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## Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by Mastercard pre-tournament notes

**Dates:** March 12-18, 2018

**Location:** Bay Hill Club and Lodge (par 72; 7,419 yards)

**Field size:** 120

**2017 champion:** Marc Leishman

**Purse:** \$8.9 million (\$1,602,000 to winner); **FedExCup:** 500 points to the winner

**Format:** 72-hole stroke play

**Website:** arnoldpalmerinvitational.com **Facebook:** arnoldpalmerinvitational **Twitter:** @APIInv **Instagram:** APIInv

### Pre-Tournament Media Availability/Important Events

#### **Tuesday, March 13**

4:00 p.m. – Arnie’s March Against Childhood Cancer (The Landing, adjacent to the ninth fairway)

5:00 p.m. – Tiger Woods

5:30 p.m. – Mastercard event (availability with Annika Sorenstam, Essence Carson, Julius Thomas)

#### **Wednesday, March 14**

10:00 a.m. – Sam Saunders (Arnold Palmer Invitational press conference; media center)

11:00 a.m. – Opening Ceremony (driving range)

11:30 a.m. – Rickie Fowler (driving range; as soon as opening ceremony concludes)

Following morning Pro-Am – Marc Leishman (media center)

Following morning Pro-am – Jason Day (media center)

### Celebrating 40 years at Bay Hill Club and Lodge

The 2018 Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by Mastercard will mark the 40<sup>th</sup> year at the Bay Hill Club and Lodge. Prior to arriving at Bay Hill, the tournament—then known as the Florida Citrus Open—was held at Rio Pinar CC from 1966-78. The name of the event was changed in 2007 from the Bay Hill Invitational to the Arnold Palmer Invitational, in honor of longtime host Arnold Palmer.

### About Arnold Palmer (excerpts from pgatour.com)

Arnold Palmer, whose magnetic personality and bold style of play combined to make him one of golf’s greatest players, the sport’s most revered figure and the most influential athlete of his generation, died September 25, 2016 of complications due to a heart condition with his two daughters and wife, Kit, at his side. He was 87.

The winner of 62 career PGA TOUR titles, including seven major championships, Mr. Palmer rose from his modest Western Pennsylvania roots to become a towering figure with appeal that transformed and transcended the sport of golf.

Mr. Palmer’s first PGA TOUR victory came at the Canadian Open in 1955. Just as he began to collect dramatic victories, America’s fascination with television was exploding. TV sets, which numbered only 3.8 million in 1950, were in almost 46 million U.S. homes by 1960. Arnold Palmer’s go-for-broke style made him the ideal leading man for the new medium. He leapt off the small screen with a winning smile, affable manner and bare-knuckled athleticism. He produced drama. A very large audience, including his competitors, noticed. “When he hits the ball, the earth shakes,” said Hall of Famer Gene Littler.

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The temblors reached everywhere, and Arnold Palmer became a hit with Hollywood's biggest stars and show business icons, like John Wayne, Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra. He was friendly with the 10 U.S. Presidents from Dwight D. Eisenhower to George W. Bush, and played golf with six of them – Eisenhower, George H.W. Bush, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, and Bill Clinton. He was the only golfer to receive both the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Congressional Gold Medal.

Mr. Palmer reigned over golf as the game's No. 1 player and influencer in the 1960s and '70s. Until recently, he regularly oversaw the operations of his far-flung business empire and many charitable interests, hosting the Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by Mastercard at his Bay Hill Club and Lodge in Orlando, Florida.

In the more than 40 years since his last PGA TOUR victory at the 1973 Bob Hope Desert Classic, Mr. Palmer actively oversaw his companies – which included the Arnold Palmer Design Company, Arnold Palmer Enterprises, Arnold Palmer Motors and Arnold Palmer Golf Tournament Services. Even as his playing skills waned, Mr. Palmer remained relevant and visible in golf, transitioning to the Ryder Cup captaincy in 1975, Presidents Cup captaincy in 1996, elder statesman and global business icon.

Mr. Palmer funded numerous charity ventures during his lifetime and founded the Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children and the Winnie Palmer Hospital for Women & Babies in Orlando, both of which have been listed among the nation's top hospitals.

