

THE PLAYERS Championship First-Timers Player Capsules

Zach Bauchou | Plays From / Residence: Edmond, Oklahoma | Birthplace: Forest, Virginia | College: Oklahoma State University



2026 PLAYERS Championship Category: Current Season FedExCup Standings (No. 66 at deadline)

- PGA TOUR rookie who owns six made cuts in as many starts on TOUR this season, including top-25s at The American Express (T13), Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches (T23), and Puerto Rico Open (T21).
- Earned PGA TOUR membership for the first time with a No. 11 finish on the 2025 Korn Ferry Tour Points List (top 20 earned TOUR cards); he captured his first Korn Ferry Tour title at the 2025 Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation, one of four season-ending Korn Ferry Tour Finals events.
- Began the 2023 season without membership on a PGA TOUR-sanctioned circuit, but played his way to Special Temporary Membership and a No. 82 finish on the 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Points List, as he recorded a pair of top-five finishes and an additional pair of top-25s through a combination of sponsor exemptions, top-25 rollovers, and his position on the Korn Ferry Tour Points List.
- Played four seasons at Oklahoma State University (2015-19), where he was a 2018 All-America Second Team selection and helped the Cowboys win the 2018 NCAA Championship alongside FedExCup champion Viktor Hovland, PGA TOUR winners Austin Eckroat and Matthew Wolff, and Korn Ferry Tour graduate Kris Ventura.
- Recorded top-five finishes at the Junior PLAYERS Championship in 2013 (T2) and 2014 (T5).
- Born and raised in Forest, Virginia, where he grew up playing London Downs Golf Club.
- Last name is pronounced BOH-shoo.

Michael Brennan | Plays From / Birthplace: Leesburg, Virginia | Residence: Jacksonville, Florida | College: Wake Forest University



2026 PLAYERS Championship Category: Tournament Winner (2025 Bank of Utah Championship)

- Won the 2025 Bank of Utah Championship as a sponsor exemption in his third career PGA TOUR start and first TOUR start as a professional, becoming the seventh player since 1970 to earn his first PGA TOUR win within his first three career starts.
- Prior to his first PGA TOUR title, he was in line to play the 2026 Korn Ferry Tour Season with full status as the No. 1 finisher from the 2025 PGA TOUR Americas Points List; he earned three wins en route to finishing No. 1 on PGA TOUR Americas.
- Finished No. 12 on the 2024 PGA TOUR University Ranking after four seasons at Wake Forest University, where he earned eight individual victories (tied with 17-time PGA TOUR winner Curtis Strange for the third-most career wins in school history), most notably winning the 2023 and 2024 Atlantic Coast Conference Championships.
- Grew up playing River Creek Club in his longtime hometown of Leesburg, Virginia.
- Active on Letterboxd, a social media platform for rating movies, sharing reviews, and creating movie rankings and watchlists.

Pierceson Coody | Birthplace / Residence / Plays From: Plano, Texas | College: University of Texas



2026 PLAYERS Championship Category: Top 50 in Official World Golf Ranking (No. 47 at deadline)

- Stands No. 22 in the 2026 FedExCup standings off the strength of five top-25s in seven starts, including top-10s at the Farmers Insurance Open (T2) and WM Phoenix Open (T10).
- Retained PGA TOUR membership as he finished No. 12 on the 2025 Korn Ferry Tour Points List (top 20 earned TOUR cards) in 15 starts; he also finished No. 110 in the 2025 FedExCup Fall with two top-three finishes in 17 starts.
- Previously earned PGA TOUR membership for the first time with a No. 6 finish on the 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Points List (top 30 earned TOUR cards), a season in which he earned his second and third Korn Ferry Tour titles.
- Finished No. 1 on the 2022 PGA TOUR University Ranking after four seasons at University of Texas (2018-22), where he helped the Longhorns win the 2022 NCAA Championship, the program's first national title since Jordan Spieth led Texas to victory at the 2012 NCAA Championship.
- Grandfather, Charles Coody, earned PGA TOUR victories at the 1964 Dallas Open Invitational (now known as THE CJ CUP Byron Nelson), 1969 Cleveland Open Invitational, and 1971 Masters Tournament.
- Fraternal twin brother and Class of 2023 Korn Ferry Tour graduate, Parker, is 37 minutes older than Pierceson; they followed Allan and Curtis Strange (1981) as the second set of twins to simultaneously hold TOUR membership.

