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2018 CareerBuilder Challenge - Tournament Notes

Dates: January 15-21, 2018

Where: La Quinta, California

Courses:

Stadium Course at PGA WEST; La Quinta, California

Par/Yards: 72/7,113

Nicklaus Tournament Course at PGA WEST; La Quinta, California

Par/Yards: 72/7,159

La Quinta Country Club; La Quinta, California

Par/Yards: 72/7,060

Field: 156

2017 champion: Hudson Swafford

Purse: \$5,900,000 (\$1,056,000/winner)

FedExCup: 500 (winner)

Format: 72-hole stroke play (Rds. 1-3 are pro-am format)

Facebook: facebook.com/CareerBuilderChallenge

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The CareerBuilder Challenge and the FedExCup

The CareerBuilder Challenge enters the fifth season featuring a wraparound schedule that bridges two years with 49 events. The 2017-18 PGA TOUR Season began with eight events during the fall of 2017, each of which awarded FedExCup points. The season resumed two weeks ago at the Sentry Tournament of Champions, won by Dustin Johnson. The FedExCup Playoffs once again features four events and concludes in September with the TOUR Championship and the crowning of the FedExCup champion.

Three of the last four winners of the CareerBuilder Challenge have made it all the way to the TOUR Championship that year: Jason Dufner (2016), Bill Haas (2015), Patrick Reed (2014). Hudson Swafford, last year's CareerBuilder Challenge winner, finished 38th in the final FedExCup standings.

World Golf Hall of Fame Member Phil Mickelson returns as Tournament Ambassador

For the second straight year, the CareerBuilder Challenge welcomes World Golf Hall of Fame member Phil Mickelson as its tournament ambassador. One of the most popular players in PGA TOUR history, Mickelson has been a longtime supporter of the CareerBuilder Challenge and the Coachella Valley community, with two of his 42 career PGA TOUR wins coming here in the desert (2002, 2004). Mickelson finished T21 at last year's CareerBuilder Challenge, his 14th start in the event.

How the CareerBuilder Challenge was won in 2017

In search of his first career PGA TOUR victory, Hudson Swafford began last year's final round two strokes off the lead at 15-under 201. Following birdies at three of his last four holes (Nos. 15-17), he claimed his first career PGA TOUR victory in his 93rd career PGA TOUR start. Swafford won by a stroke over Canada's Adam Hadwin at 20-under 268, a day after Hadwin fired a 13-under 59 at La Quinta Country Club.

More on Hudson Swafford

Following his win in the Coachella Valley, Swafford would claim three additional top-10 finishes, including a sixth-place showing at the Houston Open six starts later. He made starts in the first three of four FedExCup Playoffs events, before finishing a career-best 38th in the FedExCup standings. In six starts this season, he has yet to miss a cut but has yet to crack the top 25, his best showing being T27 at the Sentry Tournament of Champions.

The field by numbers

- One FedExCup champion: Bill Haas (2011).
- John Rahm is the leading returner from last year's final FedExCup standings, having finished fifth.

- Four different 2017-18 tournament winners (five wins): Patton Kizzire (OHL Classic at Mayakoba, Sony Open in Hawaii), Brendan Steele (Safeway Open), Ryan Armour (Sanderson Farms Championship), Austin Cook (The RSM Classic).
- Twelve players with five or more PGA TOUR wins: Phil Mickelson (42), Corey Pavin (15), Zach Johnson (12), Bubba Watson (9), Brandt Snedeker (8), Geoff Ogilvy (8), Mike Weir (8), Lee Janzen (8), Mark Brooks (7), Jimmy Walker (6), Rory Sabbatini (6), Patrick Reed (5), Jason Dufner (5), John Daly (5).
- Thirteen past champions of the CareerBuilder Challenge: Corey Pavin (1987, 1991), Mark Brooks (1996), Phil Mickelson (2002, 2004), Mike Weir (2003), Chad Campbell (2006), D.J. Trahan (2008), Bill Haas (2010, 2015), Jhonattan Vegas (2011), Mark Wilson (2012), Brian Gay (2013), Patrick Reed (2014), Jason Dufner (2016) and Hudson Swafford.
- Fourteen major championship winners, led by Phil Mickelson (5).
- Sixteen of the top 30 in the current FedExCup standings, led by No. 1 Patton Kizzire.
- Of note – Mark Brooks will make his 803rd career start, believed to be most in PGA TOUR history. Brooks won the 1996 CareerBuilder Challenge and will be making his 31st start at the event.
- Making their first starts of 2018 include Phil Mickelson, Bubba Watson, Brandt Snedeker and Patrick Reed.

