



2017 Shell Houston Open
(The 21st of 43 events in the PGA TOUR Season)

Humble, TX **March 30 - April 2, 2017**
Golf Club of Houston (Tournament Course)

Purse: \$7,000,000 (\$1,260,000 to the winner)
Par/Yards: 36-36—72/7,441

First-Round Notes – Thursday, March 30, 2017

Weather: Mostly sunny with a high of 80. Wind WNW 8-16 mph.

First-Round Leaderboard

Rickie Fowler	64 (-8)
Sung Kang	65 (-7)
Stewart Cink	66 (-6)
Jhonattan Vegas	66 (-6)
Kyle Stanley	66 (-6)

Rickie Fowler made eight birdies, his most in any round this season, against no bogeys to open the Shell Houston Open with an 8-under 64 and one-shot lead. Fowler birdied three of the four par 3s at the Golf Club of Houston, including his closing hole (No. 9) after his 232-yard tee shot left a 5'2" putt for birdie.

Seven of Fowler's eight birdies were made from 10 feet or less. Fowler is 100% putting from inside 10 feet.

Today's 64 marks Fowler's best start this season and his lowest opening round, in relation to par, on the PGA TOUR. His previous-low opening round was a 7-under 63 at the 2011 DEAN & DELUCA Invitational.

Fowler's 64 is his lowest score (by four shots) in 21 rounds at the Shell Houston Open and just one shy of the course record at the Tournament Course. Today's round also marked his third bogey-free round at the Golf Club of Houston.

Fowler is making his sixth start at the Shell Houston Open where he owns two top-10s: 2014/6th and 2017/T10.

Fowler, who has made the cut in every appearance in the Shell Houston Open, has struggled on the weekend. In five previous starts, Fowler boasts a 69.8 scoring average in the first two rounds compared to a 73.4 average on the weekend.

Fowler First 2 Rounds vs. Last 2 Rounds		
Stat	First 2	Last 2
Rounds Par or Better	10	4
Birdies or Better	45	33
Bogeys or Worse	18	28
Score to Par	-22	+14
Scoring Average	69.8	73.4

Fowler ranks first in Scrambling and Sand Saves this season. In round one, he was 1/1 in Sand Saves and 2/2 in Scrambling.

In six starts on the PGA TOUR this season, Fowler has three top-10s including his fourth career PGA TOUR win at The Honda Classic. He is currently 10th in the FedExCup standings

This marks Fowler's third first-round lead on TOUR and the first time he's held the solo-lead after 18 holes. On the two previous occasions, he was T1 at the 2010 Memorial Tournament and T1 at the 2016 Waste Management Phoenix Open, both events where he finished as the lone runner-up.

In his only multiple-win season, Fowler won THE PLAYERS Championship and Dell Technologies Championship in 2015.

First-Round Lead Statistics

Since 2000, five first-round leaders of the Shell Houston Open have parlayed that position into a win: D.A. Points (2013), Johnson Wagner (2008), Stuart Appleby (2006), Vijay Singh (2005) and Fred Couples (2003).

Only four of 19 first-round leaders/co-leaders have gone on to win so far this season (stroke-play events). The last to do so was Justin Thomas at the Sony Open in Hawaii.

After round one last year, eventual-champion Jim Herman was five shots back. Charley Hoffman led by one after an opening 8-under 64.

Sung Kang

Sung Kang played his first 17 holes without a bogey before missing a five-foot putt for par that would have tied Rickie Fowler at 8-under.

Kang hit 12 of 14 fairways and only missed three greens in the first round.

This marks Kang's 15th start of the season where a T12 at the Waste Management Phoenix Open is his best finish. He is coming off a T49 in the Puerto Rico Open.

Kang is making his third start in the Shell Houston Open: 2012/MC and 2016/69th.

Kang's low round on the PGA TOUR is a 60, setting the course record at Monterey Peninsula CC during the second round of the 2016 AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am.

