



**Primary on-site PGA TOUR media contact:**

John Bush, Media Official

904-923-7419 (cell), [johnbush@pgatourhq.com](mailto:johnbush@pgatourhq.com)

## 2019 Sony Open in Hawaii Media Notes

**Dates:** January 7-13, 2019

**Where:** Waialae Country Club; Honolulu, Hawaii

**Par/Yards:** 35-35—70/7,044

**Field:** 144; **Format:** 72-hole stroke play

**Purse:** \$6,400,000

**Winner's Share:** \$1,152,000

**Defending Champion:** Patton Kizzire

### Wednesday, January 9 (all times local)

9:00 a.m. – Rory Sabbatini

Following 7:27 a.m. 9-hole Pro-Am – Jordan Spieth

Following 7:36 a.m. 9-hole Pro-Am – Charles Howell III

Following 7:54 a.m. 9-hole Pro-Am – Adam Scott

Prior to 3:02 p.m. 9-hole Pro-Am – Steve Stricker (approx. 1:00 p.m.)

### **2018-19 PGA TOUR Season continues at Sony Open in Hawaii, the second event of the Hawaii Swing**

The Sony Open in Hawaii marks the 10<sup>th</sup> 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 included eight FedExCup events, which began at the Safeway Open and ended at The RSM Classic. Following a break, the season resumed in January with the Sentry Tournament of Champions and this week's Sony Open in Hawaii.

### **Significant changes for PGA TOUR in 2018-19**

1. The new schedule – with an improved flow, from start-to-finish, will allow fans to better follow and engage in the PGA TOUR all season long. THE PLAYERS move to March and the PGA Championship move to May has created a “Season of Championships” -- with six straight months of significant events starting with THE PLAYERS, bookended by the FedExCup Playoffs in August.
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 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

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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 72<sup>nd</sup> hole -- would have captured the FedExCup by a single shot 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 10<sup>th</sup>-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.

### 2019 marks 54<sup>th</sup> playing of the Sony Open in Hawaii

#### Longest-running PGA TOUR title sponsors

The Honda Classic	1982
AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am	1986
<b>Sony Open in Hawaii</b>	<b>1999</b>
John Deere Classic	1999

#### Longest-running host courses (non-Major Championships)

Charles Schwab Challenge	Colonial Country Club (1946)#
AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am	Pebble Beach Golf Links (1947)\$
<b>Sony Open in Hawaii</b>	<b>Waialae Country Club (1965)&amp;</b>

# no tournament in 1949 and 1975

\$ multiple course rotation has included Pebble Beach GL since 1947

& no tournament in 1970

#### Patton Kizzire set to defend Sony Open in Hawaii title

- Seeking to join the following players who have won back-to-back at the Sony Open: Jimmy Walker (2014-15), Ernie Els (2003-04), Corey Pavin (1986-87), Hubert Green (1978-79).
- Made par on the sixth playoff hole (17<sup>th</sup> hole) to defeat James Hahn at the 2018 Sony Open in Hawaii for his second win of the season (Mayakoba Golf Classic). Was his first career playoff.
- Six holes marked the longest playoff in the history of the Sony Open in Hawaii and the longest playoff on TOUR since the 2012 Mayakoba Golf Classic, when John Huh defeated Robert Allenby after eight holes. By comparison, the longest sudden-death playoff in PGA TOUR history came at the 1949 Motor City Open (where Cary Middlecoff and Lloyd Mangrum were declared co-winners after 11 holes due to darkness).
- Won the second PGA TOUR event of his career in his 66<sup>th</sup> start at the age of 31 years, 10 months, 11 days.
- Won in his second start in the Sony Open in Hawaii, missing the cut in 2016.
- Has shot 64 or better nine times in his career, including second- and third-round 64s in 2018.
- First win at the 2017 Mayakoba Golf Classic came after he led by one over Rickie Fowler through 54 holes, making the Sony Open in Hawaii his first come-from-behind victory on TOUR.

#### A closer look at the field

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- FedExCup champions: Justin Thomas (2017), Jordan Spieth (2015), Brandt Snedeker (2012), Vijay Singh (2008)
- 2018-19 tournament winners: Kevin Tway (Safeway Open), Marc Leishman (CIMB Classic), Cameron Champ (Sanderson Farms Championship), Bryson DeChambeau (Shriners Hospitals for Children Open), Matt Kuchar (Mayakoba Golf Classic), Charles Howell III (The RSM Classic).
- 23 of the 33 (70 percent) players in the Sentry Tournament of Champions field are scheduled to play the Sony Open.
- Seven of the top 10 in the current FedExCup standings: Gary Woodland (2), Marc Leishman (3), Charles Howell III (4), Kevin Tway (5), Bryson DeChambeau (7), Cameron Champ (8), Matt Kuchar (9).
- Two players in the top 5 in the Official World Golf Ranking: Justin Thomas (4), Bryson DeChambeau (5).
- Players in the field with 10 or more PGA TOUR wins: Vijay Singh (34), Davis Love III (21), Kenny Perry (14), Adam Scott (13), Steve Stricker (12), Bubba Watson (12), Zach Johnson (12), Jordan Spieth (11)
- Past Sony Open champions: Patton Kizzire (2018), Justin Thomas (2017), Fabian Gomez (2016), Jimmy Walker (2014-15), Russell Henley (2013), Johnson Wagner (2012), Zach Johnson (2009), Vijay Singh (2005), Jerry Kelly (2002).

