



2019 The Honda Classic Pre-Tournament notes

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Dates: February 25 – March 3, 2019

Where: Palm Beach Gardens, Florida

Course: PGA National (Champion; 35-35—72/7,125)

Defending champion: Justin Thomas

Purse: \$6,800,000 (\$1,224,000/winner)

FedExCup: 500 points to the winner

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

Notes on the Field

- 10 of the top 30 in the current FedExCup standings, led by No. 3 Gary Woodland
- Eight of the top 30 in the OWGR, including Justin Thomas (3), Brooks Koepka (4) and Rickie Fowler (9)
- Five FedExCup champions: Vijay Singh (2008), Jim Furyk (2010), Bill Haas (2011), Billy Horschel (2014) and Justin Thomas (2017)
- Eight past champions: Vijay Singh (1999), Ernie Els (2008), Rory Sabbatini (2011), Michael Thompson (2013), Russell Henley (2014), Adam Scott (2016), Rickie Fowler (2017) and Justin Thomas (2018)

A look back at The 2018 Honda Classic

Pos.	Player	R1	R2	R3	R4	Total
1	Justin Thomas	67	72	65	68	272/-8
2	Luke List	71	66	66	69	272/-8
3	Alex Noren	66	75	65	67	273/-7
4	Tommy Fleetwood	70	68	67	69	274/-6
T5	Byeong Hun An	70	72	69	65	276/-4
T5	Webb Simpson	66	72	66	72	276/-4

- After beginning the final round one stroke off Luke List's lead, Justin Thomas defeated List with a birdie on the first hole of sudden death (No. 18) for his eighth career victory
- Thomas lost in a playoff to Phil Mickelson at the World Golf Championships-Mexico Championship the following week
- In his first season as a full-time PGA TOUR member, Alex Noren finished third
- The tie for fifth represented one of Webb Simpson's three top-fives leading into his win at THE PLAYERS in 2018

The Honda Classic and the FedExCup

- The Honda Classic is the 18th event in the FedExCup season
- Eight of the 12 winners of The Honda Classic have advanced to the season-ending TOUR Championship in the FedExCup era: Ernie Els (2008), Y.E. Yang (2009), Camilo Villegas (2010), Rory McIlroy (2012), Russell Henley (2014), Adam Scott (2016), Rickie Fowler (2017) and Justin Thomas (2018)
- After Justin Thomas' win at The Honda Classic in 2018, he took the lead in the FedExCup standings and held it for 16 consecutive weeks until Dustin Johnson overtook him after the U.S. Open

Wyndham Rewards Top 10 – Current top 10 in the FedExCup standings

Pos.	Player	Points	Pts. behind	Wins
1	Xander Schauffele	1,298	--	2
2	Matt Kuchar	1,239	59	2
3	Gary Woodland	984	314	0
4	Charles Howell III	956	342	1
5	Marc Leishman	931	367	1
6	Justin Thomas	924	374	0
7	Phil Mickelson	821	477	1
8	Dustin Johnson	770	528	1
9	Justin Rose	720	578	1
10	Bryson DeChambeau	712	586	1

Player Notes

Justin Thomas

- Seeking to join Jack Nicklaus (1977-78) as the only player to successfully defend his title at The Honda Classic
- With a victory, would become the fourth-youngest player since 1960 to win 10 times on the PGA TOUR (Tiger Woods, Jordan Spieth, Jack Nicklaus)
- Four top fives in seven starts during 2018-19 season (T5/CIMB Classic, 3rd/Sentry Tournament of Champions, 3rd/Waste Management Phoenix Open, 2nd/Genesis Open)
- Finished ninth at last week's World Golf Championships-Mexico Championship

Brooks Koepka

- Making fifth start at the event with best result a T26 in 2016
- Has three wins since missing The 2018 Honda Classic due to injury (2018 U.S. Open, 2018 PGA Championship, THE 2018 CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES)
- Averages 311.3 yards off the tee during the 2018-19 season, good for 12th-best on TOUR
- Earned PGA TOUR Player of the Year honors for the 2017-18 season

Rickie Fowler

- Making 10th consecutive start at the event (won in 2017)
- Claimed fifth PGA TOUR title at the 2019 Waste Management Phoenix Open
- Making sixth start of the 2018-19 season with an additional top-five at the Shriners Hospitals for Children Open (T4)
- Owns 66 top-10s in 221 career PGA TOUR starts

Adam Scott

- Making eighth start at the event (won in 2016)
- Made a quadruple-bogey-7 at No. 15 in the third round of 2016 victory, representing the last time a player won on TOUR despite making a quadruple bogey at any point of the tournament
- Won 13 PGA TOUR titles from 2003 through the 2015-16 season and is currently in a stretch of 57 starts without a victory (most recent: 2016 The Honda Classic, WGC-Mexico Championship in back-to-back starts)
- Has collected three top-10s in seven starts this season, highlighted by a runner-up showing at the Farmers Insurance Open, which took him over the \$50-million mark in official PGA TOUR earnings

Webb Simpson

- Best result in four starts at the event came in 2018 (T5)
- Will defend his 2018 PLAYERS Championship title in two weeks
- Winner of five PGA TOUR events, including 2012 U.S. Open
- In five starts on TOUR in 2018-19, has collected top-10s at The RSM Classic (3rd) and Sentry Tournament of Champions (T8)
- Finished T39 at last week's WGC-Mexico Championship

