

Report (11 players)

Ben Griffin

Things To Know

- Earned his second PGA TOUR title and first individual stroke-play victory on TOUR at the 2025 Charles Schwab Challenge, with the two victories coming in a span of 28 days. After the victory, reflected on his journey to the winner's circle, saying, "It's crazy how fast things can change in this game. Even going back to when I didn't have any status on any sort of Tours... it's a bunch of stepping stones that gets you to the next part of your career. Now I'm at the point where I feel like I'm starting to show I am an elite golfer. I can compete against the best. Golf is not an easy game. It's a very hard game, and you don't win very often. Some people never win."
- Earned his first PGA TOUR win alongside Andrew Novak at the 2025 Zurich Classic of New Orleans. Griffin and Novak were frequent playing partners for a three-year stretch from 2022-25 when both were St. Simons Island, Georgia / Sea Island residents (Griffin relocated to Jupiter, Florida in March 2025). The kinship between the two also dates back to their teenage years, as Griffin (grew up in Chapel Hill, North Carolina) and Novak (born in Raleigh, North Carolina but grew up in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina) competed against one another in Carolinas Golf Association events in their early teens.
- The bold aviator sunglasses Griffin wears are not just for style. Griffin revealed he "sees floaters" and has "really bad vision." In 2024, Griffin had laser surgery to fill eight retinal holes in both his eyes, noting he was at risk of losing vision within five or six months without the treatment. Griffin says of his sunglasses, "I still see the floaters. I had to get surgery just to maintain my level. When I wear sunglasses, it's a little bit darker out, so I don't see the floaters as well. If it's really bright out and I'm not wearing the sunglasses, I look into the clouds or whatever and I see black stuff everywhere."
- Gained popularity for his social media accounts (@bengriffingolf), which frequently showcased a "Day in the Life" of a PGA TOUR player, documenting everything from his food choices to his practice and recovery routines at tournaments.
- Earned his first PGA TOUR card via the 2022 Korn Ferry Tour season, which saw him record three runner-up finishes. Ben also finished solo-fourth as a sponsor exemption at the 2022 Wyndham Championship, the final event of the PGA TOUR regular season. Sedgefield Country Club in Greensboro, North Carolina is roughly 60 miles west of Ben's hometown of Chapel Hill.
- Quit professional golf in April 2021 after failed runs on Korn Ferry Tour (six missed cuts in eight starts in 2019) and PGA TOUR Latinoamerica (four missed cuts in four starts for the 2020-21 season), citing burnout and financial strain and saying, "I wasn't making enough money to support myself. My parents have always been supportive of me, but I never wanted to ask them for more help. I wanted to start making some financial decisions on my own, and that's why I had to go to work. I wasn't confident in myself to make it all the way to the (PGA) TOUR back then." He accepted a job in property management at the beginning of April, earned a license and transitioned into working as a mortgage loan officer in his hometown of Chapel Hill, North Carolina in May.
- First pondered a return to professional golf in July 2021, when he accidentally drove to the golf course instead of the office. One of the key moments in his return was when he Monday qualified into the 2021 Price Cutter Charity Championship at Springfield, Missouri's Highland

Springs Country Club, where a friend, Mike Swann, was a member. Swann flew him out for a member-guest tournament at the club, and he and other members of the club encouraged Griffin to enter the Monday qualifier. Griffin, who estimated he played 12 rounds in the four months prior to the qualifier, missed the cut but ultimately decided it was time for another run at professional golf. Ben and Mike remain close friends.

- Completed his professional golf comeback with a T29 at Final Stage of the 2021 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament (now known as PGA TOUR Q-School presented by Korn Ferry) for guaranteed starts to begin the 2022 season. "It was hard, but I had a couple things telling me I needed to go back," Griffin said of the decision to quit his job as a mortgage loan officer. "For a while, I had lost my dreams."

