014

Rory McIlroy recorded four rounds in the 60s at Valhalla Golf Club (66-67-67-68), ending with two putts from 34'4" to par the 72nd hole and win the 96th PGA Championship by one stroke over Phil Mickelson as darkness descended upon the famed Louisville, Kentucky layout.

More on Rory McIlroy's win at the 2014 PGA Championship

- McIlroy earned his fourth major championship title and ninth overall PGA TOUR victory at the age of 25 years, 3 months and 6 days in his 25th major championship start.
- At the age of 25 years, 3 months and 6 days old, McIlroy became the fourth youngest to win a fourth Major Championship.
- McIlroy became the second youngest to win his second PGA Championship (Tiger Woods/2000/24 years, 7 months, 21 days).
- With his win at Valhalla Golf Club, McIlroy became the first player to win back-to-back major championships since Pádraig Harrington at the 2008 Open Championship and PGA Championship. Prior to Harrington, Tiger Woods (2006 Open Championship and PGA Championship) and Phil Mickelson (2005 PGA Championship and 2006 Masters Tournament) were the last ones to accomplish the feat. Woods has won back-to-back majors on five different occasions including four straight majors (2000 U.S. Open through the 2001 Masters Tournament).
- McIlroy joined Pádraig Harrington (2008), Tiger Woods (2000, 2006), Nick Price (1994) and Walter Hagen (1924) as the only players to win the Open Championship and PGA Championship in the same season.
- With the win, McIlroy won his third consecutive TOUR start last year. Since 1980, he became the fifth different player to win three or more consecutive starts: Tiger Woods (5 times), Tom Watson (1980), David Duval (1997), Vijay Singh (2004). Woods' resume included winning streaks of seven (2006-07), six (1999-00), five (2007-08), three (2000) and three (2001).
- McIlroy became the 11th player since 1934 to win on the PGA TOUR the week before winning a major.
- PGA Championship results: 2009/T3, 2010/T3, 2011/T64, 2012/1st, 2013/T8, 2014/1st.
- PGA TOUR wins (11): 2010 Wells Fargo Championship, 2011 U.S. Open, 2012 The Honda Classic, 2012 PGA Championship, 2012 Deutsche Bank Championship, 2012 BMW Championship, 2014 The Open Championship, 2014 World Golf Championships-Bridgestone Invitational, 2014 PGA Championship, 2015 WGC-Dell Match Play, 2015 Wells Fargo Championship.
- Of the last 32 major championships, McIlroy owns the most titles (4), followed by two-time winners Jordan Spieth, Martin Kaymer, Phil Mickelson and Bubba Watson.

Additional Player Notes

Jordan Spieth

- With his victories at the Masters and U.S. Open, World No. 2 Jordan Spieth became the first player to win a season's first two majors since Tiger Woods in 2002. Woods was also the last player to win three majors in a calendar year (2000 U.S. Open, Open Championship and PGA Championship).
- With his U.S. Open win, Spieth became the youngest to win two career majors since Gene Sarazen in 1922.
- With five wins and eight runner-up finishes, Spieth has the most first- and second-place finishes by a TOUR player before the age of 22 since 1970: Spieth (13), Tiger Woods (7), Sergio Garcia (6), Bobby Clampett (5) and Rickie Fowler (3).
- With his second John Deere Classic title last month, Spieth claimed his fourth of the 2014-15 PGA TOUR Season and fifth overall. The last player to win five TOUR events in a season was Woods in 2013.
- Dating to the Valspar Championship, his first win of the season, Spieth has played 45 of 50 rounds at par-or-better.
- With his win at the Masters, Spieth overtook the No. 1 spot in the FedExCup standings, a position he has held on to for the past 18 weeks. Following his T10 finish at last week's World Golf Championships-Bridgestone Invitational, he leads by 1,481 points over Bubba Watson.

Zach Johnson

- Open Championship winner Zach Johnson will be making his 12th start in the PGA Championship. His best finish among the previous 11 is a T3 in 2010 at Whistling Straits (69-70-69-70—278/-10). He finished T37 at Whistling Straits in the 2004 PGA Championship.
- This week's PGA Championship will be his 47th start in a major championship, where he has collected two wins among his eight top-10 finishes (2007 Masters, 2015 Open Championship)
- So far this season, Johnson has collected eight top-10 finishes in 20 starts, four of which have come in his last six starts.
- Johnson's Open Championship title last month was his 12th career title on the PGA TOUR.

