



**2015 THE PLAYERS Championship**  
(The 26<sup>th</sup> of 43 events in the PGA TOUR Season)

Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.  
THE PLAYERS Stadium  
TPC Sawgrass

May 7-10, 2015  
Par/Yardage: 36-36—72/7,215

FedExCup Points: 600  
Purse: \$10,000,000 (\$1,800,000)

**First-Round Notes – Thursday, May 7, 2015**

*Weather: Sunny with a high of 83 degrees. Winds N 10-15 mph with gusts to 20 mph.*

**First-Round Leaderboard**

Hideki Matsuyama	67 (-5)
David Hearn	67 (-5)
Charley Hoffman	67 (-5)

**Hideki Matsuyama**

Hideki Matsuyama posted a 5-under 67 with six birdies (holes 2, 4, 9, 13, 15, 16) in his second appearance at THE PLAYERS Championship (2014-T23).

In his 2014-15 season, Matsuyama has posted seven top-10 finishes including a second-place finish at the Waste Management Phoenix Open and two T3 finishes (the Masters and the Hyundai Tournament of Champions).

If Matsuyama were to win this week, he would become the youngest winner in PLAYERS history at 23 years, 2 months and 15 days. Currently, the youngest winner is Adam Scott at 23 years, 8 months and 5 days in 2004.

Matsuyama is in search of his second career PGA TOUR victory this week and first since last year's Memorial Tournament presented by Nationwide in his first year as a PGA TOUR member.

In addition to his win at the Memorial, Matsuyama has collected five International victories.

**Hideki Matsuyama first-round statistics:**

Driving Distance: 280.2 yards  
Driving Accuracy: 9 of 14 (64.3 percent)  
Greens in Regulation: 12 of 18 (66.7 percent)  
Putts: 26  
Strokes Gained Putting: 2.179

International players have won eight of the last 13 PLAYERS Championships. A total of 13 international players have won THE PLAYERS in the 40-year history of the event, including one native of Asia (South Korea's K.J. Choi, 2011). No Japanese player has ever won THE PLAYERS Championship.

**David Hearn**

David Hearn is searching for his first PGA TOUR win. The only players that have captured their first win at THE PLAYERS were Craig Perks (2002) and Tim Clark (2010).

Hearn (T1) has three made cuts in three previous PLAYERS starts, including a T6 finish last year.

In the 2014-15 season, Hearn has posted two top-10 finishes (T7/Shriners Hospitals, T6/Zurich Classic).

Hearn played six full seasons on the Web.com Tour, with a victory at the 2004 Alberta Classic.

Hearn has two top-10 finishes in 16 starts in 2014-15, including a T6 in his last outing at the Zurich Classic of New Orleans. He is 77th in the FedExCup standings.

**David Hearn first-round statistics:**

Driving Distance: 265.1 yards  
Driving Accuracy: 7 of 14 (50 percent)

Greens in Regulation: 13 of 18 (72.2 percent)  
Putts: 27  
Strokes Gained Putting: 3.074

### **Charley Hoffman**

Charley Hoffman led the field with eight birdies on Thursday. His only square on the day was a triple-bogey 7 on the first hole (his 10th).

Hoffman, winner of the OHL Classic at Mayakoba last fall, sits seventh in the FedExCup standings thanks to the victory and two additional top-10 finishes in 2014-15.

Hoffman was second through 36 holes at the Masters and played with eventual champion Jordan Spieth in the final pairing in the third round before eventually finishing T9.

In eight previous starts at THE PLAYERS, Hoffman has made eight cuts with just one top-25 finish, T22 in 2010.

### **Charley Hoffman first-round statistics:**

Driving Distance: 286.1 yards  
Driving Accuracy: 10 of 14 (71.4 percent)  
Greens in Regulation: 14 of 18 (77.8 percent)  
Putts: 26  
Strokes Gained Putting: 2.275

### **Kevin Na**

Kevin Na shot a 5-under-par 67, matching his best opening round at THE PLAYERS in his ninth time playing the event.

In his eight previous appearances, Na has missed the cut four times but also has a T3 (2009) and a T7 (2012). In 2012, he held the lead following the third round only to shoot 76 on the final day to drop to T7.

Na has played in 14 events thus far in the 2014-15 season with his best finish, T2, coming at the CIMB Classic in Malaysia. He has three other top 10s at the Arnold Palmer Invitational (T6), Valspar Championship (T10) and the World Golf Championships-Cadillac Championship.

Na has twice previously held or shared the lead through 18 holes at the 2007 Crowne Plaza Invitational (finished T7) and the 2009 RBC Canadian Open (finished T53).

### **Derek Fathauer**

Derek Fathauer posted just the third eagle in PLAYERS history at the fourth hole, holing out with a pitching wedge from 130 yards. The previous eagles at No. 4 were recorded by Lyn Lott (1982) and Ernie Els (2014).

