



2017 The RSM Classic

(8th of 45 events in the PGA TOUR Season)

St. Simons Island, GA
Seaside Course (Host)
Plantation Course

November 16-19, 2017
Par/Yards: 35-35—70/7,005
Par/Yards: 36-36—72/7,058

Purse: \$6,200,000
FedExCup Points: 500 (winner)

First-Round Notes – Thursday, November 16, 2017

Weather: Sunny with a high of 68. Wind NNE 5-10 mph.

First-Round Leaderboard

| | |
|----------------------|---------|
| Chris Kirk (PL) | 63 (-9) |
| Joel Dahmen (PL) | 64 (-8) |
| Jason Kokrak (PL) | 65 (-7) |
| Hudson Swafford (PL) | 65 (-7) |
| Brian Gay (PL) | 65 (-7) |

Nick Watney and Brice Garnett recorded the lowest scores on the Seaside Course: 5-under 65.

Chris Kirk

Chris Kirk, the 2013 RSM Classic champion, opened with a 9-under 63 on the Plantation Course which included seven birdies and an eagle (on his final hole, No. 18), against no bogeys. Kirk played the Plantation's four par 5s in 5-under (birdie-birdie-birdie-eagle).

When he won in 2013, the tournament was only played on the Seaside Course.

The four-time PGA TOUR winner has gone winless the last two seasons, with his last win coming at the 2015 DEAN & DELUCA Invitational. He has advanced to the FedExCup Playoffs all seven seasons he has been on the PGA TOUR.

This marks Kirk's fourth first-round lead/co-lead on TOUR. He has never converted a first-round lead to victory.

Kirk needed 23 putts to complete the round, tied for the fewest by a player in the first round (Vaughn Taylor). He also leads the field in Scrambling, making par on all four holes he missed the green.

Kirk is one of eight former University of Georgia golfers in the field: Hudson Swafford, Bubba Watson, Chris Kirk, Brian Harman, Kevin Kisner, Harris English, Keith Mitchell and Greyson Sigg. Kisner was the second Georgia Bulldog to win The RSM Classic (2015).

Kirk is also one of 12 Georgia Bulldogs who have won on the PGA TOUR. Last season, three former UGA players won on the PGA TOUR: Hudson Swafford (CareerBuilder Challenge), Russell Henley (Houston Open) and Brian Harman (Wells Fargo Championship).

Kirk has played in three domestic events this season, and one overseas (THE CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES/T54).

Kirk lived in St. Simons Island for six and a half years, but now lives in Athens, Georgia.

First-Round Leader Notes

Through seven events in the 2017-18 PGA TOUR Season, the first-round leader/co-leader has gone on to win four times, most recently Patton Kizzire at the OHL Classic at Mayakoba. In the 2016-17 season, only eight players in 46 stroke play events carried a first-round lead/co-lead to victory.

The first-round leader/co-leader has gone on to win The RSM Classic twice, both coming in the last two years – Kevin Kisner (2015) and Mac Hughes (2016).

In the seven-year history of The RSM Classic, there has never been a first-round lead greater than one stroke. That streak continues this year with Chris Kirk holding a one-shot lead after 18 holes.

Joel Dahmen

Playing in his sophomore season on the PGA TOUR, Joel Dahmen shot his career-low round on TOUR, an 8-under 64 in his 22nd career start.

Dahmen made a career-high eight birdies en route to his bogey-free 64. He only missed one fairway on the Plantation Course.

In his only other start at The RSM Classic, Dahmen missed the cut in 2016.

Dahmen, a native of Clarkston, Washington, was the 2014 Mackenzie Tour-PGA TOUR Canada Player of the Year after he won twice in Canada that year. He was diagnosed with testicular cancer in February 2011 but made a full recovery and returned to the Mackenzie Tour-PGA TOUR Canada later that season.

In four starts this season, Dahmen has two missed cuts and one top-25: a T23 in last week's OHL Classic at Mayakoba.

In 21 starts on the PGA TOUR, Dahmen only has one top-10: a T9 at the 2017 AT&T Byron Nelson.

Jason Kokrak

Making his third start in The RSM Classic, Jason Kokrak opened with a bogey-free 7-under 65 on the Plantation Course. In two previous starts, he finished T45 (2016) and MC (2015).

Today marks Kokrak's fifth event of the season. In five opening rounds on TOUR this season, his scoring average is 68.0.