Rickie Fowler

- A month removed from his Scottish Open crown, Rickie Fowler comes to this week's PGA Championship with a first (PLAYERS Championship), second (Quicken Loans National) and third (World Golf Championships-HSBC Champions/T3) on the PGA TOUR this season.
- Fowler is poised to make his sixth consecutive start at the PGA Championship, with his first at Whistling Straits in 2010 (T58).
- Last season, became the first player since Tiger Woods in 2005 to claim top-five finishes in each of the four majors (Masters/T5, U.S. Open/T2, Open Championship/T2, PGA Championship/T3).

Bubba Watson

- Eight-time PGA TOUR winner Bubba Watson will make his ninth PGA Championship start this week, with his best finish being a runner-up effort in 2010 at Whistling Straits.
- With victories at the WGC-HSBC Champions and Travelers Championship, Watson is one of five multiple winners on TOUR this season (Jordan Spieth/4, Jimmy Walker/2, Rory McIlroy/2 and Jason Day/2).
- Watson comes to this week's PGA Championship on the heels of a solo-second finishes in his last two starts: RBC Canadian Open and at last week's World Golf Championships-Bridgestone Invitational, two strokes behind Shane Lowry.

Jason Day

- With his T4 finish at The Open Championship, Jason Day claimed his ninth top-10 finish in 20 major championship appearances:

| | | | | | | | |
|------|--------------------|-----|----|----|----|----|---------|
| 2013 | U.S. Open | T2 | 70 | 74 | 68 | 71 | 283/+3 |
| 2011 | U.S. Open | 2 | 71 | 72 | 65 | 68 | 276/-8 |
| 2011 | Masters Tournament | T2 | 72 | 64 | 72 | 68 | 276/-12 |
| 2013 | Masters Tournament | 3 | 70 | 68 | 73 | 70 | 281/-7 |
| 2014 | U.S. Open | T4 | 73 | 68 | 72 | 68 | 281/+1 |
| 2015 | Open Championship | T4 | 66 | 71 | 67 | 70 | 274/-14 |
| 2013 | PGA Championship | T8 | 67 | 71 | 72 | 67 | 277/-3 |
| 2015 | U.S. Open | T9 | 68 | 70 | 68 | 74 | 280/E |
| 2010 | PGA Championship | T10 | 69 | 72 | 66 | 74 | 281/-7 |

- In Day's first start (of five) at the PGA Championship, he finished T10 at Whistling Straits in 2010. His best showing in the event is T8 in 2013 (Oak Hill CC).
- Last month, Day captured his fourth career PGA TOUR win at the RBC Canadian Open to join Jimmy Walker, Rory McIlroy, Jordan Spieth and Bubba Watson in the group of multiple winners this season. Day also won the Farmers Insurance Open in February in a playoff.

Dustin Johnson

- Making his sixth start in the PGA Championship, Dustin Johnson makes a return to Whistling Straits, where he incurred a two-stroke penalty on the 72nd hole en route a T5 finish in 2010. He held a one-stroke lead as he teed off on the home hole Sunday. In an area that was deemed as a bunker, Johnson incurred the penalty after grounding his club. Johnson was unaware the area from which he hit was a bunker.
- Johnson had a putt to win this year's U.S. Open on the 72nd hole, but a three-putt par led to the T2 finish. It came one day before his 31st birthday.
- A nine-time winner on the PGA TOUR, Johnson is looking for his second win of the season, having won the WGC-Cadillac Championship in March. His win at Doral extended his streak of winning at least once a year to eight straight, a current PGA TOUR record.

Shane Lowry

- About his inaugural PGA TOUR win at last week's World Golf Championships-Bridgestone Invitational, Shane Lowry said "This is the best golf I've ever played, these last four days." Lowry posted rounds of 70-66-67-66—269 (-11) to win by two strokes over Bubba Watson in his 28th career start on the PGA TOUR.
- Lowry will be making his fourth start in the PGA Championship. In his first start, he missed the cut at Whistling Straits in 2010. He finished T57 in 2013 and T46 last year at Valhalla.