Fathauer shot an opening round 68 and sits at T5. Fathauer won the Web.com Tour Championship at Dye's Valley Course at TPC Sawgrass last year to finish No. 1 on the Web.com Tour Finals money list qualifying him for THE PLAYERS. For the 2013-2014 Web.Com Tour season, Fathauer made 19 cuts, while recording a win, a runner-up and a third.

Fathauer started on the 10th hole on Thursday and made the turn at 1-under-par. Fathauer joins Fulton Allem (1999, round 2) as the only players to play holes 2-4 in 5-under-par in the same round at THE PLAYERS since 1983.

Fathauer, 29, is playing in THE PLAYERS for the first time in his career. He was tied for the lead after an opening-round 66 at the Northern Trust Open earlier this year, but failed to break par the remaining three rounds and finished the event T61.

### **Billy Horschel**

Making his third start at THE PLAYERS Championship (T26/2014, Cut, 2013), Billy Horschel sits T5 through 18 holes.

The Ponte Vedra Beach resident is looking to join local PLAYERS champions Mark McCumber (1988), David Duval (1999) and Fred Funk (2005).

### **Brendon Todd**

Brendon Todd (T2) is playing in his first PLAYERS, but in his career has already played in all four major championships, all four World Golf Championships, the Hyundai Tournament of Champions and all four FedExCup Playoff events.

Other than Jack Nicklaus, who won THE PLAYERS in its inaugural year in 1974, only Hal Sutton (1983) and Craig Perks (2002) have won the event in their first appearance.

### **First-Round Statistics**

The first-round leader or co-leader has gone on to win THE PLAYERS 13 times since the tournament began in 1974, most recently Martin Kaymer last year. There have been four wire-to-wire winners: Al Geiberger (1975), Greg Norman (1994), Steve Elkington (1997) and Hal Sutton (2000). En route to his win last year, Kaymer had the outright lead after rounds one and two, but shared the 12-under lead after the third round with Jordan Spieth.

Of 33 winners since the event moved to TPC Sawgrass in 1982, only 10 have carded a first-round score of 70 or higher and gone on to win, with the most recent being K.J. Choi in 2011 with a 70.

The first-round leader/co-leader has won three of 24 times this season, most recently Jordan Spieth at the Masters.

### **Sergio Garcia**

Making his 16<sup>th</sup> start at THE PLAYERS Championship, 2008 champion Sergio Garcia opened with a 69. His best opening round at this event is 66 (2005, 2008) and his career-low round is a second-round 65 in 2013.

Garcia owns the longest active cuts made streak at THE PLAYERS with 11 in a row, dating to a T53 finish in 2004.

In 14 previous starts at THE PLAYERS, Garcia has a victory (2008) and four additional top-10 finishes in 2002 (T4), 2007 (2), 2013 (T8) and 2014 (3).

Garcia is seeking to become the seventh player to win THE PLAYERS more than once—Jack Nicklaus (3), Fred Couples (2), Davis Love III (2), Hal Sutton (2), Steve Elkington (2) and Tiger Woods (2).

### **Jordan Spieth**

Reigning Masters champion Jordan Spieth struggled in round one, opening with a 75. Spieth is seeking to become the eight player with a victory at both THE PLAYERS and the Masters Tournament. The others are Raymond Floyd, Jack Nicklaus, Sandy Lyle, Fred Couples, Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson and Adam Scott.

Spieth played the Junior PLAYERS Championship in 2010 (one of the American Junior Golf Association's premier events), finishing T2.

### **Rory Mcllroy**

World No. 1 Rory Mcllroy opened with a 3-under 69, highlighted by an eagle-3 at the 16<sup>th</sup> hole.

Mcllroy is making his sixth start at THE PLAYERS Championship this week. He missed his first three cuts in 2009, 2010 and 2012, but has finished inside the top 10 each of the past two years (T8/2013, T6/2014).

With a win this week, Mcllroy would become the fourth player to win the week before and the week of THE PLAYERS Championship (Raymond Floyd – 1981 Doral-Eastern-Open, Tom Kite – 1989 Arnold Palmer Invitational and Tiger Woods – 2001 Arnold Palmer Invitational).

### **Additional Player Notes**

After missing the 2014 PLAYERS Championship due to injury, 2001 and 2013 champion Tiger Woods posted a 73.

Phil Mickelson opened with a 73, marking his highest opening score at the event since an 83 in 2000. It equals his fourth-highest opening round in 21 starts here (83-2000, 78-1995, 77-1997). Since capturing THE PLAYERS in 2007, Mickelson has not posted a top-10 finish at TPC Sawgrass.

Adam Scott opened his 14<sup>th</sup> PLAYERS Championship with a 72. Scott has won THE PLAYERS (2004), a World Golf Championships event (Bridgestone Invitational), a major championship and the TOUR Championship; only Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson can also make that claim.

