



CHAMPIONS

2017 MISSISSIPPI GOLF RESORT CLASSIC ADVANCE MEDIA INFORMATION

Contact: Dave Senko; Senior Manager, Communications

904-728-1307 (Cell)
daves@pgatourhq.com

Dates: March 27-April 2, 2017

Course: Fallen Oak, Biloxi, Mississippi

Par/Yards: 36-36-72/7,151

Year Opened: 2006 (Tom Fazio)

Field: 78 professionals **Format:** 54-hole stroke-play event with no cut.

Purse: \$1,600,000; **Winner's Share:** \$240,000

Television: Golf Channel -- Friday 8:30-10:30 p.m. (tape delayed), Saturday & Sunday 2:00-4:00 p.m. (Live).
All times are local.

2016 Champion: Miguel Angel Jimenez defeated Scott Dunlap by two strokes.

2016...A Look Back: Miguel Angel Jimenez closed with an 8-under 64 to win by two strokes over Scott Dunlap. Dunlap, the 36-hole leader, was two in front of Jerry Smith and three better than Jimenez at the start of Sunday's play. However, thanks to a bogey-free round that included four straight birdies from holes Nos. 10-13, the 52-year-old Spaniard took control. Jimenez started his decisive back-nine surge with a 55-foot putt executed from the fringe of No. 10. Jimenez's bogey-free, final-round, 8-under-par 64 was the lowest final round in tournament history. In his final 30 holes, he played bogey-free and led all players with 17 birdies.

The 2017 Schedule: The 8th annual Mississippi Golf Resort Classic is the fifth of 26 official events in 2017, a season that concludes with the Charles Schwab Cup Championship, November 6-12, at the Phoenix Country Club in Phoenix, Arizona. The course hosted the Waste Management Phoenix Open for several years. The PGA TOUR Champions primary purpose is to provide significant competitive and earnings opportunities for players age 50 and older, to protect the integrity of the game and to help grow the reach of the game in the U.S. and around the world.

About PGA TOUR Champions: PGA TOUR Champions is a membership organization of golf's most recognizable and accomplished players, age 50 and older, including 32 members of the World Golf Hall of Fame. The Tour's mission is to provide financial opportunities for its players, entertain and inspire its fans, deliver substantial value to its partners, create outlets for volunteers to give back and generate significant charitable and economic impact in tournament communities. In 2017, the PGA TOUR Champions schedule includes 26 tournaments in 18 states, Japan, Wales and Canada, with purses totaling more than \$55 million. The Charles Schwab Cup, which includes the Regular Season and the Charles Schwab Cup Playoffs, is used to determine the season-long champion. All events are televised in the United States, with most receiving complete coverage on Golf Channel, the exclusive cable-television partner of PGA TOUR Champions. Internationally, telecasts air live, tape-delayed or in a highlights-package format in excess of 206 countries and territories, reaching more than 145 million households. The PGA TOUR's web site is PGATOUR.COM, the No. 1 site in golf, and the organization is headquartered in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla. Follow PGA TOUR Champions at facebook.com/PGATOURChampions, on Twitter @ChampionsTour and on Instagram @pgatourchampions.

About the Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic: The Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic is uniquely funded by a group of consortium partners, who see this event as an ideal way to promote the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The 2017 major contributing partners are: Mississippi Power, C Spire, IP Resort & Spa, F.E.B. Distributing, Hard Rock Biloxi, Harrah's Gulf Coast, Hancock Bank, Coca-Cola and Beau Rivage Hotel & Resort-Fallen Oak. The tournament is administered through the MGRC Foundation, Inc. whose mission is to promote tourism on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

History of the Event: The Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic is currently in its eighth year. Its list of former champions includes: **David Eger** (2010), **Tom Lehman** (2011), **Fred Couples** (2012), **Michael Allen** (2013), **Jeff Maggert** (2014), **David Frost** (2015) and **Miguel Angel Jimenez** (2016). Last year, Jimenez became the second consecutive international player to win the event.

The 2017 Charles Schwab Cup Playoffs: In 2016, Bernhard Langer won the inaugural Charles Schwab Cup Playoffs and won the Charles Schwab Cup for the third year in a row, and fourth time overall. This year's three-tournament playoff series begins in Richmond, Virginia, before heading west to Thousand Oaks, California, and concluding in Phoenix.

