



Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai

Hualalai Golf Course | Ka'upulehu-Kona, Hawai'i | January 15-20, 2018

First-Round Notes

Thursday, January 18, 2018

Course Setup: Par 72 / 7,107 yards

Weather: Mostly sunny skies in the morning with periods of wind and clouds in the afternoon. High in the low 80s and wind from NE at 10-20 mph with gusts up to 30mph.

Purse: \$1,800,000 (Winner: \$300,000)

Player	To Par	Scores
T1. Gene Sauers	-8	32-32 - 64
T1. Jerry Kelly	-8	34-30 - 64
T3. Rocco Mediate	-7	32-33 - 65
T3. Colin Montgomerie	-7	34-31 - 65
T5. Kirk Triplett	-6	35-31 - 66
T5. Fred Couples	-6	33-36 - 66
T5. Kevin Sutherland	-6	34-32 - 66

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Gene Sauers, 32-32 - 64 (-8)

Opened with an 8-under-par 64, one shy of his career-low round on PGA TOUR Champions (2nd rd./2017 Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic).

This year's bogey free opening round 64 was one stroke lower than his 2017 first-round score of 65.

He finished T8 here one year ago with both rounds in the 60s (65-68 - 133/-11)

In his combined total of three rounds played in 2017 and '18, he has posted only two bogeys.

His best finish in 2017 was second place at the Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic where he lost in the first playoff hole at Fallen Oak in Biloxi, Mississippi.

Made 24 starts on PGA TOUR Champions in 2017 and finished 15 of those starts inside the top 25.

Recipient of the 2017 PGA TOUR Courage Award, presented to a player who, through courage and perseverance, has overcome extraordinary adversity, such as personal tragedy or debilitating injury or illness, to make a significant and meaningful contribution to the game of golf.

Jerry Kelly, 34-30 – 64 (-8)

The 2017 Rookie of the Year closed with an 8-under-par 30 on the back nine to claim a share of the lead in his first appearance at Hualalai.

His round consisted of nine birdies, eight pars and just one bogey.

The 51-year-old was in the field at last week's Sony Open in Hawaii, finishing at T14 (-12) with all four rounds in the 60's.

The only rookie to win in 2017, Kelly posted two victories (Boeing Classic and Pacific Links Bear Mountain Championship) and tallied 10 top-10s in 20 starts

Rocco Mediate, 32-33 – 64 (-7)

After posting a 32 on the front nine, the Naples resident carried momentum on the back with an eagle on 10. In addition to the eagle, Mediate tallied six birdies to finish the day with a first-round 64.

The posted 64 beats his 2017 opening round at Hualalai by 3 strokes (2017: 67-66 – 133/-11)

Mediate's best finish in the 2017 season was at the Mitsubishi Electric Championship, posting an -11 (T8). The T8 was his only top-10 in 18 starts that season.

Ending the 2017 season ranked 66th in the Charles Schwab Cup standings, Mediate's last event played was the Dominion Energy Charity Classic where he finished T56.

Tournament Notes:

On opening day there were 28 rounds in the 60s and three players who posted bogey free rounds (Gene Sauers, Fred Couples, Tom Kite)

32 out of 44 player field finished round one under par.

Bernhard Langer, 2017 Player of the Year and defending tournament champion posted a 69 in his first round and currently sits at T20, six shots off the lead. In his 11 appearances at Hualalai, the World Golf Hall of Famer has never posted a first round over par. Only three times has he posted first round scores in the 70s (2015, 72; 2016, 70)

Colin Montgomerie was one of only two World Golf Hall of Famers in the top-10 after the first round (Couples, T5). Despite two bogeys on the front nine, Montgomerie tallied nine birdies, leading him to finish with a seven under 65.

With a birdie on the first hole, Kirk Triplett started off the day well. He went on to post four more birdies and an eagle on 10. He was one of three players to eagle the hole, and ended the day at -6.

Fred Couples continues to play well in at the Mitsubishi Electric Championship at Hualalai. In his previous eight starts he has posted three second place finishes (2010, '14, '17) and finished outside the top 10 only twice. In his ninth start today, he posted a bogey free round in addition to six birdies.

2017 Charles Schwab Cup champion Kevin Sutherland got his year off to a good start, shooting a 6-under-par 66. It is his first appearance at the Mitsubishi Electric Championship after qualifying with a win at the Charles Schwab

Cup Championship last November. Sutherland became just the third player to win the Charles Schwab Cup Championship and the Charles Schwab Cup in the same season, joining two players also in the field this week, Tom Watson (2005) and Tom Lehman (2012).

First time players Brandt Jobe and Stephen Ames experienced different levels of play in their debut rounds at Hualalai. Jobe sits inside the top-15 at T13 with a 4-under-par while Ames shot a 2-over-par 74.