#### **The Arnold Palmer Invitational and the FedExCup**

The Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by Mastercard is the 20<sup>th</sup> event in the PGA TOUR's wraparound schedule that bridges two years with 48 official events (which includes the four FedExCup Playoffs events). Entering the Arnold Palmer Invitational, Justin Thomas has led the FedExCup standings for the past three weeks, with the reigning FedExCup champion holding a 259-point lead over Patton Kizzire.

The winner of the Arnold Palmer Invitational has advanced to the season-ending TOUR Championship seven of 11 years during the FedExCup era: Vijay Singh (2007), Tiger Woods (2009, 2012, 2013), Ernie Els (2010), Jason Day (2016) and Marc Leishman (2017). In 2009, Tiger Woods won at Bay Hill en route to winning the FedExCup title.

The field this week is well represented by past FedExCup champions, including Tiger Woods (2007, 2009), Vijay Singh (2008), Brandt Snedeker (2012), Henrik Stenson (2013), Billy Horschel (2014) and Rory McIlroy (2016).

#### **2017 Arnold Palmer Invitational Leaderboard**

Marc Leishman	71-66-71-69—277 (-11)
Kevin Kisner	70-67-68-73—278 (-10)
Charley Hoffman	68-66-71-73—278 (-10)
Rory McIlroy	74-71-65-69—279 (-9)
Tyrrell Hatton	72-69-67-71—279 (-9)

#### **How Marc Leishman won the 2017 Arnold Palmer Invitational**

Starting the final round of the 2017 Arnold Palmer Invitational three shots off the lead, Marc Leishman made a 51'5" putt for eagle on Arnold Palmer's favorite hole, the par-5 No. 16, to take a one-shot lead heading to No. 17. With pars on his last two holes, he claimed the clubhouse lead at 11-under 277. When Kevin Kisner was unable to birdie the 18<sup>th</sup> hole, Leishman was declared champion of the 2017 Arnold Palmer Invitational and received the tournament's red alpaca cardigan in honor of Mr. Palmer.

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**More on Marc Leishman**

- Victory was the second straight at Bay Hill by an Australian (Jason Day/2016).
- Win at Bay Hill was his second victory on the PGA TOUR and came at the age of 33 years, 4 months and 23 days in his 207<sup>th</sup> start. His maiden PGA TOUR title came at the 2012 Travelers Championship. He has since added a third win at the 2017 BMW Championship.
- Will attempt to join Matt Every (2014-15), Tiger Woods (2000-03, 2008-09, 2012-13) and Loren Roberts (1994-95) as back-to-back winners at Bay Hill.
- Seeking to join the following multiple Arnold Palmer Invitational winners: Tiger Woods (8), Tom Kite (2), Loren Roberts (2), Ernie Els (2), Matt Every (2).
- Leishman became just the sixth international player to win the Arnold Palmer Invitational, and third Australian, joining Rod Pampling (2006) and Jason Day (2016). Other international winners include South African Ernie Els (1998 and 2010), Vijay Singh of Fiji (2007) and Scotland's Martin Laird (2011).
- Won in his eighth start at the Arnold Palmer Invitational, with a T3 in 2011 his only other top-10 finish.

**A glance at the field**

- 18 of the top 30 players in the current FedExCup standings, led by Patton Kizzire (No. 2), Pat Perez (No. 9), Jason Day (No. 10), Brian Harman (No. 14), Justin Rose (No. 15), Austin Cook (No. 16), Luke List (No. 17), Bubba Watson (No. 18), Chesson Hadley (No. 19) and Alex Noren (No. 20).
- 21 of the top 50 in the Official World Golf Ranking, led by Justin Rose (No. 5), Hideki Matsuyama (No. 6), Rickie Fowler (No. 7), Jason Day (No. 9), Tommy Fleetwood (No. 10) and Rory McIlroy (No. 12).
- Past FedExCup champions: Tiger Woods (2007, 2009), Vijay Singh (2008), Brandt Snedeker (2012), Henrik Stenson (2013), Billy Horschel (2014), Rory McIlroy (2016).
- Past Arnold Palmer Invitational champions in the field: Robert Gamez (1990), Paul Goydos (1996), Ernie Els (1998, 2010), Tim Herron (1999), Tiger Woods (2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013), Vijay Singh (2007), Martin Laird (2011), Matt Every (2014, 2015), Jason Day (2016), Marc Leishman (2017).