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Zecheng Dou | Plays From / Birthplace: Zhengzhou, China | Residence: Dallas, Texas | Pronunciation: zuh-CHUNG DOH



2026 PLAYERS Championship Category: Current Season FedExCup Standings (No. 59 at deadline)

- Stands No. 66 in the 2026 FedExCup standings off the strength of back-to-back top-25s at the WM Phoenix Open (T13) and Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches (T17); he has six made cuts in as many starts this season.
- Three-time Korn Ferry Tour winner and three-time Korn Ferry Tour graduate (2017, 2022, 2025) who returned to the PGA TOUR after a No. 18 finish on the 2025 Korn Ferry Tour Points List (top 20 earned TOUR cards).
- Closed the 2025 Korn Ferry Tour Season with consecutive finishes of T2, solo second, and T18 in the final three events, climbing 40 spots in the standings to earn his place in the top 20 and secure PGA TOUR membership.
- Became the first Chinese-born golfer to win on the Korn Ferry Tour with his victory at the 2017 AdventHealth Championship, which propelled him to PGA TOUR membership at season's end; he was the third-youngest winner in Korn Ferry Tour history at the time (20 years, 6 months, 8 days), and became the third-youngest graduate in Korn Ferry Tour history, only trailing Jason Day (2007) and Si Woo Kim (2015) in both categories.
- Known as an excellent table tennis player, is a longtime fan of the anime television series *Naruto*, and previously believed he was a "professional level" video game player, though he now refers to himself as a "scratch player."
- Also goes by Marty, a name given to him by his kindergarten teacher in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

A.J. Ewart | Birthplace / Residence / Plays From: Coquitlam, British Columbia, Canada | College: Barry University



2026 PLAYERS Championship Category: Current Season FedExCup Standings (No. 67 at deadline)

- PGA TOUR rookie who stands No. 70 in the 2026 FedExCup standings off the strength of a T13 finish at the Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches; he has five made cuts in six starts this season.
- Earned PGA TOUR membership for the first time as the medalist at Final Stage of 2025 PGA TOUR Q-School presented by Korn Ferry, contested at TPC Sawgrass (Dye's Valley Course) and Sawgrass Country Club.
- Prior to earning PGA TOUR membership, played two seasons on PGA TOUR Americas (2024, 2025); he notably won the 2024 Elk Ridge Saskatchewan Open and finished No. 15 on the 2025 PGA TOUR Americas Points List.
- Played four seasons at Barry University (2019-23), an NCAA Division II program in Miami Shores, Florida, where he was credited with 14 collegiate victories; he tallied seven victories as a junior (2021-22 season), tying a school record previously established by PGA TOUR winner Adam Svensson en route to earning the 2022 Division II Jack Nicklaus Award at season's end.
- Got into golf at a young age through his father, Brad, who held Class "A" Assistant Golf Coach status with the Professional Golfers' Association of Canada and spent more than 30 years as a professional and journalist in 32 countries worldwide; Brad was also known as a talented trick shot artist who entertained fans around the world.
- Shared a house in Phoenix, Arizona with fellow Golf Canada members, including Sudarshan Yellamaraju.

Steven Fisk | Plays From: Sea Island, Georgia | Residence: Evans, Georgia | College: Georgia Southern University



