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**2019 Safeway Open Pre-Tournament Notes**

**Dates:** September 23-29, 2019

**Where:** Silverado Resort & Spa (North Course), Napa, California

**Par/Yards:** 36-36--72/7,166 yards

**Field:** 144

**2018 champion:** Kevin Tway

**Purse:** \$6,600,000/\$1,188,000 (winner)

**FedExCup:** 500 points (winner)

**Format:** 72-hole stroke play

**Things to know**

- Phil Mickelson, Justin Thomas, Francesco Molinari, Patrick Cantlay, Bryson DeChambeau and Adam Scott headline the best field in Safeway Open history; Molinari and Scott are both making their first starts at the Safeway Open, while Thomas returns after a two-year absence, having finished T8 in 2016 and T3 in 2015 in his last two starts at the event.
- Fresh off his first career win at the Sanderson Farms Championship, Sebastian Munoz will compete at the Safeway Open as the FedExCup points leader
- The Safeway Open is one of a record 11 official FedExCup events held in this fall season. Last season, six of eight fall winners went on to qualify for the season-ending TOUR Championship
- Two-time NBA MVP Steph Curry is scheduled to play in the Wednesday pro-am with Phil Mickelson
- Kevin Tway defends his first PGA TOUR title

**Notes on the field**

- 21 of the top 30 in the current FedExCup standings
- 13 of the 30 players that qualified for the 2019 TOUR Championship
- 15 of the top 50 in the Official World Golf Ranking
- FedExCup champions: Jim Furyk (2010), Brandt Snedeker (2012), Justin Thomas (2017)
- Eight players that will compete in the 2019 Presidents Cup: U.S.: Justin Thomas, Bryson DeChambeau, Patrick Cantlay; International: Hideki Matsuyama, Adam Scott, Marc Leishman, Abraham Ancer, C.T. Pan
- The last five Safeway Open champions: Sangmoon Bae (2014), Emiliano Grillo (2015), Brendan Steele (2016, 2017), Kevin Tway (2018)
- Three Safeway Open winners have advanced to the FedExCup season-finale TOUR Championship: Jimmy Walker (2013-14), Sangmoon Bae (2014-15), Emiliano Grillo (2015-16)
- Sponsor exemptions include former Dallas Cowboys quarterback Tony Romo, 17-year-old Akshay Bhatia, World Golf Hall of Fame member Fred Couples and two-time major champion John Daly

**A look at the 2018 Safeway Open**

- Kevin Tway defeated Ryan Moore with a birdie-3 on the third playoff hole (par-4 10<sup>th</sup> hole) to win the 2018 Safeway Open. Brandt Snedeker was eliminated on the first hole. Tway birdied his final five holes to notch his first PGA TOUR title (Nos. 17-18 in regulation, Nos. 18-18-10 in playoff). The playoff was the fifth in the 12-year history of the Safeway Open

**2018 Safeway Open Leaderboard**

Kevin Tway	68-67-68-71—274 (-14)*
Ryan Moore	67-67-73-67—274 (-14)

Brandt Snedeker	66-65-69-74—274 (-14)
Luke List	70-69-69-67—275 (-13)
Troy Merritt	67-70-70-68—275 (-13)
Sam Ryder	69-70-67-69—275 (-13)
Aaron Baddeley	70-67-69-69—275 (-13)
Sungjae Im	66-69-69-71—275 (-13)

\*won playoff with a birdie-3 on the third extra hole (par-4 10<sup>th</sup>)

#### **More on Kevin Tway**

- Won in his fifth start at the Safeway Open (MC/2011, T40/2013, T62/2016, T52/2017, Won/2018)
- Safeway Open was first of six tournaments in 2018-19 PGA TOUR season where he posted all four rounds under-par in an event – after achieving this feat just five times in his 90 previous career TOUR starts (twice/2016-17, 3 times/2017-18)
- Only other top-10 finish last season was T5 at Travelers Championship
- Along with his dad, eight-time PGA TOUR winner Bob Tway, became the 10<sup>th</sup> father-son duo to win on the PGA TOUR, joining Tom Morris Sr. and Jr., Willie Park Sr. and Jr., Joe Kirkwood Sr. and Jr., Jack Burke Sr. and Jr., Clayton/Vance Heafner, Julius/Guy Boros, Al/Brent Geiberger, Jay/Bill Haas and Craig/Kevin Stadler

