



2015 Frys.com Open (1<sup>st</sup> of 43 events in the 2015-16 PGA TOUR Season)

Napa, Calif. October 15-18, 2015 Purse: \$6,000,000

Silverado Resort and Spa (North) Par/Yards: 36-36—72/7,203

# First-Round Notes - Thursday, October 15, 2015

Weather. Partly cloudy, with a high of 78 degrees. Winds SW 8-14 mph.

Due to darkness, round one was suspended for the day at 6:53 p.m. Pacific Time, with three players remaining on the course. Players were back in position at 8:45 a.m. PT Friday and the final round was completed at 8:49 a.m. PT.

## First-Round Leaders

Brendan Steele	63 (-9)
Jhonattan Vegas	64 (-8)
Harold Varner III	65 (-7)
Martin Laird	65 (-7)

#### **Brendan Steele**

Idyllwild, Calif. native Brendan Steele got off to the hottest start of the new season with birdies on seven of his first nine holes, turning in 29. Beginning on No. 10, his only two pars on his outward nine came at Nos. 10 and 13. He made seven pars and two birdies on his inward nine, good for a bogey-free, 9-under 63.

Steele's 63 ties the tournament course record, set by Johnny Miller in round one of the 1976 Kaiser International Open Invitational (T2).

Steele needed just 11 putts on Nos. 10-18, which he followed with 15 on Nos. 1-9, totaling 26. He made 114' of putts in round one, 87' of which came on his first nine holes. He made putts of 26'5", 20'4" and 18'11" on Nos. 12, 13 and 15, respectively.

Steele missed just one green in regulation in round one. (No. 7).

Steele's 63 is one stroke shy of his career-low round, a score he has posted twice. Most recently, he finished T5 at the 2014 Travelers Championship, thanks to an opening-round, 8-under 62.

Steele is making his fifth start at the Frys.com Open, with his lone top-10 finish being a T7 in 2011 at CordeValle GC in nearby San Martin.

On the strength of four top-10 finishes in the 2014-15 PGA TOUR Season, Steele advanced to the FedExCup Playoffs for a fourth time. He played his way through the BMW Championship, before he ended his season ranked 50<sup>th</sup> in the FedExCup standings.

Steele remains in search of his second career PGA TOUR title, and first since the 2011 Valero Texas Open, 117 starts ago.

Steele has previously held an 18-hole lead/co-lead three times, but never finished better than T5 (2014 Travelers Championship).

## Jhonattan Vegas

With birdies on six of his first nine holes (Nos. 10-18), Jhonattan Vegas opened with an 8-under 64. He trumped his lone bogey of the day at the par-4 14<sup>th</sup> with an eagle-three at the fifth hole.

Vegas is making his fourth start in the Frys.com Open. He missed the cut last year at Silverado and in 2013 at CordeValle GC. In his first start, he finished T22 at CordeValle GC in 2012.

Playing this week out of the Past Champion category, Vegas finished 153<sup>rd</sup> in the 2014-15 FedExCup standings, where his T11 at the Farmers Insurance Open marked his lone top-20 finish of the season.

Vegas is in search of his second career PGA TOUR title and first since the 2011 CareerBuilder Challenge in Palm Springs.

### Harold Varner III

PGA TOUR rookie Harold Varner III made six birdies and an eagle (par-5 16<sup>th</sup>) in round one, with his only bogey coming at the par-3 15<sup>th</sup>.

Varner's 65 comes in just his fourth start on the PGA TOUR. He previously played in the 2013 U.S. Open (MC), 2014 Northern Trust Open (T70) and 2014 Wells Fargo Championship (MC).

Varner made his way onto the PGA TOUR this season by virtue of his 33<sup>rd</sup>-place finish on the 2015 Web.com Tour priority list. On that Tour last season, Varner collected three top-10 finishes, highlighted by a solo-second at the Panama Claro Championship in his first start of the season.

Varner competed in all 25 events on last year's Web.com Tour.

Varner, a 25-year-old Eastern Carolina University grad, resides in Jacksonville Beach, Fla., and plays out of TPC Sawgrass.

# **Additional Player Notes**

Last year's Frys.com Open marked Jarrod Lyle's first return to the PGA TOUR following a 29-month absence to undergo treatment for myeloid leukemia. This week's Frys.com Open marks his first TOUR start since the Colonial National Invitation Tournament in late May. Lyle finished T31 at Silverado last year and opened with a 3-under 69 this week.

2014-15 PGA TOUR Rookie of the Year Daniel Berger opened with a 2-under 70. Berger missed last year's cut, following rounds of 75-72.

2014 Frys.com Open runner-up Steven Bowditch opened with an even-par 72. Last year, Bowditch overcame an opening-round, 1-over 73 with scores of 68-67-67 to finish two strokes back of Sangmoon Bae. As a Captain's Pick, Bowditch is coming off his first Presidents Cup appearance, where he went 1-2-0 for the International Team.

### **Miscellaneous Notes**

This week's Frys.com Open marks the 30<sup>th</sup> PGA TOUR or Champions Tour event hosted by Silverado Resort and Spa; 1968-1976 Kaiser International Open Invitational, 1977-1980 Anheuser-Busch Golf Classic, 1989-2002 The Transamerica on the Champions Tour and 2014 Frys.com Open.

Ten of 17 2015-16 PGA TOUR Rookies are in this week's Frys.com Open field. Among them, the lowest score of 7-under 65 belonged to Harold Varner III.

### Bogey-free rounds:

R1: Stuart Appleby (70), Brendon De Jonge (68), Mark Hubbard (68), Smylie Kaufman (68), Martin Laird (65), Brendan Steele (73), David Toms (71).

Scoring Averages at the par-72 Silverado Resort and Spa (North):

	Front 9	Back 9	Total	Cumulative
R1:	35.736	35.008	70.744	