2026 PLAYERS Championship Category: Tournament Winner (2025 Sanderson Farms Championship)

- As a PGA TOUR rookie last season, earned his first TOUR title at the 2025 Sanderson Farms Championship, where he birdied four of the final five holes (including the last three) for a two-stroke victory over Garrick Higgo.
- Earned PGA TOUR membership for the first time with a No. 4 finish on the 2024 Korn Ferry Tour Points List; he earned his first Korn Ferry Tour title at the 2024 Club Car Championship at The Landings Golf & Athletic Club in Savannah, Georgia, less than 60 miles from his alma mater, Georgia Southern University. Previously finished No. 64 on the 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Points List and No. 119 on the 2022 Korn Ferry Tour Points List.
- Played four seasons at Georgia Southern University (2015-19), where he earned a school-record nine wins.
- Individual runner-up finisher (to PGA TOUR winner Matthew Wolff) at the 2019 NCAA Championship.
- Has a unique grip he refuses to change. In fact, he went without a coach for many, many years because he feared it would be the first thing a coach would change. He says of the grip, "I certainly think the right way to hold a golf club is different than the way I do it, but it's just so ingrained in me... I don't think I can change."
- Grew up in Stockbridge, Georgia, where he developed his game at Rum Creek Golf Course, a par-3 course and driving range built (and operated for many years) by his late father, Christopher, and another family.

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Takumi Kanaya | Plays From: Hiroshima, Japan | Residence: Tokyo, Japan | Pronunciation: tuh-KOO-mee kuh-NYE-uh



2026 PLAYERS Championship Category: Top 100 from 2025 FedExCup Fall (finished No. 99)

- Finished No. 99 in the 2025 FedExCup Fall standings in his first season with PGA TOUR membership, recording a pair of top-five finishes in the final five events of the season (T4/Baycurrent Classic, T3/Butterfield Bermuda Championship) to earn his place in the top 100.
- Earned PGA TOUR membership for the first time with a top-five finish (solo third) at Final Stage of 2024 PGA TOUR Q-School presented by Korn Ferry, contested at TPC Sawgrass (Dye's Valley Course) and Sawgrass Country Club.
- Eight-time winner on the Japan Golf Tour, with his most recent win on the circuit being the 2025 ANA Open Golf Tournament last September. Previously earned his first Japan Golf Tour victory while still an amateur (2019 Mitsui Sumitomo Visa Taiheiyo Masters), becoming the fourth amateur to win on the circuit.
- Earned the 2020 Mark H. McCormack Medal as the world's top amateur; he spent a total of 55 weeks at No. 1 in the World Amateur Golf Ranking, including a streak of 54 consecutive weeks which ended once he turned professional in September 2020.
- Amateur wins included the 2015 Japan Amateur Championship and 2018 Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship.

Johnny Kiefer | Plays From / Residence: San Antonio, Texas | Birthplace: Baltimore, Maryland | College: Baylor University



2026 PLAYERS Championship Category: No. 1 from 2025 Korn Ferry Tour Points List

- PGA TOUR rookie who earned TOUR membership for the first time with a No. 1 finish on the 2025 Korn Ferry Tour Points List; he earned two victories, led the Korn Ferry Tour with six top-five finishes, and broke the Korn Ferry Tour record for single-season scoring average (67.95).
- Finished No. 1 on the 2024 PGA TOUR Americas Points List off the strength of a win and four runner-up finishes.
- Finished No. 25 on the 2024 PGA TOUR University Ranking -- the final position which awarded performance benefits -- after five seasons at Baylor University (2019-24), where he broke the school record for career scoring average (71.45) previously established by six-time PGA TOUR winner Jimmy Walker (71.55 from 1997-2001); his PGA TOUR University performance benefits included PGA TOUR Americas membership.
- Native of Baltimore, Maryland who moved to San Diego, California when he was seven years old and eventually got hooked on golf at The Farms Golf Club. After seven years in California, moved to San Antonio, Texas and joined TPC San Antonio, host of the PGA TOUR's Valero Texas Open.
- Often played the forward tees to get used to shooting low scores, and his childhood coach did not let him move back to a longer tee box until he could break 65 from the current tee box.
- Huge fan of the popular television series *The Office*. Claims to have seen the show in its entirety over 10 times.