### **Past Champions**

Nine players who have won THE PLAYERS are participating this week. Here's a look at their first-round results:

Player	Year Won	R1 Score
Sergio Garcia	2008	69

Justin Leonard	1998	73
Matt Kuchar	2012	73
Henrik Stenson	2009	72
K.J. Choi	2011	70
Phil Mickelson	2007	73
Adam Scott	2004	72
Martin Kaymer	2014	69
Tiger Woods	2001, 2013	73

### **Rookies at THE PLAYERS**

Nick Taylor	71
Daniel Berger	71
Justin Thomas	73
Adam Hadwin	75

Best finishes by a PGA TOUR rookie at THE PLAYERS: David Lingmerth (T2 in 2013), Fulton Allem (T3 in 1988), Camilo Villegas (T3 in 2006) and Jeff Quinney (T6 in 2007).

### **First-Timer Leaderboard and Notes**

Ben Martin	68
Brendon Todd	68
Robert Streb	70
Ryo Ishikawa	71
Andrew Svoboda	71
Nick Taylor	72
Danny Lee	73
Kevin Kisner	73
Justin Thomas	73
Shane Lowry	73
Billy Hurley III	74
Adam Hadwin	75
Anirban Lahiri	76
Brice Garnett	76
Brooks Koepka	78
Derek Fathauer	
Danny Willett	72
Daniel Berger	71
Bernd Wiesberger	77

Other than Jack Nicklaus, who won THE PLAYERS in its inaugural year in 1974, only Hal Sutton (1983) and Craig Perks (2002) have won the event in their first appearance.

### **Miscellaneous Notes**

Since moving to THE PLAYERS Stadium Course at TPC Sawgrass in 1982, 19 of the 33 winners played the week before with the other 14 (most recently Tiger Woods in 2013, Matt Kuchar in 2012, K.J. Choi in 2011 and Tim Clark in 2010) taking the week off prior to the event.

In memoriam of Calvin Peete, THE PLAYERS Championship held a moment of silence on the first tee prior to Tiger Woods teeing off. Peete won the 1985 PLAYERS Championship.

Darren Clarke withdrew with a right wrist injury during the first round. This was Clarke's 12<sup>th</sup> appearance in THE PLAYERS Championship and his second withdrawal (2007). In the 2014-15 season, Clarke has played the Shell Houston Open (Cut) and the Masters (T52).

*"I jarred my wrist on the practice range, but didn't want to pull out because THE PLAYERS is such a big championship. Unfortunately the problem got worse during the round and I couldn't do anything else. With the BMW PGA and Irish Open coming up, I didn't want to risk aggravating the injury and have to miss those tournaments as well so reluctantly was forced to withdraw."*

Jason Bohn holed out for eagle from 134 yards with a pitching wedge on the par-4 sixth hole. Bohn's eagle marked the seventh eagle on the sixth hole in PLAYERS history and the first since David Toms in 2012.

Hole 18 on TPC Sawgrass is currently playing as the hardest hole on the PGA TOUR this season with an average score of 4.650, yielding just seven birdies from the 143 players. Twenty-six players posted scores of double-bogey or worse. The closest average score this season is at Trump National Doral's 18<sup>th</sup> hole, ranking a 4.572 over four rounds.

**Bogey-free rounds**

**R1 –**

Brendon Todd (68) and Charles Howell III (68) posted the only bogey-free rounds of the day.

No player has gone all four rounds without a bogey at THE PLAYERS Championship. Greg Norman came the closest in 1994 with a single bogey in the final round on No. 13.

There were 21 balls in the water at the par-3 17<sup>th</sup> hole Thursday. Here's a list of balls in the water on the famed hole since 2003:

Year	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Cumulative
2015	21				
2014	12	12	1	3	28
2013	15	9	7	13	44
2012	18	11	4	6	39
2011	12	14	8	6 (in regulation)	40
2010	7	8	5	9	29
2009	16	6	4	6	32
2008	20	18	10	16 (in regulation)	64
2007	50	21	10	12	93
2006	19	17	12	9	57
2005	7	8	25	28	68
2004	9	10	4	7	30
2003	6	10	3	10	29

**Scoring Averages at the par-72 TPC Sawgrass:**

	<b>Front 9</b>	<b>Back 9</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Cumulative</b>
Thursday	36.070	36.315	72.385	---

**First-round scoring average since 2004**

Year	Avg.	Sub-par	Sub-70
2015	72.385	59	24
2014	71.993	67	28
2013	72.007	67	33
2012	72.373	54	27
2011	72.222	60	24
2010	71.103	86	36
2009	72.379	52	25
2008	74.478	23	2
2007	73.387	41	11
2006	73.308	46	15
2005	71.364	83	37
2004	73.548	45	16

Morning scoring average (72.40) vs. afternoon scoring average (72.13).

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