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2018 Sanderson Farms Championship pre-tournament notes

Dates: October 22-28, 2018

Where: Country Club of Jackson / Jackson, Mississippi

Par/Yards: 72/7,421 yards

Field: 132

2017 champion: Ryan Armour

Purse: \$4,400,000/\$792,000 (winner)

FedExCup: 300 points to the winner

Format: 72-hole stroke play

Twitter: @SandersonPGA

2018-19 PGA TOUR Season continues at the Sanderson Farms Championship

This week's Sanderson Farms Championship marks the fifth event of the 2018-19 PGA TOUR Season in a wraparound schedule that bridges two years with 46 events -- 43 Regular Season events and three FedExCup Playoffs events. The fall includes eight FedExCup events, which began at the Safeway Open and ends with the RSM Classic in November. Following a break, the season resumes in January with the Sentry Tournament of Champions in Hawaii.

Significant changes for PGA TOUR in 2018-19

The PGA TOUR has introduced several changes for the 2018-19 PGA TOUR Season that will allow fans to better follow and engage in the TOUR all season:

- 1) A season with a better flow from start to finish; a return of THE PLAYERS Championship to March, which kicks off a cadence of significant events over five months; and a season that concludes with the FedExCup Playoffs. Every week matters – four of the eight winners during the fall of 2017 qualified for the season-ending TOUR Championship (Justin Thomas, Patton Kizzire, Patrick Cantlay and FedExCup champion Justin Rose).
- 2) The FedExCup Playoffs – which have been reduced from four to three events beginning this season and will conclude before Labor Day, allowing the TOUR to compete to own the August sports calendar – will feature fields of 125 for THE NORTHERN TRUST, 70 for the BMW Championship and 30 for the TOUR Championship, where the FedExCup Champion will be determined.
- 3) A simplified, strokes-based scoring system at the TOUR Championship that crowns a singular champion. Instead of a points reset at the TOUR Championship, the TOUR is instituting a strokes-based system related to the FedExCup standings through the BMW Championship. The scoring system virtually replicates the win probabilities of the current system but uses strokes instead of points – which is much easier for golf fans, and the casual sports fan, to understand. The leader through the first two FedExCup Playoffs events will begin the TOUR Championship at 10-under par. The next four players will start at -8

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through -5, respectively. The next five will begin at -4, regressing by one stroke per five players until players 26-30 start at even par. With the implementation of this change, the player with the lowest total score including FedExCup Starting Strokes will be the FedExCup champion and be credited with an official victory in the TOUR Championship. Two constants will the drama and the crowning of a deserving champion seen over the first 12 years of the FedExCup. Using next year's scoring at the 2018 TOUR Championship, Justin Rose – thanks to a birdie on the 72nd hole -- would have captured the FedExCup by a single stroke over Tiger Woods, Billy Horschel and Dustin Johnson.

- 4) A \$10 million Wyndham Rewards-sponsored bonus – the Wyndham Rewards Top 10 -- where players will be rewarded for their outstanding play during the Regular Season, prior to the start of the FedExCup Playoffs. The top Regular Season finisher in FedExCup points through the Wyndham Championship will earn \$2 million, followed by \$1.5 million for the runner-up with the 10th-place finisher earning \$500,000. Dustin Johnson led last year's FedExCup standings through the Wyndham Championship, just 83 points ahead of Justin Thomas.
- 5) Including the Wyndham Rewards Top 10, there will be a doubling of FedExCup total bonus money available to players, from \$35 million to \$70 million.

A look back at the 2017 Sanderson Farms Championship

In his fifth start at the Sanderson Farms Championship and first time to make the cut, Ryan Armour opened with a 6-under 66 to take a share of the 18-hole lead. With ensuing rounds of 68-67-68, he finished at 19-under 269, good for a five-stroke victory over Chesson Hadley. The victory, his first on the PGA TOUR, came in his 105th career start at the age of 41 years, 8 months, 2 days.

More on Ryan Armour

- Following his win in Jackson, collected a pair of top-10 finishes, highlighted by a solo-second at the Quicken Loans National.
- On the strength of his victory and runner-up finish, advanced to the FedExCup Playoffs for the first time, competing in the first three Playoffs events.
- Finished his fifth season on the PGA TOUR 49th in the FedExCup standings.
- Best start in two finishes in 2018-19 was T29 at the CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES.

Field Notes

- Nine past Seven Sanderson Farms Championship winners are in this year's field: Ryan Armour (2017), Cody Gribble (2016), Peter Malnati (2015), Nick Taylor (2014), Scott Stallings (2012), Chris Kirk (2011), Bill Haas (2010), Chad Campbell (2007) and D.J. Trahan (2006). A year after his win in Mississippi, Haas won the 2011 FedExCup
- The majority of the 21 PGA TOUR rookies will compete at the Country Club of Jackson.
- Two major championship winners combining for three wins: Retief Goosen (2001, 2004 U.S. Open), Lucas Glover (2009 U.S. Open)

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Players of Note

Jhonattan Vegas

- Poised to make his second start in the Sanderson Farms Championship, following a T4 in 2016
- Three-time winner on the PGA TOUR; 2011 CareerBuilder Challenge, 2016, 2017 RBC Canadian Open
- Among five top-25 finishes in the 2017-18 PGA TOUR Season was a T7 at the winners-only Sentry Tournament of Champions
- Member of 2018 International Presidents Cup Team

Bill Haas

- 2011 FedExCup champion
- 2010 Sanderson Farms Championship winner
- In three starts in the event, has never finished outside the top-5; 1st/2010, T4/2008, T3/2007
- Owns six PGA TOUR wins among 56 top-10 finishes
- In first start of the 2018-19 season, finished T10 at the Safeway Open