- October 16-22 | Dominion Charity Classic (The Country Club of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia)
- October 23-29 | PowerShares QQQ Championship (Sherwood Country Club, Thousand Oaks, California)
- November 6-12 | Charles Schwab Cup Championship (Phoenix Country Club, Phoenix, Arizona)

At the start of the playoffs, each player's regular-season money total will become the equivalent number of points (e.g. \$330,000 equals 330,000 points). During the first two playoff events, each dollar earned is worth two points, and those points will be added to a player's regular-season point total. After the Dominion Charity Classic, the top 54 players will advance, and after the PowerShares QQQ Championship, the top 36 players will qualify for the season-ending Charles Schwab Cup Championship.

Points will be reset for the Charles Schwab Cup Championship, similar to the reset in the FedExCup Playoffs before the TOUR Championship. Any of the top-five players will win the Charles Schwab Cup with a victory in the season finale, and all 36 players are mathematically capable of winning the Charles Schwab Cup, depending on his performance and the results of the rest of the field.

MISSISSIPPI GULF RESORT CLASSIC STORYLINES...

Steve Stricker is Back for Round Two: Two weeks after making his PGA TOUR Champions debut at the Tucson Conquistadores Classic, Steve Stricker, a 12-time winner on the PGA TOUR and the captain of the 2016 United States Presidents Cup team, will make his second start on PGA TOUR Champions. The Madison, Wisconsin resident finished second, one stroke behind Tom Lehman in his debut. After turning 50 on February 23rd he joined fellow Wisconsin resident Jerry Kelly as one of the newest members of the Tour. Stricker has a history in the state of Mississippi. He played in the 1991 Ben Hogan Gulf Coast Classic at Windance CC in Gulfport an event won by Tom Lehman, missing the cut there as a 24-year old. He also competed in a pair of Sanderson Farms Championships in Madison where he missed the cut in 2004 and finished T17 the following year.

So Far in 2017...Oldies Rule: In the 38-year history of PGA TOUR Champions, players between the ages of 50-55 have claimed 85 percent of the nearly 1,100 events staged on Tour. However, results in 2017 have produced a far different number with three of the four winners aged 57 or older. Fred Couples is the "youngster" of that trio at age 57, having won the recent Chubb Classic. Fifty-nine year-old Bernhard Langer won the year's first event in Hawaii (Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai), while 58-year-old Tom Lehman won the Tour's most recent event in Tucson (Tucson Conquistadores Classic). A year ago, seven of the 26 events were won by players 57 or older led by 62-year-old Jay Haas' victory at the Toshiba Classic.

Toms, Olazabal and Daly Headline New Faces in Field: A trio of former PGA TOUR winners are among the dozen new faces set to compete at the event. LSU product David Toms was a 13-time winner on Tour, including the 2001 PGA Championship. Jose Maria Olazabal, is a two-time Masters champion (2004, 2009), while John Daly is a two-time major championship winner – 1991 PGA Championship and 1995 The Open

Championship. In addition to that trio, there are other former PGA TOUR winners in the field, including Jerry Kelly, Billy Mayfair and Michael Bradley. Former European Tour Ryder Cuppers Paul Broadhurst and Phillip Price are also slated to play. Broadhurst won the 2016 Senior Open Championship at Carnoustie.

Langer Looks to Extend Record: With a record 32 consecutive sub-par rounds, World Golf Hall of Famer and defending Charles Schwab Cup winner Bernhard Langer looks to extend that string this week. Langer broke Gil Morgan's 17-year-old record of 31 when he posted a final-round 65 in Tucson. Colin Montgomerie is also on record pace in that category as well with 30 straight but is not in this week's field.

A Look at This Year's Field: Here is a rundown on the makeup of the 2017 field.

- 57 players in the field have won 310 PGA TOUR victories
- 47 players have won 232 PGA TOUR Champions titles
- 13 players have won major titles on the PGA TOUR
- 17 players have won major titles on PGA TOUR Champions
- Three members of the World Golf Hall of Fame – Tom Kite, Bernhard Langer & Larry Nelson

2017 PGA TOUR Champions – Tournament Recaps:

1. Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai: **Bernhard Langer** claimed his 30th career victory on PGA TOUR Champions after high winds forced the cancellation of the final round at Hualalai. Langer closed Friday's second round with birdies on four of his last five holes, and his 36-hole total of 15-under-par (64-65) held up as the winning score over Fred Couples (-14) and Kirk Triplett (-13). The victory came on his 33rd wedding anniversary with his wife, Vikki, who was in attendance along with two of Langer's children.