After two top-10s and four top-25s in the 2015-16 season, Kang advanced to the FedExCup Playoffs for the first time in his career. Before Kang ended his season at No. 96 in the standings with a missed cut at the Dell Technologies Championship, he closed with a course-record 64 at Bethpage Black during THE NORTHERN TRUST, the first event of the Playoffs.

Phil Mickelson

Making his 13th start in the Shell Houston Open, Phil Mickelson opened with an even-par 72. Mickelson has the second-most birdies and most rounds under par at the Shell Houston Open since 2006,

Most Birdies at SHO since 2006	
Player	# of Birdies
Charley Hoffman	168
Phil Mickelson	165
Padraig Harrington	141
Hunter Mahan	139

Most Rounds Under Par at SHO since 2006	
Player	# of rounds
Phil Mickelson	27
Charley Hoffman	25
Hunter Mahan	24

Mickelson is one of four former Masters champions in the field along with Angel Cabrera, Jordan Spieth and Adam Scott.

Additional player notes

Stewart Cink carded a bogey-free 6-under 66 in his seventh start at the Shell Houston Open. In six previous starts, his best finish is a T6 in 2013. A six-time PGA TOUR winner, Cink is in search of his first win since the 2009 Open Championship.

University of Texas alum and Houston resident Jhonattan Vegas posted a bogey-free 66 for his low score in 21 rounds in the Shell Houston Open.

Vaughn Taylor, the 2010 Shell Houston Open runner-up, made five birdied against no bogeys on his inward nine to post a 5-under 67. The Augusta, Ga. native is not in the field at next week's Masters Tournament. This week's Shell Houston Open winner receives, if not previously eligible, the last "win and you're in" invitation to the Masters Tournament.

In his first start since 2010, 2007 Shell Houston Open winner Adam Scott posted a bogey-free 4-under 68. En route to his win in 2007, he opened with a 69.

Justin Rose made five birdies in a row (Nos. 9-13) en route to a 5-under 67, his lowest opening round in five starts in the Shell Houston Open.

Miscellaneous Notes

There are 29 players in this week's Shell Houston Open scheduled to compete in next week's Masters Tournament.

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

Four of the top-10 in the Official World Golf Ranking are in the field: No. 5 Henrik Stenson (74), No. 6 Jordan Spieth (69), No. 7 Adam Scott (68) and No. 9 Rickie Fowler (64).

There are 10 former Shell Houston Open winners in the field:

	R1 Score
Jim Herman (2016)	74
J.B. Holmes (2015)	73
Matt Jones (2014)	70
D.A. Points (2013)	68
Hunter Mahan (2012)	72
Phil Mickelson (2011)	72
Johnson Wagner (2008)	69
Adam Scott (2007)	68
Stuart Appleby (2006, 1999)	79
Robert Allenby (2000)	77

Free skin cancer screenings, courtesy of cancer prevention specialists from The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, will be available to the general public for the first time at the Shell Houston Open on Saturday, April 1, from noon to 4 p.m.

Bryson DeChambeau has teamed up with the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) to lead a special NKF Birdie Challenge during the month of April, the National Donate Life Month. DeChambeau's father Jon, who has battled diabetes for 27 years, recently received a new kidney on March 8, 2017. DeChambeau will donate \$250 per birdie and \$500 per eagle on the PGA TOUR during April. Through the first round of the Shell Houston Open, DeChambeau has made four birdies.

Bogey-free rounds:

R1: Aaron Baddeley (68), Stewart Cink (66), Rickie Fowler (64), Robert Garrigus (68), Tom Hoge (67), Luke List (68), Bryce Molder (68), Adam Scott (68), Jhonattan Vegas (66).

Early Scoring Average: 71.39

Late Scoring Average: 71.13

Scoring Averages:

	Front 9	Back 9	Total	Cumulative
R1	36.063	35.194	71.257	

The most difficult hole in round one was the par-4 18th (4.1389), with the easiest being the par-5 eighth (4.611).