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**Shell Houston Open pre-tournament notes**

**Dates:** March 30-April 2

**Where:** Golf Club of Houston, Humble, Texas

**Par/Yards:** 36-36--72/7,441 yards

**Field:** 144

**2016 champion:** Jim Herman

**Purse:** \$7,000,000 (\$1,260,000 to the winner)

**FedExCup:** 500 points to the winner

**Format:** 72-hole stroke play

**Website:** shellhoustonopen.com **Facebook:** TheShellHoustonOpen **Twitter:** @shellhouopen

**Shell Houston Open and the FedExCup**

- Fifteen of the top 30 in the FedExCup standings are in the field including Jon Rahm who moved to No. 4 following his appearance in the final of last week's WGC-Dell Technologies Match Play.
- Four of the last six winners of the Shell Houston Open have advanced to the FedExCup finale, the TOUR Championship; overall, five of the 10 winners have qualified since the inception of the FedExCup in 2007.

**Shell Houston Open and the Masters Tournament**

The Shell Houston Open continues to embrace its pre-Masters date with similar course setup and conditioning at the Golf Club of Houston in terms of mowing patterns, green speeds (12 on stimpmeter), chipping areas and minimal rough (1 ¼ inches). Currently, 29 players in the Shell Houston Open field are scheduled to compete the following week at the Masters Tournament and the event is the final opportunity for players not exempt for the Masters to play their way into the year's first major championship. In 2008, Johnson Wagner became the first player to capitalize on the win-and-you're in berth into the Masters Tournament. The last player to play his way into the Masters Tournament was Jim Herman in 2016.

**Masters invitees in the 2017 Shell Houston Open field (29):**

Daniel Berger  
 Angel Cabrera  
 Rafa Cabrera Bello  
 Roberto Castro  
 Kevin Chappell  
 Jason Dufner  
 Ernie Els  
 Rickie Fowler  
 James Hahn  
 Charley Hoffman

J.B. Holmes  
 Mackenzie Hughes  
 Si Woo Kim  
 Matt Kuchar  
 Phil Mickelson  
 Sean O'Hair  
 Jon Rahm  
 Patrick Reed  
 Justin Rose  
 Adam Scott

Jordan Spieth  
 Henrik Stenson  
 Andy Sullivan  
 Hudson Swafford  
 Jhonattan Vegas  
 Jimmy Walker  
 Lee Westwood  
 Bernd Wiesberger  
 Chris Wood

Four players have won the week prior to the Masters Tournament and then gone on to win in Augusta – Ralph Guldahl (Greater Greensboro Open) in 1939, Art Wall (Azalea Open) in 1959, Sandy Lyle (Greater Greensboro Open) in 1988 and Phil Mickelson (BellSouth Classic) in 2006. Additionally, Sam Snead won the 1949 Greater Greensboro Open and the Masters, the tour's next official event, with one week of separation between the two events.

Since the Shell Houston Open moved to the Golf Club of Houston in 2006, there were only two years the tournament did not directly precede the Masters Tournament (in 2013 and 2006). Here's a look at how Shell Houston Open winners have fared the next week at Augusta.

Year	SHO winner	Masters Finish	Year	SHO winner	Masters Finish
2016	Jim Herman	MC	2010	Anthony Kim	3
2015	J.B. Holmes	MC	2009	Paul Casey	T20
2014	Matt Jones	MC	2008	Johnson Wagner	T36
2012	Hunter Mahan	T12	2007	Adam Scott	T27
2011	Phil Mickelson	T27			

Six of the last 11 Masters champions played the week before their wins: Jordan Spieth (2015), Charl Schwartzel (2011), Phil Mickelson (2010 and 2006), Angel Cabrera (2009) and Trevor Immelman (2008).

There are four former Masters champions in the 2017 Shell Houston Open field: Phil Mickelson (3), Angel Cabrera (1), Jordan Spieth (1) and Adam Scott (1).

### **How the 2016 Shell Houston Open was won**

- After holding a share of the 54-hole lead, Jim Herman made five birdies and one bogey in the final round to post a 4-under 68 and win his first career PGA TOUR title in his 106<sup>th</sup> TOUR start. With the win, he became the first player since Matt Jones in 2014 to play his way into the Masters via the Shell Houston Open.
- At the age of 38 years, 4 months, 29 days, Herman became the oldest first-time winner on TOUR since Alex Cejka won the 2015 Puerto Rico Open at the age of 44.