Background

- Relocated to Jupiter, Florida in March 2025. Previously spent the early part of his professional career in St. Simons Island, Georgia (September 2018 through December 2020), after which he moved back to his longtime hometown of Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Griffin went back to St. Simons Island in April 2022, spending nearly three years there until relocating to Jupiter.
- Born and raised in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, where he attended East Chapel Hill High School and the University of North Carolina.
- Held and swung a club as early as 11 months old (family has a photo), but he enjoyed baseball, basketball, and soccer more than golf until he was 10 or 11 years old.
- Grew up playing mostly at Chapel Hill Country Club until 2008, after which he mostly played and practiced at University of North Carolina Finley Golf Course, a Tom Fazio design which opened in 1999 and is home to UNC's golf program. Griffin's familiarity with Finley Golf Course made the transition to college golf very easy, as he noted, "I knew every break on those greens."
- Chapel Hill Country Club did not have a sprawling practice facility, just a small chipping area and putting green, a key reason why his short game became one of his greatest strengths.
- Won two U.S. Kids Golf Teen World Golf Championships at Pinehurst, winning the Boys 14 title in 2010 and the Boys 15-18 crown in 2011. The 2010 field included PGA TOUR winner Sam Burns, who finished T9. Griffin beat PGA TOUR member Will Gordon by a stroke to take the 2011 title.
- Won the 2013 AJGA Rolex Tournament of Champions over a field which included Doug Ghim (T4), Sam Burns (6th), Zecheng Dou (7th), Carl Yuan (9th), Scottie Scheffler (T10), and Cameron Champ (T15), in addition to earning a spot on the 2013 AJGA Rolex Junior All-America First Team with Scheffler and Collin Morikawa.
- Won individual North Carolina state titles as a freshman (2011) and junior (2013); he chipped in on the second playoff hole when he won the 2011 title as freshman.
- By the time Griffin was 16 years old, he was driving himself to golf tournaments and staying in hotels on his own, because both his parents were working. Griffin recalled, "I'd tell the front desk, 'Look, my dad is coming to check us in, don't worry. He's on a call and running behind. I just need a room key.' It worked every time."
- Played four seasons at University of North Carolina (2014-18), where he won three individual tournament titles (two in fall 2014 as a freshman, one in fall 2017 as a senior) and broke the program record for career scoring average (72.02) which was once held by Davis Love III (72.57 from 1982-85). Also fell in a playoff for individual medalist honors at the 2017 Atlantic Coast Conference Championship, losing to Korn Ferry Tour graduate Jimmy Stanger, then at University of Virginia.
- Held PGA TOUR Canada status when he turned professional out of University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill in the summer of 2018, won the 2018 Staal Foundation Open, his sixth

PGA TOUR Canada start, and finished eighth on the Order of Merit; he passed up an equipment sponsorship when he turned professional to play the season with familiar equipment.

Family

- Fiancee, Dana. Ben proposed on July 27, 2024 at the Cloister in Sea Island, Georgia.
- His father, Cowan, and mother, Erika, met at University of North Carolina and settled in Chapel Hill after college.
- Cowan has a knack for surprising Ben at tournaments but refrains from watching too much. He surprised Ben when he won on PGA TOUR Canada at the 2018 Staal Foundation Open in Thunder Bay, Ontario, flying from North Carolina to Minneapolis, renting a car and making an 8-hour drive to the golf course. Ben recalled, "I turned to the left and saw him (on the 10th hole). That was a lot of emotions... I can't believe he did it. I love it." Ben proceeded to birdie Nos. 10-12 and Nos. 16-18 to win by a stroke.
- Erika worked as a loan officer and convinced Ben to become one himself when he quit professional golf in April 2021.
- Has a younger brother, Stuart.
- His grandpa, Douglas Griffin, was one of his biggest golf mentors as a youngster, and his passing in July 2021 influenced Ben's return to professional golf. Ben noted, "In his obituary he said, hit them long and straight. When I saw that, and after I had accidentally driven to the course (instead of work), I was like, 'Maybe I need to give this another run.'"
- His great grandfather, Benjamin Cowan Shields, played professional baseball (pitcher) for the New York Yankees from 1924-25, Boston Red Sox in 1930, and Philadelphia Phillies in 1931. He joined the Yankees late in 1923, pitched batting practice, and Babe Ruth hit a line drive into the right side of his chest. Near the end of 1925, Shields had recurring medical problems and discovered the line drive damaged his lung and it became infected over the two-year period. He was diagnosed with tuberculosis and voluntarily retired until a brief return in the early 1930s.

Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Revamped his daily training routine in the leadup to his breakout multi-win season in 2025. Griffin said, "I was more into the longevity of the game, staying flexible... I had quad tendonitis in my left knee that sparked up [in winter 2024]. It was really messing me up. What I learned is I needed to strengthen it as much as possible. So at first, I was training just to be healthy again. What I came to learn is I was starting to feel better, I was starting to feel stronger, I was starting to gain a little bit of [ball] speed."
- Griffin also says of his revamped training routine, "Aside from playing professional golf, it feels like it's almost a separate thing I'm working on when I'm in the gym and training and taking care of my body."
- Does not drink alcohol during the season and -- after some prompting from his fiancée, Dana -- transitioned to a predominantly vegan diet around 2022 as he made his professional golf comeback. Griffin says of the choices, "Some people treat food like entertainment, but food is fuel. I eat for energy. Research says veganism helps with inflammation. I've never felt better. I needed to stop drinking during the season. I didn't have a drinking problem, but I was drinking like I was still in college. When you drink consistently, you think you feel good, but you don't. Now I feel incredible."
- Does not drink coffee or soda, humorously saying he does not need any added energy from caffeine.

- Enjoys going to the lake, wakeboarding, surfing, and being outside as much as possible.
- Huge fan of music in general, including electronic dance music.
- Picked up djaying as a hobby in college. His senior year at University of North Carolina, he traded some golf clubs with Tar Heels basketball player K.J. Smith, son of Kenny "The Jet" Smith, for a travel turntable kit K.J. had stopped using. Ben traveled with the turntable kit while he played PGA TOUR Canada his first summer out of college. He said, "it was a fun hobby" for him on the road. Because of the hobby, some friends began to call him "Benny Beats" and "Spinny Griff" both for his djaying and spinny wedges shots. Ben would love to meet Kygo, a Norwegian DJ, and Gryffin, a popular American DJ.
- Remains an avid North Carolina Tar Heels supporter.
- Also a huge Jim Nantz fan, in large part because Ben's father, Cowan, was a huge fan. Ben says it would be awesome to have an opportunity to meet Nantz.
- Does not really have a favorite professional sports team, but does get interested in the Carolina Hurricanes as they make runs in the NHL Stanley Cup Playoffs.

Inner Circle/Special Connections

- Teamed with fellow University of North Carolina alum Ryan Gerard, who was a Special Temporary Member on the PGA TOUR at the time, at the 2023 Zurich Classic of New Orleans. They were teammates for one season in Chapel Hill (2017-18), when Griffin was a senior and Gerard was a freshman. Griffin broke the school record for career scoring average (72.02), a record Gerard broke (71.65) upon exhausting his eligibility at North Carolina. [NOTE: Gerard's record has since been broken.]
- Frequent playing partners at the Sea Island courses during his time in St. Simons Island, Georgia (September 2018 through December 2020, and April 2022 through March 2025) included J.T. Poston, Andrew Novak, and Bryson Nimmer.

Other

- Shot a 59 at Sea Island in July 2022, holing out an approach shot for from the fairway for an eagle on his final hole. A friend was filming the shot and captured Ben's crazed reaction.
- In a 2011 magazine story published when he was 14 years old, he was quoted as saying, "Golf will help me get through other things in life."