Tiger Woods

- Tiger Woods, four-time winner of the PGA Championship (1999-2000, 2006-07), will make his 18th start at the PGA Championship. He is seeking his 15th major championship victory in his 76th start (70 professional, 6 amateur) in a major. With 79 PGA TOUR wins, Woods trails Sam Snead by just three on the all-times wins list. This year marks Woods' first time playing the PGA Championship without having competed the week before since 2006.
- Woods finished T24 at the 2004 PGA Championship at Whistling Straits and T28 when it was again held there in 2010.

Phil Mickelson

- Phil Mickelson will be making his 93rd start in a major championship this week, with just eight missed cuts (including just four since 2000). Mickelson will be making his 23rd start at the PGA Championship, with nine top 10s and a win in 2005. Mickelson finished second to McIlroy by a stroke at last year's PGA Championship. In all, he owns five major championship titles (2004, 2006 & 2010 Masters, 2005 PGA Championship and 2013 Open Championship).

Lee Westwood

- Dating to a T23 at the 2009 U.S. Open, Lee Westwood has finished inside the top 25 in 16 of his last 25 majors, including 11 top 10s. Westwood finished T15 at last year's PGA Championship. He owns the most top-three finishes in a major championship without a win since 1934:

| Player | 2 nd place finishes | 3 rd place finishes | Total top-3 finishes |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Lee Westwood | 2 | 6 | 8 |
| Sergio Garcia | 4 | 2 | 6 |
| Colin Montgomerie | 5 | 1 | 6 |
| Doug Sanders | 4 | 2 | 6 |

Major Championship Trends

International players have won five of the last seven PGA Championships (Padraig Harrington/2008, Y.E. Yang/2009, Martin Kaymer/2010 and Rory McIlroy/2012, 2014). Keegan Bradley (2011) and Jason Dufner (2013) are the exceptions.

The last time all four major championships were won in the same season by Americans was 1982.

Most major starts without a victory (not including the 2015 PGA Championship):

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| Lee Westwood | 70 |
| Miguel Angel Jimenez | 69 |
| Sergio Garcia | 68 |
| Steve Stricker | 64 |

Only 10 54-hole leaders in the last 27 majors have gone on to win, but six of the last seven have done so:

| Year | Tournament | 54-hole leader | Margin | Result | Rd 4 Score |
|------|-------------------|-----------------------------|--------|-------------|------------|
| 2015 | Open Championship | Day/Dunne/Oosthuizen | +1 | T4/T30/T2 | 70/78/69 |
| 2015 | U.S. Open | Jordan Spieth | T1 | Won | 69 |
| 2015 | The Masters | Jordan Spieth | +4 | Won | 70 |
| 2014 | PGA Championship | Rory McIlroy | +1 | Won | 68 |
| 2014 | Open Championship | Rory McIlroy | +6 | Won | 71 |
| 2014 | U.S. Open | Martin Kaymer | +5 | Won | 69 |
| 2014 | The Masters | *Bubba Watson/Jordan Spieth | +1 | *Won | 69 |

PGA Championship winners in the field

Defending Champion Rory McIlroy headlines a list of 15 PGA Championship winners in the field: Rich Beem (2002), Keegan Bradley (2011), Mark Brooks (1996), John Daly (1991), Jason Dufner (2013), Pádraig Harrington (2008), Martin Kaymer (2010), Davis Love III (1997), Rory McIlroy (2012), Shaun Micheel (2003), Phil Mickelson (2005), Vijay Singh (1998, 2004), David Toms (2001), Tiger Woods (1999, 2000, 2006-07), and Y.E. Yang (2009).

Matt Dobyys leads group of 20 PGA professionals

Matt Dobyys of Glen Head, New York captured the 48th PGA Professional National Championship in July and headlines a group of 20 PGA Professionals participating in the PGA Championship (previous PGA Championship starts in parenthesis).