#### **Additional Player notes**

- Charles Howell III, who made his 500<sup>th</sup> career start at the 2018 Sony Open, broke through for his third career PGA TOUR win last fall at The RSM Classic. Howell's last win came at the 2007 Genesis Open, a span of 11 years, 9 months and 333 starts between titles. Currently fourth in the FedExCup standings, Howell has finished inside the top 100 in the FedExCup each year since the inception of the FedExCup, with two trips to the TOUR Championship. The former AJGA Player of the Year (1996) and NCAA Individual Champion (2000) has enjoyed a high level of success at the Sony Open with nine top-10 finishes and 17 made cuts. Since 2002, he is a TOUR-best 154-under at the Sony Open, 26 strokes better than the next player on the list (Jerry Kelly).
- 2017 FedExCup champion Justin Thomas will make his fifth appearance (T6-2015, MC-2016, Won-2017, T14-2018). Thomas won back-to-back starts at the Sentry Tournament of Champions and Sony Open in Hawaii in 2017, posting a first-round 59 en route to his Sony Open title that season.
- Jimmy Walker will make his 13<sup>th</sup> start at the Sony Open, led by wins in 2014 and 2015 and a fourth-place finish in 2011.
- Jordan Spieth will make his fourth start at the Sony Open in Hawaii. After missing the cut in his debut appearance in 2014, he posted rounds of 65-67-66-63 in 2017 to finish solo-third and most recently T18 in 2018.
- 2009 Sony Open champion Zach Johnson will make his 14<sup>th</sup> start at Waialae Country Club, with additional top-10 finishes in 2014 (T8), 2016 (T9) and 2017 (T6). Most recently he finished T14 in 2018.
- Matt Kuchar has finished no worse than T13 in his last five starts at the Sony Open (T5-2011, T5-2013, T8-2014, T3-2015, T13-2016).
- Adam Scott returns to the Sony Open after a two-year absence. Here's a look at his seven prior starts at the event (MC-2004, T20-2005, T18-2006, T2-2009, MC-2011, T8-2014, T56-2016).
- 2002 Sony Open in Hawaii champion Jerry Kelly will make his 22<sup>nd</sup> start at the Sony Open in Hawaii, including 21 straight since Sony took over sponsorship in 1999. He most recently finished T14 in 2018.
- Rory Sabbatini will be making his 21<sup>st</sup> consecutive Sony Open start, including runner-up finish in 2006 and 2008.
- Vijay Singh will be making his 22<sup>nd</sup> start at the Sony Open, with a win in 2005 among his four top-10s.

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- Patrick Reed missed the cut (2013) in his only other start at the Sony Open.
- Bubba Watson returns to Waialae for the first time since 2010 (4-2006, T48-2007, T50-2008, MC-2009, T46-2010).
- Among the sponsor exemptions is Takumi Kanaya, Japan's highest-ranked amateur player. Kanaya, 20, captured the 2018 Asia-Pacific Amateur to earn invites to the Masters Tournament and The Open Championship in 2019.

### **Sony Open in Hawaii Tournament notes**

- Ernie Els (2003) and Justin Thomas (2017) are the only players to win the Sony Open in Hawaii and Sentry Tournament of Champions back-to-back in the same season.
- Ten players have won each of the PGA TOUR's Hawaii events at least once: Jim Furyk (1996 Sony; 2001 Sentry Tournament of Champions), Jack Nicklaus (1974 Sony; 1963-64, 1971, 1973, 1977 TOC); Lee Trevino (1968 Sony; 1981 TOC); Lanny Wadkins (1988, 1991 Sony Open, 1982-83 TOC); Paul Azinger (1991 Sony; 1990 TOC); Mark O'Meara (1985 Sony; 1996 TOC); Ernie Els (2003-04 Sony; 2003 TOC); Vijay Singh (2005 Sony; 2007 TOC), Zach Johnson (2009 Sony; 2014 TOC), Justin Thomas (2017 Sony; 2017 TOC).
- The last player to win the event in his first try was Russell Henley (2013); prior to that was Bruce Lietzke ('77).
- Justin Thomas (2017) holds the 72-hole record at the Sony Open with a 253-winning total.
- Nine players have made the Sony Open their first TOUR win: Ted Makalena (1966), Grier Jones (1972), John Schlee (1973), Gary Groh (1975), Isao Aoki (1983), David Ishii (1990), John Morse (1995), Jerry Kelly (2002), Russell Henley (2013).
- In the last 13 years (since 2006), eight of the 54-hole leaders/co-leaders have gone on to capture the Sony Open in Hawaii. Last season, Tom Hoge held the 54-hole lead at 16-under 194, before Patton Kizzire came from behind to defeat James Hahn in a playoff.