Jackson Koivun

Scottie Scheffler

Things To Know

- Following a seven-win 2024 season, has five wins in 2025, making him the first player since Tiger Woods (2005-07) to recorded five or more wins in back-to-back seasons. Scheffler's wins in 2025 included a victory at his hometown event (THE CJ CUP Byron Nelson), a successful title defense at the Memorial Tournament presented by Workday, major championship victories at the PGA Championship and The Open Championship (third and fourth major championship titles, respectively), and a FedExCup Playoffs victory at the BMW Championship. Followed Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods as the third player in the modern era to earn 15-plus PGA TOUR wins and three-plus major championships prior to turning 29 years old. Also followed Woods as the second player in history to win consecutive titles at the Memorial Tournament (2024 and 2025 for Scheffler; 1999, 2000, and 2001 for Woods).
- Following his victory at the 2025 Open Championship, Scheffler said of his priorities in life, "My faith and my family. Those come first for me. Golf is third in that order. I've said it for a long time, golf is not how I identify myself. I don't identify myself by winning tournaments, chasing trophies, being famous or whatever it is. I try to live as normal of a life as possible because I feel like a normal guy. I have the same friends I had growing up. I don't think I'm anything special just because some weeks I'm better at shooting a lower score than other guys are." Scheffler added, "It's something I actually talked to Shane (Lowry) about this week... just because you win a golf tournament or accomplish something, it doesn't make you happy. Maybe for a few moments, maybe for a few days, but at the end of the day, there's more to life than playing golf."
- In his pre-tournament press conference at the 2025 Open Championship, spoke openly about what does and does not fulfill him in life, saying, "To win the (CJ CUP) Byron Nelson at home, I literally worked my entire life to become good at golf to have an opportunity to win that tournament. You win it, you celebrate, get to hug my family... it's such an amazing moment. Then it's like, 'What are we going to eat for dinner?' Life goes on. This is not a fulfilling life. It's fulfilling from the sense of accomplishment, but it's not fulfilling from a sense of the deepest places of your heart. That's something I wrestle with on a daily basis. We work so hard for such little moments. I love playing golf. I love being able to compete. I love living out my dreams. I love being a father. I love being able to take care of my son. I love being able to provide for my family out here playing golf. Every day when I wake up early to go put in the work, my wife thanks me for going out and working so hard. When I get home, I try to thank her every day for taking care of our son. This is not the end all be all. This is not the most important thing in my life. I'd much rather be a great father than I would a great golfer."
- On where his trophies and awards are displayed at home, Scheffler says, "I have a room in my house called 'The Golf Room,' and that's where all my crap goes. Literally. It's just a room full of all my golf junk. I've got some trophies in there as well... I'd like to say that (The Golf Room) is nicely presented, but it's not."
- Following his victory at the 2025 PGA Championship, said of playing golf, "When I think about the game of golf, my favorite thing to do is... when I can be by myself and I can just practice, it's one of the most fun things for me. It's so peaceful, and I love the pursuit of trying to figure something out. That's what I love about this game. I feel like you're always battling yourself, and you're always trying to figure things out. And you're never going to perfect it. In golf, there's always something you can figure out, there's always something you can do better. It's a great challenge, and it's a lot of fun."
- Earned his 14th PGA TOUR title at the 2025 CJ CUP Byron Nelson, where he previously made his PGA TOUR debut as a 17-year-old amateur in 2014. Scheffler tied the lowest 72-

hole score in PGA TOUR history (31-under 253), equaling Justin Thomas (253 / 2017 Sony Open in Hawaii) and Ludvig Aberg (253 / 2023 RSM Classic). Said of winning the event, "This tournament means a lot to me. I grew up coming here to watch. It's very special to have won this tournament. It's really fun to be able to play here in my hometown, in front of the hometown fans. This was my first start on the PGA TOUR when I was in high school. The girl I was dating at the time (Meredith) is now my wife. We have one son. My sister (Callie) was caddying for me at the time; she was here today, she has two kids. We have a lot of great memories as kids coming to watch this tournament. I just dreamed to be able to play in it, and it's more of a dream to be able to win it."

