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**2018 THE CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES Pre-Tournament Notes**

**Dates:** October 25-21, 2018 (part of the 2018-19 PGA TOUR season)

**Where:** Club at Nine Bridges, Jeju Island, South Korea

**Par/Yards:** 36-36—72/7,184 yards

**Field:** 78 players

**Eligibility:** Eligible players for the 78-player field are:

- Top 60 available players from the final 2017-18 FedExCup Points List, to a floor of the 125th position.
- Five players designated by the KPGA, as follows:
  - Winner of the 2018 KPGA Championship.
  - Winner of the 2018 KPGA Genesis Championship.
  - Top three available players from the KPGA Genesis Points List as of October 8, 2018.
- Two players from the Asian Tour, as follows:
  - The leading available player from the Asian Tour Order of Merit, as of October 8, 2018.
  - The next highest ranked available player of Korean nationality from the Asian Tour Order of Merit as of October 8, 2018.
- Top three available players of Korean nationality from the Official World Golf Ranking as of Monday, October 8, 2018.
- Eight sponsor exemptions:
  - Five from among the current season's PGA TOUR membership.
  - Three "unrestricted"

**2017 champion:** Justin Thomas

**Purse:** \$9,500,000/\$1,710,000 (winner)

**FedExCup:** 500 points (winner)

**Format:** 72-hole stroke play (no cut)

**Website:** <http://en.thecjcup.com/index.asp>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/PGATOURTHECJCUP/>

**A look back at the 2017 CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES**

Entering the tournament as the top-ranked player in the field, Justin Thomas opened the inaugural CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES with rounds of 63-74-70. Entering the final round tied for the lead with Scott Brown, Thomas posted a 72 on Sunday to join Marc Leishman in a playoff at 9-under 279. After halving the first extra hole with pars, Leishman found the water on the second playoff hole, while Thomas made an up-and-down birdie for the victory. Thomas earned his seventh career title and his first playoff win on TOUR.

**THE CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES and the FedExCup**

THE CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES is the first official FedExCup event in South Korea. It is the third event of the 2018-19 PGA TOUR Regular Season and one of eight events during the fall of 2018, all of which will award FedExCup points. It is also the second of three consecutive events in Asia. After a six-week break, the season will resume in January with the traditional swing through Hawaii before moving to the West Coast. After the conclusion of the Regular Season, the top 125 players in points will be eligible to play in the FedExCup Playoffs, which will feature three events. The Playoffs will conclude in August with the TOUR Championship and the crowning of the FedExCup champion.

In addition to 500 FedExCup points and a two-year PGA TOUR exemption, the winner this week (if not previously eligible) receives invitations to the 2019 Sentry Tournament of Champions, a winners-only event in January, THE PLAYERS Championship, the Masters Tournament, the PGA Championship as well as additional invitationals.

Every week is significant in the race for the FedExCup – four of the eight winners from the fall calendar of 2017 (Justin Thomas, Patrick Cantlay, Justin Rose and Patton Kizzire) qualified for the TOUR Championship. The other four winners advanced to the third of four Playoffs events (Brendan Steele, Pat Perez, Ryan Armour and Austin Cook).

## **Notables in the field**

### **Justin Thomas**

#### **Entering the week**

14	FedExCup
#4	OWGR
1	Starts at THE CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES
1	Wins at THE CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES
118	PGA TOUR starts
9	PGA TOUR wins
1	PGA TOUR starts in 2018-19
1	Top-10s in 2018-19

**Wins (9):** 2016 CIMB Classic, 2017 CIMB Classic, 2017 Sentry Tournament of Champions, 2017 Sony Open in Hawaii, 2017 PGA Championship, 2017 Dell Technologies Championship, 2018 THE CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES, 2018 The Honda Classic and 2018 WGC-Bridgestone Invitational.

- A nine-time PGA TOUR winner and former No. 1 player in the world, Thomas recorded three victories in the 2017-18 TOUR season (2017 THE CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES, 2018 The Honda Classic and 2018 WGC-Bridgestone Invitational).
- Three of Thomas' nine victories have come in Asia, with his first two wins coming at the CIMB Classic in 2015 and 2016.
- Recorded a career-best 20 top-25 finishes in the 2017-18 season and finished No. 7 in the FedExCup standings in his title defense.
- Led the Official Money list in 2017-18 with \$8,694,821 and won the Arnold Palmer Award. Became the first back-to-back earnings winner since Tiger Woods in 2006 and 2007.
- One of five players in TOUR history to win the FedExCup, a major championship and a World Golf Championships event (Rory McIlroy, Henrik Stenson, Vijay Singh and Tiger Woods).

### **Jason Day**

- A 12-time winner on the PGA TOUR and former No. 1 player in the world, Day makes his 2018-19 PGA TOUR season debut in Jeju Island.
- Finished T11 at THE CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES in 2017-18.  
Captured two PGA TOUR wins during the 2017-18 campaign. His first win came at the Farmers Insurance Open, where he beat Alex Noren and Ryan Palmer in a playoff to end an 18-month winless run. His second triumph came at the Wells Fargo Championship, where he recorded his third multiple-win season on TOUR.
- Only missed two cuts in 20 starts in the 2017-18 season and recorded five top-10s, helping him reach the season-ending TOUR Championship for the sixth consecutive season.
- Day was a part of the International Presidents Cup team that played in Incheon, South Korea, in 2015.

### **Brooks Koepka**

- The 2018 PGA TOUR Player of the Year recorded two major victories in the 2017-18 PGA TOUR Season and became just the fifth player to win the U.S. Open and PGA Championship in the same year.
- Became the first repeat winner at the U.S. Open since Curtis Strange in 1989.