A closer look at the field

Jon Rahm

- The 23-year-old native of Spain has had a meteoric rise in professional golf, having finished fifth in the FedExCup last year in his first full year on the PGA TOUR. His 2016-17 season included 11 top-10 finishes in 23 starts, including his maiden TOUR win at the Farmers Insurance Open.
- This year, in two starts, best performance was a runner-up to Dustin Johnson at the Sentry Tournament of Champions.
- Former Arizona State All-American finished T34 in his inaugural start at the CareerBuilder Challenge last year.

Patton Kizzire

- With his win at last week's Sony Open in Hawaii on the sixth playoff hole over James Hahn, became the season's first two-time winner (OHL Classic at Mayakoba).
- Making his third start in the CareerBuilder Challenge (T42/2016, T50/2017)
- Making his eighth start of the 2017-18 season. In addition to two wins, finished inside the top 10 at Sanderson Farms Championship (T10) and Shriners Hospitals for Children Open (T4).
- Making his 67th start on the PGA TOUR, having collected 12 top-10 finishes.

Patrick Reed

- 2014 CareerBuilder Championship winner will return for sixth start in the event and fourth start in the 2017-18 season.
- In 2014, opened with three straight rounds of 63, en route to 72-hole tournament record of 32 birdies.
- Has posted sub-par scores in the event in 17 of 19 rounds at the CareerBuilder Challenge (74/R1/2013, 72/R4/2016).
- Since win in Palm Springs, has won a World Golf Championships event (2014 Mexico Championship), a winners-only event (2015 Sentry Tournament of Champions) and a FedExCup Playoffs event (2016 THE NORTHERN TRUST).
- Represented the United States at the Olympic Games in Rio (2016), the Presidents Cup (2015, 2017) and the Ryder Cup (2014, 2016).
- Reed and his wife, Justine, welcomed their second child, son Barrett, in December.

Jhonattan Vegas

- 2011 CareerBuilder Challenge winner will return for seventh-consecutive start.
- Enjoyed a career-best PGA TOUR season in 2016-17, where he won second TOUR title (RBC Canadian Open).
- Finished inside the top 30 in the FedExCup standings (29th) and made his first appearance at the TOUR Championship (T24).
- Finished T7 at Sentry Tournament of Champions two weeks ago.

Adam Hadwin

- In third start in last year's CareerBuilder Challenge, posted a third-round 13-under 59 at LaQuinta Country Club en route to solo-second finish.
- Five starts after 2017 CareerBuilder Challenge, claimed first career PGA TOUR title at the Valspar Championship. Later went on to qualify for the season-ending TOUR Championship.
- Member of 2017 Presidents Cup team (0-2-1).

Bubba Watson

- Nine-time PGA TOUR winner poised to make sixth start in the event.
- Two-time Masters champion (2012, 2014).
- Finished T2 in 2010 CareerBuilder Challenge.
- In third start of 2017-18 season, looking for first win since 2016 Genesis Open.

Maverick McNealy

- Former World No. 1 amateur playing on sponsor invitation in third professional start.
- Made professional debut at 2017 Safeway Open (T52). Missed cut at Shriners Hospitals for Children Open in second pro start.
- As an amateur, made eight starts on the PGA TOUR, with a best showing of T44 at 2017 John Deere Classic.
- 21-year-old Stanford University grad claimed 11 school victories, tying the record for most with Tiger Woods and Patrick Rodgers.
- Considered a career amateur after college to pursue a career in business.