- Played the 2014 CJ CUP Byron Nelson via a sponsor exemption as a 17-year-old amateur, finishing T22 with sister Callie on the bag. Carded an ace in the third round, holing his tee shot with a 5-iron from 221 yards at TPC Las Colinas. The high school grad was heading to the University of Texas later that summer to embark on his college career. Asked about not receiving the \$50,000+ that would have come with his finish, Scheffler joked: "Jordan (Spieth) told me I would be mad when I get down to Austin next year and I don't have any money. I guess I'll be mad then. I'm not too upset right now."
- Following the 2024 PGA TOUR season, was named PGA TOUR Player of the Year for a third consecutive season (2022-24), following Tiger Woods as the second player in history to earn the accolade in three straight seasons. Scheffler was surprised with the award in December during a FedEx charity event at a local PGA TOUR Superstore, where he and wife Meredith hosted the Dallas-based charity, Behind Every Door. In honor of Scheffler's historic year, which saw him win the 2024 FedExCup title, FedEx donated \$50,000 to the non-profit, as it is close to the Scheffler's heart. Behind Every Door is committed to creating pathway opportunities of hope for individuals to realize their God-given potential, fostering lasting change in their lives and communities.
- Reached No. 1 in the Official World Golf Ranking for the first time in his career on March 27, 2022 after winning the World Golf Championships-Dell Technologies Match Play. At just 25 years old, he became the sixth-youngest player to reach No. 1 since the OWGR was established in 1986.
- On becoming World No. 1: "It's not something that I didn't want to achieve or didn't believe that I could do. I grew up wearing long pants to go practice because I wanted to be a professional golfer. That's what I dreamed of. I dreamed of being out here. I've always been, I would say, fiercely competitive, and so for me getting out here was a goal per se, and being out here, I like competing and I enjoy the challenge of playing out here every week. The rankings never really crossed my mind. It was always just about being out here and competing."
- Returned to the Player Advisory Council (PAC) in 2025, having previously served on the 16-member council in 2024. The PAC advises and consults with the PGA TOUR Policy Board (Board of Directors) and Commissioner Jay Monahan on issues affecting the TOUR.

Background

- Born in Ridgewood, New Jersey; moved Dallas when he was six.
- Was a Ewing Automotive North Texas PGA Junior Tour member from 2002-2010, competing in 136 tournaments and winning 90 (66.2 percent). Often played in the older divisions, which included players such as Jordan Spieth.
- Attended Highland Park High School in Dallas and won three individual state titles in golf - the only other person to have done that was Jordan Spieth. Notable alumni of Highland Park include Super Bowl champion quarterback Matthew Stafford, World Series champion pitcher Clayton Kershaw, and Pro Football Hall of Fame members Bobby Layne and Doak Walker.

- Won the 2013 U.S. Junior Amateur Championship, defeating Davis Riley in the championship match, and was named the 2013 AJGA Rolex Junior Player of the Year.
- Played collegiately at the University of Texas from 2014 to 2018, where he helped the team win three Big 12 Conference Championships and was named Freshman of the Year in 2015; member of U.S. Walker Cup Team in 2017. At UT, was teammates with future PGA TOUR members Beau Hossler, Kramer Hickok and Doug Ghim.
- After turning professional in 2018, competed on the Korn Ferry Tour in 2019 and earned two victories en route to being named the 2019 Korn Ferry Tour Player of the Year. Within the next two seasons, Scheffler was named 2020 PGA TOUR Rookie of the Year and represented the United States at the 2021 Ryder Cup.
- Breakout season on the PGA TOUR was the 2021-22 season, when he won his first four PGA TOUR titles in a span of six starts, including his first major championship title (2022 Masters Tournament). Scheffler was named 2022 PGA TOUR Player of the Year at season's end and set the single-season earnings record with \$14,046,910 (previous record was held by Jordan Spieth, who amassed \$12,030,465 in 2014-15).
- Became the first back-to-back winner of THE PLAYERS Championship (2023, 2024) in the 50th playing of the tournament.