William Mow | Plays From / Residence: Chino Hills, California | Birthplace: Upland, California | College: Pepperdine University



2026 PLAYERS Championship Category: Tournament Winner (2025 ISCO Championship)

- As a PGA TOUR rookie last season, won the 2025 ISCO Championship, where he began the final round seven strokes off the lead and closed in 9-under 61 for a one-stroke victory; he became the first player since Smylie Kaufman (2015 Shriners Hospitals for Children Open) who overcame a seven-stroke deficit in the final round and earned their first PGA TOUR win.
- Earned PGA TOUR membership for the first time with a No. 10 finish on the 2024 Korn Ferry Tour Points List.
- Finished No. 6 on the 2023 PGA TOUR University Ranking after four seasons at Pepperdine University (2019-23), where he was the 2023 West Coast Conference Player of the Year and helped the Waves win the 2021 NCAA Championship, their first national title since 1997, when PGA TOUR winner Jason Gore led Pepperdine to victory.
- Grew up playing El Prado Golf Courses and Los Serranos Golf Club -- both of which have two courses open to the public -- in Chino, California. Also grew up attending The Genesis Invitational.
- Enjoys watching NBA basketball games, and his unique talents include unicycling and juggling eggs; he taught himself to juggle with golf balls and a how-to video on YouTube.
- Last name is pronounced MOW (rhymes with the word how).

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Marco Penge | Plays From: Horsham, West Sussex, England | Residence: Palm Beach Gardens, Florida | Pronunciation: PENJ



2026 PLAYERS Championship Category: Top 50 in Official World Golf Ranking (No. 35 at deadline)

- PGA TOUR rookie who earned TOUR membership for the first time through the DP World Tour as one of the top 10 players from the 2025 Race to Dubai Rankings who were not already exempt; he finished No. 2 on the 2025 Race to Dubai Rankings, only trailing two-time PLAYERS Championship winner Rory McIlroy.
- Won three times in a six-month stretch last year (April, August, October) en route to his No. 2 finish on the 2025 Race to Dubai Rankings, with his most notable victory coming at the 2025 Open de España.
- Concluded his rookie season on the DP World Tour at No. 110 on the 2024 Race to Dubai Rankings -- the final position which awarded full status for the 2025 season; he solidified his position in the standings with a birdie on the 72nd hole of the regular season finale (Genesis Championship, contested at Jack Nicklaus Golf Club Korea).
- Finished No. 1 on the 2023 HotelPlanner Tour Order of Merit and earned DP World Tour membership.
- Often watched THE PLAYERS Championship in his youth, holding the event and its closing stretch in high regard.
- Missed the two PGA TOUR events leading into THE PLAYERS as he and his wife, Sophie, a retired professional golfer, celebrated the birth of their second child; they have two sons -- Enzo (2024) and Romeo (2026).



Kristoffer Reitan | Birthplace: Oslo, Norway | Residence: West Palm Beach, Florida | Pronunciation: RYE-tin



2026 PLAYERS Championship Category: Top 50 in Official World Golf Ranking (No. 43 at deadline)

- PGA TOUR rookie who earned TOUR membership for the first time through the DP World Tour as one of the top 10 players from the 2025 Race to Dubai Rankings who were not already exempt.
- Finished No. 8 on the 2025 Race to Dubai Rankings off the strength of his first DP World Tour title at the 2025 Soudal Open, where he followed Viktor Hovland as the second Norwegian to win a DP World Tour event.
- Earned his second DP World Tour title at the 2025 Nedbank Golf Challenge in South Africa last December, a victory which solidified his place in the top 50 of the year-ending Official World Golf Ranking.
- As an amateur, earned DP World Tour membership for the 2019 season through its annual Qualifying School, after which he turned professional; he was relegated to the HotelPlanner Tour following his rookie season, though he later returned to the DP World Tour after a No. 7 finish on the 2024 HotelPlanner Tour Order of Merit.
- Finished T9 at the 2016 Junior PLAYERS Championship and played half a season at University of Texas (fall 2017).
- Grandfather, Odd Reitan, is the CEO and co-owner (with sons Ole Robert and Magnus, the latter being Kristoffer's father) of REITAN, a Norwegian conglomerate with businesses in retail, real estate and financial investment.



