



## 2018 RBC Heritage

*(The 24<sup>th</sup> of 44 events in the PGA TOUR Season)*

Hilton Head Island, SC    April 9-15, 2018  
Harbour Town Golf Links

Purse: \$6,700,000 (\$1,206,000 to the winner)  
Par/Yards: 36-35—71/7,099

### First-Round Notes – Thursday, April 12, 2018

#### Weather

Sunny, with a high of 69. Wind SE 6-12 mph.

#### First-Round Leaderboard

Rory Sabbatini	64 (-7)
Chesson Hadley	66 (-5)
Billy Horschel	66 (-5)
John Huh	66 (-5)
Matt Kuchar	66 (-5)

#### **Rory Sabbatini**

In his ninth start at the RBC Heritage, Rory Sabbatini made seven birdies and no bogeys en route to a 64. His previous-low round at Harbour Town was a final-round 66 in 2009 (T8).

This marks the 11<sup>th</sup> time Sabbatini has held at least a share of the 18-hole lead on the PGA TOUR. His best finishes among them were a pair of T2s at the 2006 Sony Open in Hawaii and 2007 World Golf Championships-Bridgestone Invitational.

Sabbatini missed the cut in his last two starts in the event before this week (2015, 2016), but finished T9 in 2013 and 2014, capping off a streak of five consecutive top-20 finishes.

Sabbatini's made cut in his last start before this week (Houston Open/T70) marked his ninth consecutive made-cut of the season, a career-best for a single season.

Sabbatini is in search of his seventh PGA TOUR title and first since the 2011 The Honda Classic. His lone top-10 finish this season is a T5 at the Valspar Championship.

#### First-Round Lead Notes

Two of the last four 18-hole leader/co-leaders at the RBC Heritage have carried that lead on to victory (Matt Kuchar/2014, Branden Grace/2016). Prior to that, Peter Lonard last performed the feat in 2005.

After round one a year ago, eventual champion Wesley Bryan (69) was six strokes off Bud Cauley's lead of 8-under 63.

Six 18-hole leaders/co-leaders have gone on to win in 22 stroke-play events this season on the PGA TOUR, most recently Brice Garnett at the Puntacana Resort & Club Championship.

#### **Matt Kuchar**

Making his 15<sup>th</sup> start in the RBC Heritage dating to 2003, 2014 champion Matt Kuchar opened with a 5-under 66.

In his last four starts at Harbour Town, Kuchar has finished outside the top 10 only once: 2017/T11, 2016/T9, 2015/5<sup>th</sup>, 2014/1<sup>st</sup>. He has not missed a cut since his inaugural start in 2003.

In four of his last five starts at the RBC Heritage, Kuchar has been unable to break par in the second round.

Kuchar is in search of his eighth PGA TOUR victory and first since his win in Harbour Town in 2014.

#### **Billy Horschel**

After a birdie-birdie-birdie start (Nos. 10-12), Billy Horschel opened with a 5-under 66.

Horschel is making his sixth consecutive start and, with the exception of a T9 in his first year of 2013, he has not finished higher than T51 (2015). He missed last year's cut following scores of 70-78.

Horschel, the 2014 FedExCup champion, is in search of his fifth PGA TOUR title and first since the 2017 AT&T Byron Nelson.

### **John Huh**

Following three birdies and an eagle within his first six holes, John Huh birdied the ninth hole to make the turn in 6-under 30. He made eight pars and a bogey (par-4 16<sup>th</sup>) on his inward nine, good for a 5-under 66.

Huh is making his fifth start in the RBC Heritage, where he has experienced a rollercoaster of results. He missed the cut in 2012, 2015 and 2017, but finished T3 in 2014.

Huh, who is making his 15<sup>th</sup> start of the 2017-18 PGA TOUR Season, has collected one top-10 finish (T3/ CareerBuilder Challenge). He is in search of his second career PGA TOUR victory (2012 OHL Classic at Mayakoba).

### **Chesson Hadley**

With six birdies against just one bogey (par-3 fourth hole), Chesson Hadley opened with a 5-under 66 in his fourth start in the RBC Heritage. After a T38 in 2014, he missed the cut in 2015 and 2016.

In nine rounds now at the RBC Heritage, today's 66 marks just his second round under par (R2/2014/67).

Hadley, winner of the 2014 Puerto Rico Open, has second-, third-, fourth- and fifth-place showings this season.

### **Additional Player Notes**

World No. 1 and RBC Ambassador Dustin Johnson reeled off four consecutive birdies (Nos. 18-3) en route to a 2-under 69. He is making his third start in the event and first since missing back-to-back cuts in 2008 and 2009.

Defending champion Wesley Bryan opened with a 2-under 69. The only three players to successfully defend an RBC Heritage title are Payne Stewart (1989-90), Davis Love III (1991-92) and Boo Weekley (2007-08).

Five-time RBC Heritage winner Davis Love III (1987, 1991, 1992, 1998, 2003) opened with a 2-over 73 in his 30<sup>th</sup> start at the RBC Heritage. Love will celebrate his 54<sup>th</sup> birthday Friday.

Luke Donald, who has collected five runner-up finishes in the RBC Heritage, opened with a 5-over 76. Of just nine over-par scores in 45 rounds in the event, seven have come in the first round.

Austin Cook made 18 pars in his first round and sits T49.

### **Miscellaneous Notes**

**Team RBC:** Matt Kuchar (66), Dustin Johnson (69), Jim Furyk (70), Brandt Snedeker (70), Ryan Palmer (73), Nick Taylor (73), Graeme McDowell (73), David Hearn (81).

Bogey-free rounds:

R1: Rory Sabbatini (64), Jonas Blixt (67), Peter Malnati (68), Brice Garnett (68), John Senden (69), Austin Cook (71).

<b>Scoring Averages:</b>	<b>Front (36)</b>	<b>Back (35)</b>	<b>Total (71)</b>	<b>Cumulative</b>
R1:	35.992	35.750	71.742	---

Morning scoring average (71.03) vs. afternoon scoring average (72.45).