



**On-site PGA TOUR media contact:**  
Doug Milne, Communications Manager  
(904) 614-0657 | dougmilne@pgatourhq.com

### **2015 Zurich Classic of New Orleans pre-tournament notes**

**Dates:** April 20-26, 2015

**Where:** Avondale, La.

**Course:** TPC Louisiana

36-36—par 72/7,425 yards

**Field size:** 156

**2014 champion:** Seung-Yul Noh

**Purse:** \$6,900,000 (\$1,242,000/winner)

**FedExCup:** 500 points to the winner

**Format:** 72-hole stroke play

**Twitter:** @zurich\_classic

### **How Seung-Yul Noh won the 2014 Zurich Classic of New Orleans**

Beginning the final round with a two-stroke lead over Keegan Bradley at 18-under, Seung-Yul Noh never lost pace. His 1-under 71 Sunday was good for a two-stroke margin of victory over Robert Streb and Andrew Svoboda at 19-under 269. In a show of remembrance to the South Korean ferry accident earlier in the week, Noh wore a ribbon on his hat. With the win, his second on the PGA TOUR, Noh earned a spot into the field at the PLAYERS Championship two weeks later (T72).

### **More on Seung-Yul Noh**

- Following his win at TPC Louisiana, Noh would earn berths into the first three FedExCup Playoffs events, where he finished T9 at the Deutsche Bank Championship. He would finish the 2013-14 PGA TOUR Season 35<sup>th</sup> in the FedExCup standings.
- So far this year, Noh has made the cut in seven of 12 starts, with his best full-field finish being a T22 at the Northern Trust Open.
- The 2015 Zurich Classic of New Orleans will be Noh's fourth consecutive start at TPC Louisiana. Prior to his 2014 win, he missed the cut in 2013 and finished T66 in 2012.
- With his win, Noh became the second South Korean to win the Zurich Classic of New Orleans, joining K.J. Choi (2002). With The Presidents Cup 2015 being held in his home country in October, Noh looks to improve on his current position (24<sup>th</sup>) on the International Team standings at the Zurich Classic.

### **Notes on the field**

- Ten of the top 30 in the FedExCup standings, highlighted by Dustin Johnson (No. 6) and Jason Day (No. 9).
- Three of the top 10 in the Official World Golf Ranking: Jason Day (No. 6), Dustin Johnson (No. 7) and Justin Rose (No. 9).
- Nine past Zurich Classic of New Orleans winners: Seung-Yul Noh (2014), Billy Horschel (2013), Jason Bohn (2010), Jerry Kelly (2009), Andres Romero (2008), Nick Watney (2007), Vijay Singh (2004), K.J. Choi (2002) and David Toms (2001).

### **Justin Rose**

- 2013 U.S. Open champion Justin Rose will make his 10<sup>th</sup> start in this week's Zurich Classic of New Orleans. His best result is a T5 in his first start of 2004 (English Turn G&CC), though he hasn't finished outside the top 15 in his last three starts (T8/2014, T15/2013 and T10/2012). Rose comes to New Orleans this week on the heels of a T2 finish at the Masters two weeks ago. Rose has played his last 12 rounds at TPC Louisiana with scores of par-or-better.

### Dustin Johnson

- With his victory last month at the World Golf Championships-Cadillac Championship, Dustin Johnson extended his streak of winning at least once a year to a current TOUR record of eight straight years. In seven starts so far this season, Johnson has finished inside the top six five times (T4/AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am, P2/Northern Trust Open, 1<sup>st</sup>/WGC-Cadillac Championship, T6/Valero Texas Open and T6/Masters). Johnson is poised to make just his second start in this week's Zurich Classic of New Orleans. He previously missed the cut in 2008.

### Jason Day

- Jason Day claimed his third career PGA TOUR title earlier this year in sudden death over Scott Stallings, J.B. Holmes and Harris English at the Farmers Insurance Open. Day also won the 2010 AT&T Byron Nelson Championship and 2013 World Golf Championships-Cadillac Match Play. Day will be making his third start in the Zurich Classic of New Orleans and first since finishing T32 in 2009.

### Rickie Fowler

- Coming off top-five finishes in each of last year's four major championships, Rickie Fowler is poised to make his fifth consecutive start at this week's Zurich Classic of New Orleans (T26/2011, T10/2012, T32/2013 and MC/2014). Fowler is making his ninth start of the season this week, where he is coming off a T12 finish at the Masters two weeks ago. His best finish so far this season is a T3 at the World Golf Championships-HSBC Champions.

### Billy Horschel

- 2013 Zurich Classic of New Orleans champion Billy Horschel used his win at TPC Louisiana, his first on the PGA TOUR, as a springboard to an epic 2013-14 campaign. Following his 2013 win in New Orleans, he would add additional titles at the 2014 BMW Championship and TOUR Championship by Coca-Cola en route to winning the FedExCup title. Last month, Horschel recorded his best finish of the season, third-place honors at the Valero Texas Open. Horschel will be making his fifth consecutive start in this week's Zurich Classic of New Orleans and is coming off a missed cut in last year's event.

### Steve Stricker

- In just his second start since undergoing surgery last December 23 to relieve issues stemming from acute and chronic L5 radiculopathy, Steve Stricker will be making his 14<sup>th</sup> appearance at the Zurich Classic of New Orleans. Stricker is in search of his 13<sup>th</sup> career PGA TOUR title this week and first since the 2012 Hyundai Tournament of Champions.

### Kevin Kisner

- The University of Georgia graduate posted his best career finish last week at the RBC Heritage, where he lost in a playoff to Jim Furyk after carding a final-round 64. His birdie from seven feet on the 72<sup>nd</sup> hole forced the playoff, with Furyk winning on the second hole of sudden death. With the finish, Kisner moved to No. 37 in the FedExCup standings.