Jordan Smith | Plays From / Birthplace: Bath, Somerset, England | Residence: Surrey, England



2026 PLAYERS Championship Category: Current Season FedExCup Standings (No. 60 at deadline)

- PGA TOUR rookie who stands No. 73 in the 2026 FedExCup standings with two top-25s in five starts this season (T16/WM Phoenix Open, T23/Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches).
- Earned PGA TOUR membership for the first time through the DP World Tour as one of the top 10 players from the 2025 Race to Dubai Rankings who were not already exempt; he finished No. 16 on the 2025 Race to Dubai Rankings, earning PGA TOUR membership after nine consecutive seasons on the DP World Tour.
- Two-time DP World Tour winner with victories at the 2017 Porsche European Open and 2022 Portugal Masters.
- Turned professional in 2014 and quickly ascended to the DP World Tour, as he finished atop the 2015 PGA EuroPro Tour Order of Merit and 2016 HotelPlanner Tour Order of Merit, winning twice on both circuits.
- Grew up in Wiltshire, England, which is best known as being the home of Stonehenge.
- Longtime member of Bowood, a golf club in Wiltshire, England; the club features an 18-hole course designed by Dave Thomas, best known for playing in four Ryder Cups (1959, 1963, 1965, 1967) and earning runner-up finishes at the 1958 and 1966 Open Championships.



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Michael Thorbjornsen | Plays From: Wellesley, Massachusetts | Residence: Jacksonville, Florida | College: Stanford University



2026 PLAYERS Championship Category: Top 100 from 2025 FedExCup Fall (finished No. 70)

- Finished No. 70 in the 2025 FedExCup Fall standings in his first full season with PGA TOUR membership; he earned podium finishes at the 2025 Corales Puntacana Championship (T2) and 2025 Baycurrent Classic (3rd).
- Finished No. 1 on the 2024 PGA TOUR University Ranking, following Ludvig Åberg (2023) as the second player who earned PGA TOUR membership as the No. 1 player from PGA TOUR University.
- Played four seasons at Stanford University (2021-24), where he earned three collegiate victories -- including medalist honors at the 2023 Pac-12 Conference Championship -- and finished with a 70.40 career scoring average, which ranked third in program history behind Patrick Rodgers (70.31) and Maverick McNealy (70.12).
- Notable amateur victories included the 2021 Western Amateur (defeated Gordon Sargent in the championship match) and the 113th Massachusetts Amateur Championship (contested in July 2021).
- Spent his first three years of high school at IMG Academy in Bradenton, Florida, but returned to his longtime hometown of Wellesley, Massachusetts for his senior year.
- Frequently played popular video games Call of Duty and PGA TOUR 2K with his Stanford teammates; he also bought a Nintendo Switch for the team, which led to countless Mario Kart races.
- Last name is pronounced THOR-be-orn-son.



Sudarshan Yellamaraju | Plays From: Mississauga, Ontario, Canada | Birthplace: Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India



2026 PLAYERS Championship Category: Current Season FedExCup Standings (No. 62 at deadline)

- PGA TOUR rookie who stands No. 67 in the 2026 FedExCup standings with top-25s at the Sony Open in Hawaii (T13) and Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches (T17); he has five made cuts in six starts this season.
- Earned PGA TOUR membership for the first time with a No. 19 finish on the 2025 Korn Ferry Tour Points List (top 20 earned TOUR cards); he secured his position in the top 20 off the strength of his victory at The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club, where three-time PGA TOUR winner Darren Clarke presented the trophy.
- Eschewed college golf and turned professional in 2021 at 19 years old; he was homeschooled and took a gap year prior to turning professional.
- Spent the early years of his childhood in India, though his family emigrated to Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada around the time he was four years old; he got his start in golf in Winnipeg, mostly hitting range balls with a set of rental clubs at a local golf dome, watching and analyzing videos of Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy on YouTube, and watching golf on television with his father, Suresh.
- Eventually moved to Mississauga, Ontario, Canada around the time he was 11 years old, and later won the 2017 Ontario Men's Amateur Championship at age 16, a victory he refers to as a "big turning point" in his golf journey.
- Big fan of Manchester United and enjoys listening to the popular soccer podcast "Stick to Football".
- Name is pronounced suh-DAR-shin yell-uh-MUH-rah-ju.



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