- Along with his third major victory at Bellerive Country Club, Koepka set the PGA Championship 72-hole scoring record at 16-under 264.
- Despite missing nearly four months due to a wrist injury, recorded six top-10 finishes, highlighted by his major wins and two runner-ups, and 15 of 17 made cuts.
- The four-time TOUR winner finished ninth in the FedExCup standings last season in his third trip to the season-ending TOUR Championship, his best finish to date.

#### **Hideki Matsuyama**

- The five-time PGA TOUR winner is Japan's top-ranked player at No. 21 in the Official World Golf Ranking.
- Recorded four top-10 finishes in the 2017-18 season with 18 made cuts in 21 starts.
- Ended No. 13 in the FedExCup last season and finished inside the top-15 in each of the four FedExCup Playoffs events, including T4 finishes at both the Dell Technologies Championship and season-ending TOUR Championship.
- Will compete in THE CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES for the first time in his first start of the 2018-19 season.

#### **Kevin Na**

- Na claimed his second TOUR victory at the 2018 A Military Tribute at The Greenbrier, winning by a tournament-record five strokes. Entering the final round trailing by one stroke, Na posted a 6-under 64 and became the first South Korean-born player to win on TOUR since Si Woo Kim won the 2017 THE PLAYERS Championship. He ended a six-year winless run with the victory.
- Finished 28th in the final FedExCup standings on the strength of four top-10s and nine top-25 finishes.
- Advanced to the TOUR Championship for the sixth time in 11 attempts.

#### **Si Woo Kim**

- Kim is a two-time winner on the PGA TOUR, capturing the 2016 Wyndham Championship and THE PLAYERS Championship in 2017, the PGA TOUR's flagship event.
- In his PLAYERS victory, closed with a bogey-free 69, the first player to shoot a bogey-free final round to win THE PLAYERS since Tim Clark in 2010. At the age of 21 years, 10 months, 16 days, Kim also became the youngest winner of THE PLAYERS.
- Recorded five top-10 finishes in the 2017-18 season, highlighted by a runner-up showing at the 2018 RBC Heritage, where he lost in a playoff to Japan's Satoshi Kodaira.
- Kim is the first Asian player in PGA TOUR history to win twice before the age of 22.

#### **Whee Kim**

- Kim finished fourth at the 2017 CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES and was the highest finisher among the 16 South Koreans in the field.
- Recorded two runner-up finishes in 2017-18 (P2/Shriners Hospitals for Children Open and T2/RBC Canadian Open).
- Earned his second victory on the Korean Tour last season, defeating Jeonghyeob Hyun 1-up in the final round of match play at the Descente Korea Munsingwear Matchplay at South Cape Owners Club.
- As an amateur, won the gold medal at the 2010 Asian Games, representing his home country of South Korea.

#### **Sungjae Im**

- The Jeju Island native recorded eight top-10s in 25 starts during the 2018 Web.com Tour season, highlighted by three runner-up finishes and two victories (The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic at Sandals Bay and WinCo Foods Portland Open presented by Kraft-Heinz).
- Became the first player since 1990 to win the first and last event of the Web.com Tour's Regular Season.
- Earned his TOUR card for the 2018-19 season by finishing No. 1 on the Web.com Tour's Regular season and became the first player in Web.com Tour history to go wire-to-wire atop the money list for the entire season (27 weeks).
- At 20 years old, Im is the youngest member among the 21 rookies in the 2018-19 TOUR season.

- Competed in two major championships in the 2017-18 season. He missed the cut in the 2018 U.S. Open, but produced the best result out of any Korean in the field at the PGA Championship, finishing T42.
- In his first TOUR start as a full member, played his way into the final group on Sunday at the Safeway Open and finished T4, the best finish among the 21 rookies in the field.

#### **A broader look at the field**

- The field includes 13 players from South Korea:
  - Byeong Hun An
  - Minchel Choi
  - Sungjae Im
  - Sung Kang
  - Si Woo Kim
  - Whee Kim
  - Hyungjoon Lee
  - Kyoung-Hoon Lee
  - Tae Hee Lee
  - Dong Seop Maeng
  - Doyeop Mun
  - Sanghyun Park
  - Hyun-Woo Ryu
- Additionally, Michael Kim, James Hahn and Kevin Na are of Korean descent and are in the field.
- The field consists of 18 winners from the 2017-18 TOUR season and 31 of the top 50 from last season's final FedExCup standings, including 13 of the 30 players who reached the TOUR Championship.
- Three FedExCup champions will make the trip to Jeju Island: Brandt Snedeker (2012), Billy Horschel (2014) and Justin Thomas (2017).
- There are 12 countries represented in the field.

#### **2017-18 PGA TOUR Season notes**

- Nine players won multiple events in 2017-18: Justin Thomas (3), Dustin Johnson (3), Bubba Watson (3), Bryson DeChambeau (3), Brooks Koepka (2), Justin Rose (2), Jason Day (2), Francesco Molinari (2) and Patton Kizzire (2).
- Three rookies claimed a victory in 2017-18: Austin Cook (The RSM Classic), Satoshi Kodaira (RBC Heritage) and Aaron Wise (AT&T Byron Nelson). Among the 25 rookies on TOUR last season, Wise was the only player who advanced to the TOUR Championship.
- Eight international players won on the PGA TOUR in 2017-18: Justin Rose (England), Jon Rahm (Spain), Jason Day (Australia), Paul Casey (England), Rory McIlroy (Northern Ireland), Ian Poulter (England), Satoshi Kodaira (Japan) and Francesco Molinari (Italy).

#### **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 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 72<sup>nd</sup> 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 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.