



2026 Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches
(7th of 34 FedExCup Regular Season events)

Palm Beach Gardens, Florida
PGA National Resort (The Champion Course)

February 26 – March 1, 2026
Par/Yards: 35-36—71/7,223

FedExCup points: 500 (winner)
Purse: \$9.6 million (\$1,728,000/winner)

First-Round Notes – Thursday, February 26, 2026

Weather: Partly cloudy. High of 80. Wind SSE 10-15 mph.

First-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Player	Total
1	Austin Smotherman	62 (-9)
2	Nico Echavarria	63 (-8)
T3	Taylor Moore	67 (-4)
T3	Jackson Suber	67 (-4)
T3	Kevin Roy	67 (-4)
T3	Daniel Berger	67 (-4)
T3	Kristoffer Reitan	67 (-4)
T3	Pontus Nyholm	67 (-4)

Austin Smotherman (1st/-9)

- Loomis, California native hit 10 of 14 fairways and 17 of 18 greens in regulation for a bogey-free 9-under 62 to match his low round on TOUR (R1/2022 Butterfield Bermuda Championship)
- Holds 18-hole lead/co-lead for the third time on TOUR: 2022 Butterfield Bermuda Championship (T23), 2023 VidantaWorld Mexico Open (T5)
- Nine birdies equals his most birdies in a single round on TOUR (R1/2022 Butterfield Bermuda Championship)
- Six consecutive birdies on Nos. 7-12 marks his most consecutive birdies in a round on TOUR
- Missed the cut in lone previous appearance at The Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches (2022)
- Notched three missed cuts and one top-10 (T8/The American Express) in four starts this season
- Best finish among four top-10s in 81 prior starts on TOUR: T5/2023 VidantaWorld Mexico Open
- Secured his return to the PGA TOUR with a No. 3 finish on the 2025 Korn Ferry Tour Points List

Nico Echavarria (2nd/-8)

- Bogey-free 8-under 63 matches his career low round on TOUR (six times, most recent: R2/2026 American Express) and his low round at The Cognizant Classic
- Notched four missed cuts and one top-10 (T8/AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am) in five starts this season
- Colombia native seeks his third PGA TOUR title (2023 Puerto Rico Open, 2024 Baycurrent Classic)
- Fourth appearance at The Cognizant Classic (MC/2023, T21/2024, MC/2025)

Miscellaneous Notes

- **Daniel Berger** (T3/-4) seeks his fourth top-five finish in his 10th start at this event (2nd/2015, T4/2020, 4th/2022)
- Norway's **Kristoffer Reitan** (T3/-4), a PGA TOUR rookie after earning his TOUR card via the Top 10 in 2025 DP World Tour Eligibility Ranking, is making his seventh TOUR start; best TOUR finish: T13/2025 Genesis Scottish Open
- PGA TOUR rookie **Pontus Nyholm** (T3/-4) seeks to make his first cut in his fifth start on the PGA TOUR
- **David Ford** (T68/+1) makes eagles on hole Nos. 2 and 3 to become the first player in the last 20 years to make back-to-back eagles at PGA National (Champion Course)
- **Will Zalatoris** withdrew ahead of the opening round with an ankle injury and was replaced by **Ben Silverman** (T82/+2)
- Opening-round scores for notable players in the field:
 - 2019 Open Champion **Shane Lowry** (T35/-1)
 - Defending champion of The Cognizant Classic **Joe Highsmith** (T35/-1)
 - No. 26 in the Official World Golf Ranking, the highest-ranked player in the field **Ryan Gerard** (T82/+2)
 - Five-time major championship winner **Brooks Koepka** (T98/+3)