- Brian Cairns of Walled Lake, Mich., and the Fox Hills Learning Center (2011, '12)
- Matt Dobyys of Glen Head, N.Y., and Fresh Meadow CC (2012)
- Sean Dougherty of Overland Park, Kan., and Oakwood CC (2011)
- Charles Frost of Johns Island, S.C., and Kiawah Island Club
- Brian Gaffney of Darien, Conn., and Quaker Ridge GC (2000, '09, '12)
- Brett Jones of Basking Ridge, N.J., and Due Process Stable
- Ryan Helminen of Menasha, Wisc., and Ridgeway CC (2014)
- Ryan Kennedy of Ventura, Calif., and Oakmont CC
- Johan Kok of Brentwood, Tenn., and The Hideaway at Arrington (2014)
- Alan Morin of Royal Palm Beach, Fla., and The Falls CC (2002, '03, '05, '08, '12)
- Jeff Olson of Delaware, Ohio, and Golf Club of Dublin
- Austin Peters of Thousand Oaks, Calif., and Wood Ranch GC
- Ben Polland of Manhasset, N.Y., and Deepdale GC
- Adam Rainaud of South Hadley, Mass., and Black Hall Club
- Bob Sowards of Dublin, Ohio, and New Albany CC (1997, 2001, '03, '04, '11-'14)
- Brent Snyder of Hudson, Wisc., and Troy Burne GC
- Grant Sturgeon of Port Chester, N.Y., and Winged Foot GC (2009)
- Omar Uresti of Austin, Texas
- Daniel Venezio of South Hamilton, Mass., and Myopia Hunt Club
- Steven Young of Midland, Texas, and Midland CC
- Jamie Broce of Ottawa Hills, Ohio, representing the University of Toledo

PGA Championship Long Drive Competition (info provided by PGA of America)

The 97th PGA Championship at Whistling Straits will host the PGA Championship Long Drive Competition, which began in 1952, and was re-launched during last year's Championship at Valhalla Golf Club.

During the practice round on Tuesday, Aug. 11, all players will be offered the opportunity to hit one tee shot from the No. 2 Tee. The tee shot will have to come to rest in the fairway to be eligible to win the Long Drive Competition. Whistling Straits' second hole is a 593-yard par-5 that is appropriately dubbed "Big Country."

Louis Oosthuizen is the Long Drive Competition's defending champion by virtue of last year's winning 340-yard drive. Jason Day (338 yards) and PGA Club Professional Johan Kok (337 yards) finished second and third, respectively. All three are entered in this year's Championship Field.

Awards will be given to the top three finishers with winners receiving a money clip inspired by the one that Jack Nicklaus received when winning the first of his two consecutive PGA Championship Driving Contest titles in 1963. That year, Nicklaus, using a persimmon driver and wound golf ball, hit a winning drive of 341 yards, 17 inches.

Additionally, through PGA REACH, the charitable foundation of the PGA of America, the top three finishers will be provided charitable donations of \$25,000, \$15,000, and \$10,000, respectively, with the funds split equally between the players' designated charity and the American Lake Veterans Golf Course. Designed by Jack Nicklaus, the American Lake Veterans Golf Course, in Tacoma, Wash., is the nation's only golf course designed specifically for the rehabilitation of wounded and disabled veterans.

Harold Williams won the original PGA Championship Driving Contest in 1952 with a 329-yard drive. The competition was discontinued from 1965-73, before returning in 1974 as an open event. Before its return at Valhalla, the last National Open Long Drive Championship conducted at a PGA Championship site was in 1984 at Shoal Creek Country Club in Birmingham, Ala.

Whistling Straits

The par-72 Whistling Straits will play host to the PGA Championship for the third time and will play at 7,790 yards (compared to 7,514 yards in 2004 and 7,507 in 2010).

Special Championship Moments at Whistling Straits (provided by the PGA of America):

The 2020 Ryder Cup will be hosted on The Straits at Whistling Straits.

The 2010 PGA Championship was hosted on The Straits. This was the second time the PGA Championship was hosted on The Straits, and for the second time on this riveting and unforgiving course, the winner had to be determined by a playoff. With the sun setting quickly and a nerve-wracking three-hole playoff between Martin Kaymer and Bubba Watson, it was Kaymer who pulled through for the win. Kaymer celebrated his first major championship win at Whistling Straits.