Charlie Reiter

- Playing on a sponsor invite, CareerBuilder Challenge will mark second start in a professional tournament for the Palm Desert High School senior.
- In first start in a professional start, finished T65 at the 2017 Emeritus Australian Open (75-69-75-75—294/+10)
- Following high school graduation, will play golf collegiately at USC.

Charity

Since its inception, the CareerBuilder Challenge has been unwavering in its commitment to charity on a variety of levels. To date, the tournament's host organization, Desert Classic Charities, has provided more than \$60 million to the Eisenhower Medical Center and other non-profit organizations in the region.

The PGA TOUR and its tournaments generated more than \$180 million for charitable causes in 2017, surpassing last year's record amount by approximately \$14 million. This total includes donations made by tournaments on the PGA TOUR, PGA TOUR Champions, Web.com Tour, Mackenzie Tour-PGA TOUR Canada, PGA TOUR Latinoamérica and PGA TOUR-China.

The all-time total generated for charity by the PGA TOUR to date now exceeds \$2.65 billion. The TOUR surpassed \$1 billion in 2005 and \$2 billion at the beginning of 2014.

January for Jarrod



The PGA TOUR's latest fundraising effort, "January for Jarrod," is designed to help offset the significant costs Jarrod Lyle and his family face after he underwent his third bone marrow transplant for acute myeloid leukemia on December 6. The TOUR will be distributing pins for players and caddies starting at the CareerBuilder Challenge (see image) to build support for the cause.

Lyle took to Instagram last week with a positive update: *"Got the best news today since finding out Briony was pregnant both times. I found out that the transplant I had has grafted 100%. Another big step forward in my journey back to a normal life again. #happylylefamily."*

After a third leukemia recurrence in July 2017, the surgery was performed in Melbourne, Australia, about 90 minutes from his home in Torquay. There is no timetable for returning to golf, with Lyle focusing exclusively on his rehabilitation at this time.

Lyle, 36, is currently a member of the Web.com Tour, but was a PGA TOUR member on five occasions between 2007 and 2016.

To make a non-tax-deductible gift to the Lyle family, do so directly at www.youcaring.com/januaryforjarrod. All proceeds will go directly to the family to offset day-to-day living, family and medical expenses.

"A Whole New Game!"

The CareerBuilder Challenge is again poised to deliver fun and entertainment on a broader level, designed to draw upon the interests of everyone in the community, golf fan or otherwise. Off-course activities this year again include the free Friday-Saturday night concert series. On Friday, fans will be treated to a performance by one of the 80s most-celebrated rock acts, Huey Lewis and the News. On Saturday, the Goo Goo Dolls, who have toured consistently for over two decades, will be featured.

CareerBuilder's "Find Your Calling"

Once again this year, Desert Classic Charities will feature CareerBuilder's "Find Your Calling," a job-placement initiative provided to all seven Coachella Valley Boys & Girls Clubs. Representatives from CareerBuilder and the Boys & Girls Clubs will be on site Saturday of tournament week to offer insight into the initiative.

Venues for the 2018 CareerBuilder Challenge

For just the fourth time (1987, 2016, 2017), the Stadium Course at PGA WEST will be a part of this year's rotation. The three courses in this year's mix are PGA WEST (Stadium), PGA WEST (Nicklaus Private) and La Quinta Country Club.

Miscellaneous

- Johnny Miller is the only back-to-back winner of the CareerBuilder Challenge (1975-76).
- Arnold Palmer won the CareerBuilder Challenge five times. The only other players to win more than once are two-time champions Billy Casper, John Mahaffey, Johnny Miller, Corey Pavin, John Cook, Phil Mickelson and Bill Haas.