2. Allianz Championship: After hitting a 7-iron from 179 yards on the par-5 18th, **Scott McCarron** made his six-foot eagle putt to win the Allianz Championship, his third career PGA TOUR Champions victory. At one time, seven players were tied for the lead during Sunday's final round, but in the end McCarron's 17-under total was one stroke better than Carlos Franco and Kenny Perry.

3. Chubb Classic: With a birdie on No. 2 on Sunday, **Fred Couples** took his first solo lead and didn't look back. He made four more birdies in his bogey-free 67 and claimed a three-shot victory at the Chubb Classic, the 12th win of his career and first since 2014. Miguel Angel Jimenez, the 36-hole leader finished second.

4. Tucson Conquistadores Classic: Holding a two-stroke advantage over **Tom Lehman** with three holes remaining, Steve Stricker suffered a pair of critical miscues down the stretch which proved costly. Making his first start on PGA TOUR Champions, Stricker held a two-stroke advantage with three holes remaining. However, after Lehman made a 20-footer for birdie at No. 16, he three-putted for a bogey and saw his two-stroke advantage disappear. After each made birdies on No. 17, Stricker's tee shot on the final hole found water opening the door for Lehman, who would eventually two-putt for a par and the win when Stricker went on to make a bogey.

MISSISSIPPI GULF RESORTS CLASSIC NOTES...

Golf History on the Gulf Coast: In addition to the Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic on PGA TOUR Champions, both the PGA TOUR and Web.com Tour have held events before on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

- The Gulfport Open (1944-45) was a two-year stop for the players on the PGA TOUR following World War II. It was played at the Great Southern Golf Club of Gulfport, the state's oldest golf course. In 1944, Harold "Jug" McSpaden recorded one of his 17 PGA TOUR titles and the win in Mississippi was one of five victories that year. Sam Snead defeated Byron Nelson in a 19-hole playoff in 1945 after the two were tied at the end of regulation. Nelson rallied from that loss to win 18 tournaments that year, including a record-setting 11 in a row.
- It is now known as the Web.com Tour, but when it started in 1990, it was known as the Ben Hogan Tour. The Gulf Coast Classic was played at Windance Country Club in Gulfport from 1990-92. From 1993-97, on what was then known as the Nike Tour, the event was entitled the Mississippi Gulf Coast Classic and remained at Windance Country Club until it moved to Mississippi

National Golf Course in 1997. In 1999, after a year hiatus, the tournament relocated to Oaks Golf Club and was entitled the Mississippi Gulf Coast Open. Here's a complete list of the winners when the tournament was a regular stop on the Web.com Tour

Year Winner

The Gulf Coast Classic at Windance Country Club (Ben Hogan Tour)

1990: Dick Mast (-7) beat Rick Pearson in a playoff (36-hole event)

1991: Tom Lehman (-7) beat Tim Straub and John Wilson in a playoff (36-hole event)

1992: Glen Hnatiuk (-9) won by a stroke over Bruce Zabriski, Mike Donald, John Flannery (54-hole event)

The Mississippi Gulf Coast Classic at Windance Country Club (Nike Tour)

1993: Jim Furyk (-10) beat Bob Friend in a playoff (54-hole event)

1994: John Elliott (-12) beat Chris Perry in a playoff (72-hole event)

1995: Allen Doyle (-15) defeated Franklin Langham in a playoff (72-hole event)

1996: Joe Durant (-15) won by a stroke over Brett Quigley (72-hole event)

The Mississippi Gulf Coast Classic at Mississippi National Golf Club

1997: Jeff Brehaut (-13) won by six strokes over Tom Scherrer (72-hole event)

1998: No event

The Mississippi Gulf Coast Open at Oaks Golf Club

1999: Joel Edwards (-8) won by a stroke over John Riegger (72-hole event)

The Mississippi Gulf Coast Open at Oaks Golf Club (Buy.com Tour)

2000: Tripp Isenhour (-9) won by two strokes over John Elliott (72-hole event)