Hunter Mahan

- In second start in the event and first at the Country Club of Jackson, finished T18 in 2017
- A six-time PGA TOUR winner, is a veteran of four Presidents Cup Teams and three Ryder Cup Teams
- Among four top-25 finishes in the 2017-18 campaign was a season-best T7 at the Barbasol Championship
- Regained PGA TOUR card for 2018-19 through Web.com Tour Finals
- In his only start on TOUR this season, finished T17 at the Safeway Open

Lucas Glover

- Poised to make his fifth start in the Sanderson Farms Championship and first since a T5 in 2016
- Winner of three PGA TOUR events, including the 2009 U.S. Open
- In only start this season, finished T17 at the Safeway Open

Billy Hurley III

- Will make his third start in the Sanderson Farms Championship and comes off a T25 from last season.
- Winner of the Quicken Loans National at Congressional Country Club in 2016, just down the road from adopted hometown of Annapolis, Maryland
- A graduate of the United States Naval Academy in 2004, served as a Naval officer from 2004-09. Was a Lieutenant aboard a U.S. Navy destroyer from 2007-09, serving in the Persian Gulf to protect Iraqi oil platforms; spent time on the Red Sea and the South China Sea; served on the USS Chung-Hoon, a 10,000-ton guided-missile destroyer; worked on a cruiser in Jacksonville, Fla., and a destroyer in Pearl Harbor in Hawaii during his five-year obligation

Jonathan Randolph

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- Native of Brandon, Mississippi and a graduate of Jackson Prep, Randolph was an All-American at the University of Mississippi in 2009-10
- In third stint on PGA TOUR last season, finished T3 at the Sanderson Farms Championship
- Entered the 2018-19 season playing out of the Minor Medical Extension category with one available start to earn 211 FedExCup points and retain his card for the remainder of the 2018-19 season

Harold Varner III

- Scheduled to make his second start in the Sanderson Farms Championship and first since a T39 in 2016
- Comes off a 2017-18 PGA TOUR Season highlighted by three top-10 finishes; T5/A Military Tribute at The Greenbrier, 6th/John Deere Classic, T7 THE PLAYERS
- In only start on TOUR this season, finished T14 at the Safeway Open
- Winner of the 2016 Australian PGA Championship (finished sixth in defense of his title in 2017)

2017-18 PGA TOUR Rookies Select Notes

The Sanderson Farms Championship will feature most of the 21 members of the 2018-19 rookie class.

- **Sungjae Im**, 20, the youngest rookie in the 2018-19 class, led the Web.com Tour money list last year with \$534,326 thanks to two victories and three runner-up finishes in 25 starts. As a result, the native of Korea was named Web.com Tour Player of the year and Web.com Tour Rookie of the Year. In his first start this season, he finished T4 at the Safeway Open and he sits 16th in the FedExCup standings.
- **Martin Trainer**, a Palo Alto, California native, began the 2018 Web.com Tour season without status. In his first start, posted rounds of 67-70-68-69—274 (-14) to win the Mexico Championship by two strokes. In late July, opened with a 10-under 62 at the Price Cutter Championship before going on to claim his second victory of the season. Ended his season at No. 13 in the Web.com Tour priority ranking.
- **Cameron Champ** collected five top-10 finishes on last season's Web.com Tour, highlighted by a win at the Utah Championship. Champ, who played collegiately at Texas A&M, is the recipient of the 2018 Calvin Peete Award, given annually to a player who displays the spirit, humility and courage of the late Calvin Peete.
- **Jose de Jesus Rodriguez** made his way to the Web.com Tour last season via PGA TOUR Latinoamerica. A four-time winner on PGA TOUR Latinoamerica, Rodriguez is ranked fourth in all-time earnings on that Tour (\$194,433), just \$6,200 shy of No. 1. On the Web.com Tour this past season, he won the United Leasing & Finance Championship

Tournament Records and Notes

- Eleven players have made the Sanderson Farms Championship their first TOUR win, including each of the last four: Ryan Armour (2017), Cody Gribble (2016), Peter Malnati (2015), Nick Taylor (2014), Chris Kirk (2011), D.J. Trahan (2006), Luke Donald (2002), Cameron Beckman (2001), Willie Wood (1996), Ed Dougherty (1995) and Brian Henninger (1994).
- Since its 1986 inception, only two players have won the Sanderson Farms Championship more than once; Brian Henninger (1994, 1999) and Fred Funk (1998, 2004).

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- First-round leaders/co-leaders at the Sanderson Farms Championship since 2000 who've held on for the win: Ryan Armour (2017), Bill Haas (2010), D.J. Trahan (2006), John Huston (2003) and Steve Lowery (2000).
- Since 1990 - when the event was neither cancelled nor condensed in rounds, the 54-hole leader has held on for the win 11 times. Before Ryan Armour in 2017, the last to achieve the feat was Scott Stallings in 2012.
- After 19 years at Annandale Country Club in Madison, Mississippi, the Sanderson Farms Championship moved to the Country Club of Jackson in 2014. Prior to that, it spent eight years in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

Sanderson Farms Championship and charity

Century Club Charities, host organization for the Sanderson Farms Championship, continues to make a tremendous impact in the Jackson area, including primary beneficiary Friends of Children's Hospital. Friends of Children's Hospital is a nonprofit organization benefitting Blair E. Batson Hospital for Children at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. Specifically, the funds raised through the Sanderson Farms Championship go to the Children's Heart Center, a comprehensive pediatric heart surgery program at Batson. Before its formation in 2010, patients had to leave the state for surgery. Since 1994, the Sanderson Farms Championship has raised more than \$12 million for Friends of Children's Hospital and other area charities. Last year alone, more than \$1 million was provided to Mississippi charities, with a majority of that going to Friends of Children's Hospital.