Family

- Married to high school sweetheart, Meredith Scudder. The pair first crossed paths at Highland Park High School in Dallas, where they began dating as seniors. They stayed close despite attending different colleges - he at University of Texas and she at Texas A&M. The couple wed in December 2020 in a winter wonderland-themed wedding. Meredith was unaware of Scottie's fledgling golf career until 2014, when he received a sponsor exemption into THE CJ CUP Byron Nelson: "We were hanging out with her dad and (THE CJ CUP Byron Nelson) commercial came on TV. And she was kind of looking around, she was like, 'Wait a minute. Isn't that next weekend? Isn't that what you're doing?' And I was like, 'Yeah, that's what I'm doing.' She's like, 'Wow, that's cool.'"
- Scottie and Meredith welcomed their first child -- a son, Bennett (Bennie) -- in May 2024.
- Father, Scott, played high school basketball at the same school Vince Lombardi attended -- St. Cecilia High School of Englewood, New Jersey. Mother, Diane, went to high school with and was friends with the late James Gandolfini at Park Ridge High School in Park Ridge, New Jersey. While Scottie was growing up, Scott was a stay-at-home father for four Scheffler children while Diane was (and still is) Chief Operating Officer at a law firm.
- Three sisters: Callie, Sara and Molly. Callie played golf at Texas A&M.
- Scottie says of his parents and sisters: "A lot of my personality probably comes from my dad. My dad is fiercely competitive like I am. My parents, they made a lot of sacrifices to put me in a position where I'm able to do this for a living, and they made a lot of sacrifices when I was a kid. My sisters as well. They've seen a lot of golf tournaments in their lifetime, probably a lot more than they've wanted to. I'm very grateful for the sacrifices they made and obviously had such a huge impact on my life."
- Grandmother, Mary DeLorenzo, lives in the greater Jacksonville area and was notably in attendance for wins at the 2022 Arnold Palmer Invitational and 2023 PLAYERS Championship.

Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Makes himself coffee every morning at home in Texas (double shot of espresso with a little honey and cinnamon), but does not drink coffee prior to tournament rounds, and only

occasionally before practice rounds. Scheffler developed his at-home coffee routine in summer 2022, when he bought an espresso machine and taught himself how to use it.

- Basketball; excellent shooter but was small (5-2) in seventh grade so focused on golf. Loves to play pickup basketball.
- Wearing the Green Jacket, threw out the first pitch at a Texas Rangers-Houston Astros MLB game on April 27, 2022. In addition to meeting players and coaches, he and wife Meredith were both presented personalized Rangers jerseys. "I love Dallas. It's my home. It's probably where I will live the rest of my life. I don't root for any teams outside of Dallas. We grew up going to a lot of Mavs games in high school and I've become a bigger Rangers fan in the last couple of years. A lot of my buddies from college love the Astros, so it's fun to be a Ranger fan. We have a good rivalry. Hopefully, the Rangers start winning some championships."
- Pickleball. Scheffler teamed up with Jordan Spieth on October 13 of 2022 in Frisco, Texas for the Celebrity Battle of the Paddle against Dallas Mavericks legend Dirk Nowitzki and American tennis star John Isner. Despite a massive disadvantage in reach - Nowitzki and Isner are listed at 7-feet and 6 feet 10 inches tall, respectively, with wingspans to match - Spieth and Scheffler held their own and flashed some skills before ultimately losing 11-6.
- During the 2023 TOUR Championship, announced his co-ownership of the Texas Ranchers, one of the eight founding Major League Pickleball (MLP) teams in the U.S. Pickleball is one of Scheffler's favorite activities outside of golf. Other notable Texas athletes investing in this new venture include Dallas Cowboys star Micah Parsons, Houston Texans quarterback C.J. Stroud, and former Texas A&M standout Myles Garrett.