Note: Bold face indicates current or past member of PGA TOUR Champions

They've Enjoyed Success in Mississippi: Several players in this year's field have won PGA TOUR events in the state, including **Brian Henninger** (1994, '99) and **Fred Funk** (1998, '04), who each claimed a win in the Deposit Guaranty Golf Classic and the Southern Farm Bureau Classic which was staged in Madison, Mississippi. Others winners at that venue include **Gene Sauers** (1990), **Steve Lowery** (2000), **John Huston** (2003), **Willie Wood** (1996) and **Woody Austin** (2013). In addition, when the PGA TOUR had its satellite tour event in Mississippi (Magnolia Classic), current PGA TOUR Champions members **Craig Stadler** (1978), **Russ Cochran** (1983) and **Jim Gallagher, Jr.** (1985) all posted wins.

How the Leaders Have Fared: In the brief history of the Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic, players leading or tied for the lead after 36 holes have won the tournament three times—**David Eger**, at the inaugural event in 2010, **Tom Lehman** (2011) and **Fred Couples** (2012). Couples is the only first-round leader to have ever won. Nobody has ever won this event being worse than T8 after Saturday, the position **Michael Allen** was in in 2013 after the first 36 holes. All seven of the previous winners of this event were positioned among the top five in the standings after the first round.

Oldest/Youngest Winners: **David Eger** captured the inaugural Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic event in 2010, at 58 years, 1 month, 15 days, making him still the oldest winner in the history of the tournament. **Jeff Maggert's** victory in 2014 at 50 years, 1 month, 3 days surpassed **Tom Lehman's** win in 2011 at 52 years, 27 days, as the tournament's youngest winner ever. Maggert's win was also significant since he became the 17th player in PGA TOUR annals to win in his debut on Tour.

Field Has International Flavor: This year's Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic field includes players representing 11 different countries. In addition to the U.S., players hail from Mexico, Canada, Sweden, Wales, Barbados, Paraguay, Germany, England, South Africa and Spain.

Fallen Oak is One of the Toughest: Fallen Oak has consistently been one of the more difficult tests on PGA TOUR Champions. It was the fifth hardest a year ago, while ranking as the fourth-hardest course in 2015. It has ranked in the top 10 for difficulty in all but one year (2011/14th). A year ago, three of the holes were ranked among the top 50 for difficulty with No. 10 the hardest of the three, ranking 37th overall on Tour. Others in the top 50 were No. 17 (47th) and No. 4 (40th). The easiest hole last year was No. 15.

He's Had Success at Fallen Oak: One player who has enjoyed a great deal of success at Fallen Oak is **Michael Allen**. The 2013 champion, Allen finished second in 2012 and owns four other top-15 finishes. He is the all-time leading money winner in this event with \$506,400.

Stats of the Champions: Here is how the seven past champions have played Fallen Oak during the Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic:

Year	Winner	Score	Eagles	Birdies	Pars	Bogeys	Dbl. Bogey	Par 3s	Par 4s	Par 5s	Front	Back
2010	Eger	-11	0	17	31	6	0	-3	-2	-6	-3	-8
2011	Lehman	-16	0	19	32	3	0	-3	-6	-7	-4	-12
2012	Couples	-14	0	21	26	7	0	-2	-5	-7	-7	-7
2013	Allen	-11	0	16	33	5	0	+1	-7	-5	-8	-3
2014	Maggert	-11	0	18	29	7	0	+1	-6	-6	-4	-7
2015	Frost	-10	0	17	31	5	1	-+1	-4	-7	-7	-3
2016	Jimenez	-14	0	17	34	3	0	-3	-3	-8	-8	-6

How the Course Has Played: Below is a round-by-round rundown of the first seven years of the event. The number next to the overall average is where it ranked on Tour that particular year (**Bold figures** show lowest overall average, while those **bold/underlined** indicate the highest).

Year	First Round	Second Round	Third Round	Overall Average/Rank
2010	72.390	73.027	73.340	72.881 (6 th)
2011	72.456	69.687	72.000	71.483 (14th)
2012	71.056	72.395	<u>73.457</u>	72.453 (10 th)
2013	73.617	70.667	73.025	72.432 (9 th)
2014	72.700	71.650	72.600	72.317 (8 th)
2015	74.038	73.103	73.260	73.472 (4th)
2016	74.235	72.282	72.551	73.212 (5 th)