Gary Woodland

- Leads the TOUR with six top-10s in 2018-19, including two runner-up results (THE CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES, Sentry Tournament of Champions)
- Currently at No. 3 and 314 points behind leader Xander Schauffele, can take the lead in the FedExCup standings with a win at The Honda Classic
- Has two top-10s in six starts in The Honda Classic, including a T2 in 2017 and T6 in 2011
- Three-time PGA TOUR winner (most recent: 2018 Waste Management Phoenix Open)

Martin Trainer

- In his 11th start on the PGA TOUR, overcame a two-stroke deficit beginning the final round of last week's Puerto Rico Open with a 5-under 67 to win by three strokes at 15-under 273
- Became the third PGA TOUR rookie to win during the 2018-19 season, joining Cameron Champ (Sanderson Farms Championship) and Adam Long (Desert Classic)
- With the win, moved from No. 185 to 44th in the FedExCup standings
- Won twice on the Web.com Tour in 2018 en route to a 13th-place finish on the 2018 Web.com Tour priority list

Tournament notes

- **Kiradech Aphibarnrat**, the first player from Thailand to secure PGA TOUR membership, and **Alex Noren**, who finished third in his tournament debut in 2018, are among the players in search of their first PGA TOUR victory. Twelve players have made The Honda Classic their first career TOUR title, including five since 2000: Matt Kuchar (2002), Padraig Harrington (2005), Mark Wilson (2007), Y.E. Yang (2009) and Michael Thompson (2013)

- Since 1980, only four players have won The Honda Classic in their first attempt: Tim Herron (1996), Matt Kuchar (2002), Todd Hamilton (2004) and Padraig Harrington (2005)
- Jack Nicklaus (1977-78) is the only player to successfully defend his title at The Honda Classic
- International players have won the event nine of the last 14 years, with wins by Padraig Harrington (2005), Luke Donald (2006), Ernie Els (2008), Y.E. Yang (2009), Camilo Villegas (2010), Rory Sabbatini (2011), Rory McIlroy (2012), Harrington (2015) and Adam Scott (2016). Mark Wilson (2007), Michael Thompson (2013), Russell Henley (2014), Rickie Fowler (2017) and Justin Thomas (2018) are the only United States natives to win since 2005.
- In the 2017-18 season, the par-70 Champion Course ranked as the second-toughest course on TOUR (by scoring average to-par), with a scoring average of 2.303-over-par. Only Shinnecock Hills GC (U.S. Open) ranked tougher to-par.
- Since 2007, the “Bear Trap” (Nos. 15-17) continues to rank among the toughest three-hole stretches on the PGA TOUR. These three holes rank as the third-toughest, three-hole stretch on the PGA TOUR of courses that have been played in each of the last 10 years (+0.671). The field has played that stretch of holes in a combined average of 3,489 strokes over par since 2007 (4,629 over on the other 15)

Honda longest-running title sponsor on PGA TOUR

Title sponsor of The Honda Classic since 1982, American *Honda Motor Co., Inc.* is the longest-tenured title sponsor on the PGA TOUR, now in its 38th year.

Longest-running title sponsors

Tournament	First year as title sponsor
The Honda Classic	1982
AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am	1986
John Deere Classic	1999
Sony Open in Hawaii	1999

Charity

- Since its inception, The Honda Classic has contributed more than \$50 million to national and local charities, including the Nicklaus Children's Health Care Foundation.
- The Nicklaus Children's Health Care Foundation's mission is to provide charitable support for activities that advance and enhance the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of childhood diseases and disorders.

Aon Risk Reward Challenge

The season-long Aon Risk Reward Challenge will highlight the world's best professional golfers as they tackle the most strategically challenging holes across both the PGA TOUR and LPGA. The PGA TOUR and LPGA player on top of the Aon leaderboard at the end of the regular season will each receive a \$1 million prize. The scoring system, identical on both the PGA TOUR and LPGA, is intuitive and produces a compelling risk/reward narrative throughout the season. Players will take their best two scores from each Aon Risk Reward Challenge hole, with the winners having the best average score to par at the end of the regular season. Players must play a minimum of 40 rounds throughout the season. The Challenge runs across regular season tournaments (36 PGA TOUR; 29 LPGA). To view the leaderboard and for more information about the Aon Risk Reward Challenge visit: <https://www.pgatour.com/aon-risk-reward-challenge.html>.

This week's Aon Risk Reward Challenge hole at The Honda Classic is the 434-yard par-4 16th hole at PGA National.

OPPORTUNITY

The 16th hole at PGA National (Champion) was tied for the 48th toughest hole last season (0.262-over par). The risk zones are the left fairway bunker of the tee and both greenside bunkers.

INSIGHT

Last season, the field proximity to the hole average was 44' 8" recording the longest proximity to hole of any par-4 at PGA National. Last season, when finding the fairway bunker only 41% of the field found the green in regulation. Last season, when finding the fairway bunker off the tee, only 2% of players went on to make birdie.

ADVANTAGE

The strategic insight is clear, scoring is nearly a 0.5 stroke better when playing from the fairway compared to the fairway bunker. Last year's winner Justin Thomas found the fairway bunker off the tee in the 3rd round and still went on to make par. He gained over a 0.5 stroke on the field of players who found the fairway bunker for the week.