### Tournament notes

- The Zurich Classic of New Orleans is the penultimate PGA TOUR event for players, not previously eligible, to earn a start in THE PLAYERS in one of three ways: 1) moving into the top 50 in the Official World Golf Ranking; 2) winning the Zurich Classic of New Orleans; and 3) moving into the top 10 in the FedExCup standings.
- The Zurich Classic of New Orleans champion has been decided either by one stroke or in a playoff nine times since 2003. Last year, Seung-Yul Noh won by two strokes, Nick Watney (2007) won by three strokes and Jason Bohn (2010) won by two shots. The 2012 playoff between Jason Dufner and Ernie Els was the 12<sup>th</sup> in the history of the event.
- Since 1990, 14 players have made the Zurich Classic of New Orleans their maiden victory on the PGA TOUR, including six of the past 10 champions; Billy Horschel (2013), Jason Dufner (2012), Andres Romero (2008), Nick Watney (2007), Chris Couch (2006) and Tim Petrovic (2005).
- In the FedExCup era (2007-present), five of the eight champions of the Zurich Classic of New Orleans finished inside the top 30 in the final FedExCup standings that year (Billy Horschel/2013/16<sup>th</sup>, Jason Dufner/2012/14<sup>th</sup>, Bubba Watson/2011/26<sup>th</sup>, Jerry Kelly/2009/22<sup>nd</sup> and Andres Romero/2008/28<sup>th</sup>).
- Since 2000, no player has successfully defended his title at the Zurich Classic of New Orleans, and just two have followed their win with a top-20 finish the following year:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Defending Champion</b>	<b>Finish</b>
2014	Billy Horschel	MC
2013	Jason Dufner	T42
2012	Bubba Watson	T18
2011	Jason Bohn	T67
2010	Jerry Kelly	T67

2009	Andres Romero	DQ
2008	Nick Watney	T42
2007	Chris Couch	T80
2006	Tim Petrovic	MC
2005	Vijay Singh	T21
2004	Steve Flesch	T45
2003	K.J. Choi	T37
2002	David Toms	T9
2001	Carlos Franco	T34

- Among those in the field with Louisiana connections:
  - David Toms - Shreveport resident and Former LSU Tiger will be making his 22<sup>nd</sup> start in the event, with a victory in 2001 at English Turn G&CC.
  - Michael Thompson – former Tulane University undergrad, who transferred to University of Alabama following Hurricane Katrina. Thompson claimed his first career PGATOUR in 2013 at The Honda Classic.
  - John Peterson – the Baton Rouge resident was the 2011 NCAA Champion while playing for LSU. The three-time All-American also finished T4 at the 2011 U.S. Open.
  - Andrew Loupe – Baton Rouge native and LSU grad (2011) will be making his third start in the Zurich Classic of New Orleans (T52/2014, MC/2011).
  - Curtis Thompson – graduate of LSU is the brother of TOUR member Nicholas Thompson and LPGA member Lexi Thompson is scheduled to play as a sponsor exemption.

### **2014-15 PGA TOUR Season Highlights**

It took 20 events for the first multiple winner to emerge on the PGA TOUR this season (Jimmy Walker/Sony Open in Hawaii, Valero Texas Open). The last, longer stretch came in 1994 when Nick Price won his second event (Crowne Plaza Invitational at Colonial) in the 21<sup>st</sup> event of the campaign. Jordan Spieth (Valspar Championship, Masters Tournament) is the only other repeat winner so far this season.

So far in the 2015 calendar year, 11 of the 16 winners (through the Masters Tournament) were in the top 50 in the Official World Golf Ranking at the time of their respective victories: Patrick Reed (23), Jimmy Walker (17<sup>th</sup> at Sony Open in Hawaii, 13<sup>th</sup> at Valero Texas Open), Bill Haas (41), Brooks Koepka (33), Jason Day (8), Dustin Johnson (16), Jordan Spieth (10<sup>th</sup> at the Valspar Championship and 4<sup>th</sup> at the Masters), J.B Holmes (20) and Jim Furyk (10).

So far this season, 10 of the 23 events have been determined by a playoff. Most recently, J.B. Holmes defeated Johnson Wagner and Jordan Spieth in sudden death at the Shell Houston Open.

The trend of young winners on TOUR has continued early into the 2014-15 season as nine of the 23 winners have been under the age of 30, including:

- 24-year-old Patrick Reed, who became just the fifth player since 1991 to win four times before the age of 25, joining Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson, Rory McIlroy and Sergio Garcia with his victory at the Hyundai Tournament of Champions.
- 21-year-old Jordan Spieth, with his victories at the Valspar Championship and Masters Tournament, became the third different player since 1940 to win three times on the PGA TOUR before reaching their 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. The others were Tiger Woods and Sergio Garcia. Spieth first won the 2013 John Deere Classic less than two weeks before his 20<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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. He sits at No. 53 in the FedExCup standings. Rookie members in the top 50 in the FedExCup standings include Daniel Berger (22) and Justin Thomas (41).

### **Notable changes for the 2014-15 PGA TOUR season**

- Starting in January 2015, winners of the Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by MasterCard and the Memorial Tournament presented by Nationwide will receive a three-year PGA TOUR exemption and a three-year exemption into THE PLAYERS Championship.
- The 2015 Presidents Cup team eligibility for the U.S. Team will be based on FedExCup points instead of money. Presidents Cup points for the FedExCup Playoffs will be weighted the same as World Golf Championships (550 for first place, 315 for second, etc.).
- The Top 125 Money List from the previous season, established following the conclusion of the 2014 Wyndham Championship, will remain as an exempt category in 2014-15 for standard, open events only.