#### **Notable players**

##### **Phil Mickelson**

- 44-time PGA TOUR winner makes fifth start at Safeway Open (2007/MC, 2016/T8, 2017/T3, 2018/T17)
- Most recent win was 2019 AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am
- Requires Captain's Pick to extend record streak of competing in every Presidents Cup – 12 in total since 1994
- 12-under 60 in R1 of The American Express in 2019 tied low round of the 2018-19 PGA TOUR season (with Brandt Snedeker)

##### **Justin Thomas**

- 2017 FedExCup champion makes fifth appearance at Safeway Open (T8/2016, T3/2015, MC/2014, T72/2013)
- Advanced to TOUR Championship each of last four FedExCup seasons
- Won his 10<sup>th</sup> career PGA TOUR title at the 2019 BMW Championship, one of six top-five finishes in 20 starts last season
- Three of his 10 wins have come in the fall (2015 & 2016 CIMB Classic, 2017 THE CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES)

##### **Adam Scott**

- Australian makes first appearance at Safeway Open
- One of nine players to have advanced to the FedExCup Playoffs 13 times in 13 seasons
- 2013 Masters Tournament and 2004 THE PLAYERS Championship among his 13 PGA TOUR victories

##### **Francesco Molinari**

- Became first Italian to win a major championship with win at 2018 The Open Championship
- Makes first appearance at Safeway Open
- Won third PGA TOUR title at 2019 Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by Mastercard

##### **Patrick Cantlay**

- Improved his position in each of his three appearances at Safeway Open (T67/2011, T47/2012, T17/2018)
- Collected second PGA TOUR title with victory at 2019 the Memorial Tournament presented by Nationwide
- Posted career-best nine top-10s in the 2018-19 season
- Advanced to the TOUR Championship for the third consecutive season, finishing No. 21 in the FedExCup

##### **Brandt Snedeker**

- Entered final round of 2018 Safeway Open with a three-stroke lead over Kevin Tway, carded a final-round 74 and was eliminated on the first playoff hole against Ryan Moore and Tway
- Runner-up finish was best performance in three Safeway Open starts (P2/2018, T17/2015, T57/2014)

- Led the field with 23 birdies in 2018 Safeway Open
- Recorded the 10<sup>th</sup> sub-60 score in PGA TOUR history (ninth player) with 59 at 2018 Wyndham Championship

#### Sungjae Im

- Voted 2019 PGA TOUR Rookie of the Year, becoming the first player since Stewart Cink (1996/1997) to win PGA TOUR Rookie of the Year (Arnold Palmer Award) after claiming the Player of the Year award on the Korn Ferry Tour the prior year
- Only PGA TOUR rookie to advance to the 2019 TOUR Championship, finishing No. 19 in the FedExCup
- Made first ace of the 2019-20 PGA TOUR Season at A Military Tribute at The Greenbrier
- Last week, finished second to Sebastian Munoz at the Sanderson Farms Championship in a playoff while seeking his first PGA TOUR win

#### Additional player notes

- Following a T7 to open the season at A Military Tribute at The Greenbrier, **Sebastian Munoz** claimed his first PGA TOUR title at last week's Sanderson Farms Championship. Munoz joins **Harris English** as the only players with two top-10s to begin the 2019-20 season. Neither player has recorded a top-10 finish at the Safeway Open
- After T3 and T6 results in the first two events this season, **Harris English** seeks three consecutive top-10s for the first time since 2014 (9<sup>th</sup>/Waste Management Phoenix Open, T10/Genesis Open, T9/WGC-Dell Technologies Match Play)
- Former World No. 1 amateur **Maverick McNealy** made his first start as a professional at the 2017 Safeway Open (T52) and finished T63 in 2018; PGA TOUR rookie finished No. 23 on Korn Ferry Tour Regular Season points list to earn PGA TOUR card; Stanford University grad claimed 11 school victories, tying the record for most with Tiger Woods and Patrick Rodgers
- Sacramento, California native **Cameron Champ**, a nominee for PGA TOUR Rookie of the Year award in 2018-19, makes third start at Safeway Open (2017/MC, 2018/T25); followed 2018 Sanderson Farms Championship victory with T10 at Mayakoba Golf Classic and sixth at The RSM Classic last fall for his only top-10 finishes last season; One of eight rookies to qualify for the FedExCup Playoffs, eventually ending the season No. 62; led driving distance statistical category on 2018-19 PGA TOUR season with 317.9 yards (TOUR average was 293.9)
- **Bo Van Pelt**, who finished T2 at the 2010 Safeway Open, is scheduled to make his 399<sup>th</sup> PGA TOUR start (first since 2016 AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am) while using one-time top-50 career money exemption; Van Pelt has been sidelined with a torn labrum in his left shoulder