**Tiger Woods makes return to the Arnold Palmer Invitational**

Tiger Woods returns to Bay Hill for the first time since winning his eighth Arnold Palmer Invitational in 2013. Seeking his 80<sup>th</sup> PGA TOUR victory, here's a look at his record in 17 prior starts at the event:

Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by Mastercard							
<a href="#">2013</a>	1	69	70	66	70	275	-13
<a href="#">2012</a>	1	69	65	71	70	275	-13
<a href="#">2011</a>	T24	73	68	74	72	287	-1
<a href="#">2009</a>	1	68	69	71	67	275	-5
<a href="#">2008</a>	1	70	68	66	66	270	-10
<a href="#">2007</a>	T22	64	73	70	76	283	+3
<a href="#">2006</a>	T20	70	71	71	72	284	-4
<a href="#">2005</a>	T23	71	70	74	72	287	-1
<a href="#">2004</a>	T46	67	74	74	73	288	E
<a href="#">2003</a>	1	70	65	66	68	269	-19
<a href="#">2002</a>	1	67	65	74	69	275	-13
<a href="#">2001</a>	1	71	67	66	69	273	-15
<a href="#">2000</a>	1	69	64	67	70	270	-18

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1999	T56	74	72	72	72	290	+2
1998	T13	64	70	73	77	284	-4
1997	T9	68	71	71	68	278	-10
1994	CUT	80	77			157	

**Collin Morikawa becomes third recipient of the Arnold Palmer Cup exemption**

The Arnold Palmer Cup is a Ryder Cup-style tournament featuring the top male university/college golfers matching the United States against Europe. The event began at the Bay Hill Club & Lodge, Orlando in 1997 and has been staged each year alternately in Europe and the USA. Selection of the Arnold Palmer Cup representative is determined by a vote of the 20 Arnold Palmer Cup participants prior to the competition. The players select a member of each team (excluding themselves) who they think best represents the "Arnold Palmer Legacy," that is, the values that Arnold Palmer exhibited during his legendary career.

The first Arnold Palmer Cup API Exemption was awarded to Maverick McNealy of Stanford in 2016, followed by Matthias Schwab of Vanderbilt/Austria in 2017. This year's recipient will be Collin Morikawa of the University of California.