Charity

- Close to a non-profit -- Triumph Over Kid Cancer -- founded by his late friend James Ragan who was from Corpus Christi, Texas. The two met while playing on the Texas Legends Tour. Ragan had been diagnosed with osteosarcoma, a form of bone cancer, in June 2006, when he was 13. He went on to become a public advocate and fundraising force for pediatric cancer. When Scheffler won the U.S. Junior Amateur in 2013, he choked up during a Golf Channel interview when asked about Ragan. Scheffler said he thought about his friend several times during the final match. Ragan passed away at the age of 20 in 2014.

Inner Circle/Special Connections

- At University of Texas, played under longtime head coach John Fields, who took over the program in August 1997. One of the biggest lessons Fields taught Scheffler was staying in the present, with Scheffler explaining, "When I first got to college, I was trying to date this girl whose name was Meredith [now his wife], and I would come out to the course and if she shot me a text or gave me a call, I would pick it up. And I would get a little distracted when it came to practicing. Coach [Fields] sat me down and said, 'Hey, listen, when you're at the golf course, you need to be focused on what you're doing at the golf course. When you're in class, you need to be paying attention in class. When you get to do your social stuff, you need to be present where you are.' It's a daily battle to try and focus on the task at hand... when you're thinking about what you're doing, I think that's when you're living."
- Began working with famed instructor Randy Smith at Royal Oaks Country Club after moving to Dallas around the time he was eight years old. Smith guided Scheffler through the pain and adjustments of going from 5-foot-2 in seventh grade to 6-foot-3 by the time he headed to University of Texas. Smith says of his earliest days with Scheffler: "He hit low and high. Here's this tiny little kid who could hit every shot. He could shape it, move it, and he was doing it by

feel." Smith says Scheffler has a "blue-collar work ethic with an artist's imagination and high intelligence."

- Randy Smith is a PGA of America Hall of Famer. In a career spanning more than four decades, he developed a reputation as the go-to instructor for young players in North Texas, including 12-time PGA TOUR winner Justin Leonard, four-time TOUR winner Ryan Palmer, three-time TOUR winner John Rollins, TOUR winners Harrison Frazar and Cody Gribble, and 2007 U.S. Amateur Championship winner Colt Knost.
- Scottie says one of the most important things Randy Smith taught him was patience, explaining, "When you're younger and things aren't going the way they're supposed to, Randy always did a really good job of reminding me that it was a long journey to become good at golf. You're going to have ups and downs. I wasn't always the best player. I felt like I could be the best player. Randy was always by my side helping me stay patient, and teaching me little things along the way."
- Agent, Blake Smith, is the son of Randy Smith.
- Good friends with Sam Burns, who he faced in the 2023 Charles Schwab Challenge playoff (Burns won). The pair have known each other since they were teenagers, playing AJGA golf events together. Along with spouses Meredith (Scheffler) and Caroline (Burns), the group has vacationed together, including a trip to Greece after the 2022 Open Championship, and are members of the TOUR's Bible study, as faith is a shared foundation of their friendship.
- Scheffler hired veteran Ted Scott to caddie for him starting with the 2021 RSM Classic and won in their fourth official start together at the 2022 WM Phoenix Open -- which was Scheffler's first PGA TOUR title. The two met through a Bible study composed of players and caddies.

Other

- Featured in the latest season of Netflix's Full Swing, an immersive documentary that follows life on the PGA TOUR. Season Three features returning favorites and new faces offering a look on and off the course across a relentless 2024 season.
- During THE NORTHERN TRUST in 2021, penalized himself one stroke for surpassing the three-minute time period (Rule 18.2) allowed in search of an errant second shot on the 15th hole of the opening round. After the round was over, Scheffler talked with fellow competitor Daniel Berger and PGA TOUR Rules Officials to determine what to do. "We couldn't figure it out", Scheffler said. "They didn't have ShotLink data or anything, so just went with it was over 3 minutes. Just too long."
- Won The Genesis Invitational Collegiate Showcase in 2018 as a senior at the University of Texas at Riviera Country Club. Previous winners included Will Zalatoris (2015) and Sahith Theegala (2017).
- Won The East Lake Cup in 2018. The East Lake Cup is a collegiate competition featuring top-performing teams from the NCAA Men's and Women's Golf Championships.
- Played three times in The Junior PLAYERS Championship conducted by the AJGA and played annually at TPC Sawgrass, home of THE PLAYERS: (2011/5th, 2012/T33, 2013/6th).