Kokrak is making his 162nd start on the PGA TOUR, where his best finish is a pair of runner-ups: 2012 Safeway Open and 2016 Genesis Open.

Kokrak has qualified for the FedExCup Playoffs the last five consecutive seasons. He only missed out on the top-125 during his rookie season in 2012.

A Xavier University graduate, Kokrak resides in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Hudson Swafford

Sea Island resident Hudson Swafford made five birdies against no bogeys, and eagled the 18th on the Plantation course.

Swafford is making his fourth start of the 2017-18 PGA TOUR Season, and first domestic event, having played all three events of the Asia Swing. Through those events, he was a combined 4-over. In today's round, he was -7.

Swafford's lone PGA TOUR victory came at a multi-course event, the 2017 CareerBuilder Challenge.

In two previous starts at The RSM Classic, Swafford finished T36 (2016) and MC (2015). His best score in seven rounds is a 6-under 64 on the Seaside Course in the first round of the 2016 tournament.

Additional Player Notes

With a 7-under 65, Brian Gay tied his lowest opening round, in relation to par, on the PGA TOUR. On two previous occasions, he opened with a 7-under, most recently at the 2013 RSM Classic.

OHL Classic at Mayakoba winner Patton Kizzire opened with a 4-under 66 on the Seaside Course. The Sea Island resident holed out for eagle-2 on the 10th hole, his first eagle on a par-4 hole in his PGA TOUR career, and, the first eagle at the 10th hole of the Seaside Course. His first bogey came at the 11th, and was his first bogey in his last 30 holes played on TOUR, where he was a combined 8-under in that stretch.

For the second consecutive year, tournament host Davis Love III opened with an even-par 72 on the Plantation Course in his 749th official start on the PGA TOUR. In the seven-year history of the event, Love has three missed cuts and one top-10 (T4/2012).

Defending champion of The RSM Classic Mac Hughes opened with an even-par 70 on the Seaside Course. Hughes has missed the cut in his two starts on TOUR this season. Two weeks ago, he and wife Jenna welcomed their first child, a baby boy named Kenton Robert.

After being named the 2017 Web.com Tour Player of the Year at an event Wednesday, Chesson Hadley opened with a 3-under 67 on the Seaside Course, his lowest opening round in four starts this season. He has three top-five finishes in four starts, in addition to a WD at the OHL Classic at Mayakoba due to illness.

In his return to competition due to a rib injury, Brandt Snedeker was the only player to hit all 14 fairways on the Seaside Course. He made four birdies and one bogey en route to a 3-under 67. Dicky Pride was the only player to hit all fairways on the Plantation Course.

With his dad Jay on the bag, Bill Haas opened with an even-par 70 on the Seaside Course.

Luke Donald withdrew prior to the round and was replaced by Mark Wilson.

Abraham Ancer withdrew during the first round after 15 holes.

Xinjun Zhang, one of two Chinese-born players to hold a PGA TOUR card, used an 8-iron to hole out for eagle from 144 yards on Seaside's No. 4. He suffered a triple bogey-7 on his next hole, the par-4 fifth hole.

Miscellaneous Notes

All seven of the past champions of The RSM Classic are in the field this week.

| Champion | Year won | R1 Score |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Mac Hughes | 2016 | 70 |
| Kevin Kisner | 2015 | 67 |
| Robert Streb | 2014 | 71 |
| Chris Kirk | 2013 | 63 |
| Tommy Gainey | 2012 | 72 |
| Ben Crane | 2011 | 73 |
| Heath Slocum | 2010 | 74 |

Bogey-free rounds:

R1: Chris Kirk (63/PL), Joel Dahmen (64/PL), Hudson Swafford (65/PL), Nick Watney (65/SS), Jason Kokrak (65/PL), Brian Gay (65/PL), Austin Cook (66/PL), Sam Saunders (67/SS), Ben Silverman (67/PL), Henrik Norlander (68/SS), Denny McCarthy (68/SS), Aaron Wise (68/PL), Greg Chalmers (68/SS), Patrick Rodgers (69/SS), Kevin Streelman (69/PL), Roberto Diaz (70/PL), Matt Atkins (71/PL).

First-round Scoring Averages

| | Front 9 | Back 9 | Total | Cumulative |
|------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Seaside | 34.987 | 34.385 | 69.372 | --- |
| Plantation | 35.000 | 35.156 | 70.156 | --- |