**Additional Player Notes**

- **Jason Day** – 2016 API champion will make his eighth start at the event, with his victory in 2016 his only top-10 finish at Bay Hill. Won that year to become just the fourth wire-to-wire winner (no ties) of the event, joining Mike Nicolette (1983), Paul Azinger (1988) and Fred Couples (1992).
- **Ernie Els** – Will tee it up at the Arnold Palmer Invitational for the 23<sup>rd</sup> time this week. The two-time API champion (1998, 2010) most recently missed the cut in 2017.
- **Matt Every** – In 2015, joined Tiger Woods and Loren Roberts (1994-95) as the only players to win in back-to-back years at Bay Hill. Roberts, like Every, also posted his first two career victories at the Arnold Palmer Invitational. He will attempt in 2018 to become the first player to post his first three PGA TOUR victories at the same event since Leonard Gallett (1929, 1933, 1934 Wisconsin PGA).
- **Tommy Fleetwood** – Finished T10 in 2017 for his only start at the Arnold Palmer Invitational.
- **Rickie Fowler** – Will be making his seventh start at Bay Hill (T50-2010, T30-2011, T3-2013, MC-2014, T29-2015, 12-2017).
- **Zach Johnson** – Making his 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive appearance this week at the Arnold Palmer Invitational. Here's a look at his top-10 finishes at Bay Hill: 2004 (T6), 2005 (T8), 2009 (3), 2015 (T9) and 2016 (5). Johnson has missed the cut at Bay Hill just once, in 2010.
- **Davis Love III** – Three-time runner-up at the Arnold Palmer Invitational returns to the event for the 26<sup>th</sup> time.
- **Hideki Matsuyama** – Will make his fourth start at the Arnold Palmer Invitational (T21-2015, T6-2016, T45-2017). Currently No. 56 in the FedExCup standings, has improved each year in the season-long competition (No. 28/2014, No. 16/2015, No. 13/2016, No. 8/2017).
- **Rory McIlroy** – Making fourth career Arnold Palmer Invitational start (T11-2015, T27-2016, T4-2017).
- **Justin Rose** – Owns four top-10 finishes in 12 prior starts at the Arnold Palmer Invitational (2-2013, T3-2011, T8-2006, T9-2016). Most recently, finished T13 in 2017.
- **Sam Saunders** – Arnold Palmer's grandson will make his ninth start at the event: MC (2006), T50 (2010), T30 (2011), MC (2012), T43 (2014), T29 (2015), MC (2016), MC (2017).
- **Adam Scott** – Pair of third-place finishes (2004, 2014) in nine starts at the Arnold Palmer Invitational.
- **Henrik Stenson** – Orlando resident will make 10<sup>th</sup> start at the Arnold Palmer Invitational. Missed cut last year snapped a streak of five-consecutive top-15 finishes (T3-2016, 2-2015, T5-2014, T8-2013, T15-2012).
- **Bubba Watson** – The 2018 Genesis Open champion (his 10<sup>th</sup> PGA TOUR title) returns to Bay Hill for the 11<sup>th</sup> time, with top-10 finishes in 2012 (T4) and 2008 (T8).

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### **Miscellaneous Notes**

For the fourth-consecutive season, the winner of the Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by Mastercard (along with the Memorial Tournament presented by Nationwide) will receive a three-year exemption, instead of the two-year exemption awarded at other PGA Tour events.

Five players have made the Arnold Palmer Invitational their maiden PGA TOUR win: Bob Byman (1979), Mike Nicolette (1983), Loren Roberts (1994), Paul Goydos (1996) and Matt Every (2014).

The Arnold Palmer Invitational has had six international winners: South African Ernie Els (1998 and 2010), Aussie Rod Pampling (2006), Vijay Singh of Fiji (2007), Scotland's Martin Laird (2011) and Aussies Jason Day (2016) and Marc Leishman (2017).

Tiger Woods has won eight Arnold Palmer Invitational titles. The only other players with multiple victories at the event are Tom Kite (1982, 1989), Loren Roberts (1994-95), Ernie Els (1998, 2010) and Matt Every (2014, 2015).

Largest come-from-behind victory at the Arnold Palmer Invitational: 6 shots (Tom Kite/1982 and Gary Koch/1984).

Best 18-hole score: 62 (Gary Player/R3/1976; Andy Bean/R2/1981; Greg Norman/R2/1984; Adam Scott/R1/2014).

Best 36-hole score: 130 (Andy Bean/1981; Tom Watson/1981; Adam Scott/2014).

Best 54-hole score: 197 (Andy Bean/1981).

Best 72-hole score: 264 (Payne Stewart/1987).

Low finish by a winner: 63 (Gary Koch/1984).

High finish by a winner: 75 (Martin Laird/2011).

Largest 18-hole lead: 3 (Tom Byrum/1990; Spencer Levin/2011; Adam Scott/2014).

Largest 36-hole lead: 7 (Adam Scott/2014).

Largest 54-hole lead: 6 (Mike Nicolette/1983; Fred Couples/1992; Ernie Els/1998).

Largest margin of victory: 11 (Tiger Woods/2003).

### **Charity**

The PGA TOUR and its tournaments continue a commitment to charity through the "Together, anything's possible" initiative, with the Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by Mastercard at the forefront of giving back to communities. The tournament is very proud to support Arnie's Army Charitable Foundation, which includes the Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children and Winnie Palmer Hospital for Women & Babies.

"Part of my dad's legacy was to inspire others to care about things he thought were important," said Palmer's daughter Amy Saunders, chairman of Arnie's Army Charitable Foundation. "With the help of his many friends, fans and followers, we intend to keep that light shining brightly."

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