At the 2007 U.S. Senior Open, Brad Bryant became the 28th United States Senior Open Champion in exciting fashion, overtaking third-round leader Tom Watson with a birdie on the 16th hole. Bryant finished 6 under par for the tournament and won by three strokes over Ben Crenshaw. It was the second-biggest comeback in Senior Open history and capped off a thrilling championship week, as nearly 125,000 golf enthusiasts celebrated our country's independence and watched the legends of golf test themselves on The Straits.

The Irish at Whistling Straits hosted the 2005 Palmer Cup, an annual Ryder Cup-style competition where top U.S. collegiate players tee off against their European counterparts. The American team reclaimed the Palmer Cup after winning the first six individual matches on the final day of play.

The Straits at Whistling Straits hosted the 2004 PGA Championship, one of golf's four majors. The course had been open only two seasons when the announcement was made in January 2000. After 72 holes of play, three players were tied for the lead, forcing a three-hole playoff, where Vijay Singh came out victorious, winning his second PGA Championship.

There are 65 players in the field this week who participated in the 2010 PGA Championship at Whistling Straits, including 18 of the top-25 finishers.

Final Leaderboard from the 2010 PGA Championship at Whistling Straits (T10 and ties):

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| Martin Kaymer | 72-68-67-70—277 (won in a playoff) |
| Bubba Watson | 68-71-70-68—277 |
| Zach Johnson | 69-70-69-70—278 |
| Rory McIlroy | 71-68-67-72—278 |
| Jason Dufner | 73-66-69-71—279 |
| Steve Elkington | 71-70-67-71—279 |
| Dustin Johnson | 71-68-67-73—279 |
| WC Liang | 72-71-64-73—280 |
| Camilo Villegas | 71-71-70-68—280 |
| Jason Day | 69-72-66-74—281 |
| Matt Kuchar | 67-69-73-72—281 |

Final Leaderboard from the 2004 PGA Championship at Whistling Straits (T10 and ties):

| | |
|----------------|------------------------------------|
| Vijay Singh | 67-68-69-76—280 (won in a playoff) |
| Chris DiMarco | 68-70-71-71—280 |
| Justin Leonard | 66-69-70-75—280 |

| | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Ernie Els | 66-70-72-73—281 |
| Chris Riley | 69-70-69-73—281 |
| K.J. Choi | 68-71-73-70—282 |
| Paul McGinley | 69-74-70-69—282 |
| Phil Mickelson | 69-72-67-74—282 |
| Robert Allenby | 71-70-72-70—283 |
| Stephen Ames | 68-71-69-75—283 |
| Ben Crane | 70-74-69-70—283 |
| Adam Scott | 71-71-69-72—283 |

Multiple Hosts of the PGA Championship

The previous 95 PGA Championships have been played on 72 different courses in 26 states. The following 15 courses have hosted multiple PGA Championships:

- Southern Hills Country Club, Tulsa, Okla. 1970, '82, '94, 2007
- Atlanta Athletic Club, Johns Creek, Ga. 1981, 2001, 2011
- Oakland Hills Country Club, Bloomfield Township, Mich. 1972, '79, 2008
- Oakmont (Pa.) Country Club 1922, '51, '78
- Firestone Country Club, Akron, Ohio 1960, '66, '75
- Oak Hill Country Club, Rochester, N.Y. 1980, 2003, '13
- Hazeltine National Golf Club, Chaska, Minn. 2002, '09
- Whistling Straits (Straits), Kohler, Wis. 2004, '10
- Medinah (Ill.) Country Club 1999, 2006
- Valhalla Golf Club, Louisville, Ky. 1996, 2000
- Olympia Fields (Ill.) Country Club 1925, '61
- Keller Golf Club, St. Paul, Minn. 1932, '54
- Riviera Country Club, Pacific Palisades, Calif. 1983, '95
- Shoal Creek Country Club, Birmingham, Ala. 1984, '90
- Inverness Club, Toledo, Ohio 1986, '93

Future Sites of the PGA Championship

- 98th PGA Championship (Summer of 2016; Baltusrol Golf Club)
- 99th PGA Championship (August 2017; Quail Hollow Club)
- 100th PGA Championship (August 2018; Bellerive Country Club)
- 101st PGA Championship (August 2019; Bethpage Black)