#### Sponsor Exemption notes

- World Golf Hall of Fame member **Fred Couples** makes third start at Safeway Open (2009/T66, 2018/T41); 13-time winner on PGA TOUR Champions has five top-10s on the over-50 circuit this season, including a runner-up (DICK'S Sporting Goods Open) and T3 (Boeing Classic) in back-to-back weeks
- Wake Forest, North Carolina resident **Akshay Bhatia** made professional debut at 2019 Sanderson Farms Championship at age 17 (MC); Left-hander missed the cut in PGA TOUR debut at 2019 Valspar Championship but finished T42 in Korn Ferry Tour debut at 2019 Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail Championship; youngest player to be named to the United States Walker Cup team, competing for the winning 2019 team
- Former Dallas Cowboys quarterback and current CBS Sports NFL analyst **Tony Romo** has played three PGA TOUR events, missing the cut in each: 2018 & 2019 Corales Puntacana Resort & Club Championship, 2019 AT&T Byron Nelson; won the 2019 American Century Championship at Lake Tahoe, defending the title he won the previous year
- Two-time major champion **John Daly** makes fifth start at Safeway Open; Finished 72<sup>nd</sup> in most recent appearance in 2017

#### Safeway Open notes

- Five playoffs in tournament history: 2018, 2015, 2011, 2009, 2008
- Four international winners: Mike Weir/2007 (Canada), Jonas Blixt/2012 (Sweden), Sangmoon Bae/2014 (South Korea), Emiliano Grillo/2015 (Argentina)
- Brendan Steele is the only multiple winner, claiming the title in back-to-back years (2016, 2017)
- Mike Weir/2007 (2003 Masters Tournament) and Jimmy Walker/2013 (2016 PGA Championship) are the only two Safeway Open champions who have also won major championship titles

- Largest come-from-behind victory: 4 strokes (Brendan Steele/2016)
- Lone wire-to-wire winner: Rocco Mediate/2010
- Tournament records: 61 (18-hole), 128 (36-hole), 194 (54-hole), 262 (72-hole)

#### **Miscellaneous notes**

- Safeway Food & Wine Pavilion is a 25,000 square foot air-conditioned tent with two viewing decks where fans can experience food from Thomas Keller, Iron Chef Morimoto and Charlie Parker
- Celebrities playing in the Wednesday pro-am: Steph Curry, Tony Romo, Thomas Keller, Cody Ross, Ryan Vogelsong
- Under Armor junior clinic is Wednesday at 4 p.m.
- Safeway Open Concert Series features Jake Owen (Thursday), Bad Company (Friday) and Rob Thomas (Saturday)
- The 2018 Safeway Open earned "Most Fan First" event from PGA TOUR

#### **Presidents Cup notes**

- U.S. and International Presidents Cup Team potential candidates have the majority of the fall schedule to impress before Captains Tiger Woods (United States) and Ernie Els (International) each make their four Captain's Picks the week of November 4<sup>th</sup>
- Eight players in the Safeway Open field have already qualified for the Presidents Cup: Justin Thomas, Bryson DeChambeau, Patrick Cantlay, Hideki Matsuyama, Adam Scott, Marc Leishman, Abraham Ancer, C.T. Pan. Potential Captain's Picks in the field include: Sebastian Munoz, Sungjae Im, Corey Connors, Byeong Hun An, Si Woo Kim, Sung Kang, Emiliano Grillo and Adam Hadwin for the Internationals; Chez Reavie, Phil Mickelson, Charles Howell III and Brandt Snedeker for the United States

#### **Charity**

- The host organization, Golf Charities Foundation, Inc., supports the Safeway Foundation which donates to non-profit organizations with missions aligned with Health & Human Services, Hunger, Youth & Education, Veterans and supports Diversity & Inclusion of All Abilities. In three years, the Safeway Open has raised nearly \$6 million.