### **A glance at the field**

- Four of the top-10 in the Official World Golf Ranking: Henrik Stenson (5), Jordan Spieth (6), Adam Scott (7) and Rickie Fowler (9). Patrick Reed (12), Justin Rose (13), Jon Rahm (14) and Phil Mickelson (19) are also in the field.
- Fifteen of the top 30 in the FedExCup standings including No. 4 Jon Rahm and No. 7 Jordan Spieth.
- D.A. Points, the 2013 Shell Houston Open champion, captured last week's Puerto Rico Open. He is one of 10 past Shell Houston Open winners in the field: Jim Herman (2016), J.B. Holmes (2015), Matt Jones (2014), Points (2013), Hunter Mahan (2012), Phil Mickelson (2011), Johnson Wagner (2008), Adam Scott (2007), Stuart Appleby (2006, 1999) and Robert Allenby (2000).

### **Player notes**

#### **Jon Rahm**

- Jon Rahm moved to No. 4 in the FedExCup standings with a runner-up finish to Dustin Johnson at last week's WGC-Dell Technologies Match Play.
- The 22-year-old won the Farmers Insurance Open earlier this year.
- Rahm will make his tournament debut in Houston ahead of his first Masters appearance.

#### **Henrik Stenson**

- The 2017 Shell Houston Open runner-up will make his sixth start at the Golf Club of Houston: 2016/2, 2014/T54, 2013/T2, 2012/T21 and 2009/T3.
- Has seven top-10s in his last nine starts worldwide, including three runner-ups.

#### **Jordan Spieth**

- The nine-time PGA TOUR winner will make his fifth start in the Shell Houston Open where his best finish was a playoff loss in 2015. The Texas native has one victory in his home state, the 2016 DEAN & DELUCA Invitational at Colonial Country Club in Fort Worth.
- Has three top-10s and one win (AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am) this season.

#### **Adam Scott**

- The 2007 Shell Houston Open winner will make his first start in Houston since 2010. In six previous starts, he has three top-25s: 2010/T14, 2007/Won and 2002/T6.
- Best finish in five starts this season is a T10 at the CIMB Classic.

### **Rickie Fowler**

- Has top-10s in two of his last three starts in the Shell Houston Open (2014/6 and 2016/T10). This year will mark his sixth start.
- In six starts this season, has three top-10s including his fourth career PGA TOUR win at The Honda Classic.

### **Justin Rose**

- After missing the Shell Houston Open in 2016, the Olympic Gold Medalist will make his fifth start in the Shell Houston Open where a T14 in 2010 is his best result.
- Has three top-10s in six starts on TOUR this season, highlighted by a runner-up at the Sony Open in Hawaii.

### **Patrick Reed**

- The Spring, Texas resident will make his fourth start in the Shell Houston Open. Finished T10 in 2016.
- Has one top-10 in 10 starts this season.

### **Phil Mickelson**

- The World Golf Hall of Fame Member will make his 13<sup>th</sup> Shell Houston Open start and 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive. In addition to his 2011 win, Mickelson tied for fourth in 2012 and has finished inside the top 20 ever since (2013/T16, 2014/T12, 2015/T17, 2016/T13).
- Among his 42 TOUR wins, four are from the state of Texas (1996 AT&T Byron Nelson, 2000 and 2008 DEAN & DELUCA Invitational and 2011 Shell Houston Open).
- In eight starts this season, Mickelson has three top-10s (Safeway Open/T8. WGC-Mexico Championship/T7, WGC-Dell Technologies Match Play/T5).

### **Tournament notes**

- The Shell Houston Open has had 23 playoffs—the most for any non-major on the PGA TOUR (U.S. Open/32). Four of the last eight champions have been decided by extra holes (J.B. Holmes/2015, Matt Jones/2014, Anthony Kim/2010 and Paul Casey/2009).
- Tournament Record: 266 – Vijay Singh (2002), Curtis Strange (1980) and Lee Trevino (1980)
- Current Course Record: 63 – Scott Piercy (2015), Jimmy Walker (2011), Phil Mickelson (2011), Adam Scott (2008) and Johnson Wagner (2008)
- The tournament's largest come-from-behind win was seven shots by Mike Sullivan (1989) and Payne Stewart (1995).
- Vijay Singh is the only player to successfully defend a title at the Shell Houston Open (2004-05). Singh also won the event in 2002, one of only two players to have three wins at the Shell Houston Open (Curtis Strange/1980, 1986, 1988).
- Nine players have won the Shell Houston Open multiple times: Curtis Strange (1980, 1986, 1988), Vijay Singh (2002, 2004, 2005), Cary Middlecoff (1950, 1953), Jack Burke Jr. (1952, 1959), Mike Souchak (1955, 1964), Bobby Nichols (1962, 1965), Arnold Palmer (1957, 1966), Bruce Crampton (1973, 1975) and Stuart Appleby (1999, 2006).

### **Charity**

Since 1992, the Shell Houston Open and Houston Golf Association have raised more than \$62 million for local charitable causes.