Garrick Higgo

Things To Know

- Earned his second PGA TOUR title at the 2025 Corales Puntacana Championship. Higgo entered the 2025 season with only conditional status and actually intended to focus on playing the Korn Ferry Tour in an attempt to earn TOUR membership for 2026. Higgo said of his return to the winner's circle, "This is why I play the game. The journey... I'm going to go through a down again, everybody does. I'm going to have ups. I just truly enjoy the journey."
- Won the 2021 Palmetto Championship at Congaree in his second career start on the PGA TOUR after receiving a Commissioner's exemption to compete in the event. Received a congratulatory call from fellow South African Gary Player during his winner's press conference. Player has been one of Higgo's biggest mentors and has supported him through his father's passing and professional career through countless letters and phone calls.
- Went 3 years, 10 months, 7 days between his first and second PGA TOUR titles (2021 Palmetto Championship / 2025 Corales Puntacana Championship). Upon his return to the winner's circle, said, "I've definitely grown a lot. I feel like I understand the U.S. much better. I'm more comfortable here, and I think this time around it will be different. I think I'm going to keep going and keep playing well."
- Won twice in three starts on the DP World Tour in April-May of 2021, which elevated him to 51st in the Official World Golf Ranking. Playing the final round with a lead for the first time at the Grand Canaria Open, Higgo said he leaned on advice from Gary Player to secure the win: "He said there is no such thing as a lead and you should play like you are two behind. That was nice from him and he has said it so many times, but I have never really had a lead, so I haven't had to worry about that".
- Won the 2020 Open de Portugal, a co-sanctioned event between the DP World Tour and the Challenge Tour, and with it, gained status on the DP World Tour and made it to the season-ending DP World Tour Championship in the process.
- Turned professional in 2019 and won in his debut on the Big Easy Tour (named as such in honor of Ernie Els), a developmental tour in South Africa. In his next start, he won his first tournament on the Sunshine Tour.
- Attended the University of Nevada-Las Vegas for two semesters in 2017 and 2018. Unlike other high-profile international recruits who elect to attend college in the United States, college life wasn't really for him and returned home before deciding to turn pro. "I didn't play that well. I knew if I was at home, I knew where I could get my game. And I wasn't going to get there at UNLV. I loved it there. I just don't think it was the right fit for me."

Background

- Born in Johannesburg, South Africa, but attended high school in Stellenbosch, a town located east of Cape Town where he became the No. 1-ranked amateur in South Africa by age 17.
- Plays left-handed but is naturally right-handed. Started focusing on golf at age 13 after breaking his elbow playing rugby.
- In 2016, became the first South African to qualify and play in both the U.S. Amateur and U.S. Junior Amateur in the same year.
- Beat former University of Texas standout Cole Hammer in the Round of 16 at the 2017 U.S. Junior Amateur at Flint Hills National GC in Andover, Kansas, before falling to Matthew Wolff in the semifinals.

Family

- Garrick and his wife, Chandre (SHUN-drae) wed on September 9, 2023.
- Lost his father (Michael) when he was 9 years old when the entire family was in a car accident -- parents (mom - Susan), one older brother (Michael) and one younger sister (Calista). Received a letter from Gary Player after the accident, who also lost his mother around the same age. "He's been such a support since then and has sent me a lot of letters throughout the years, or called me at times to help. He's been incredibly nice to me... and I feel very lucky for that."
- His mother, Susan, was in attendance for his first PGA TOUR victory at the Palmetto Championship at Congaree. The two shared an emotional hug on the range once it became official.

Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Interests include rap music, sports and Chelsea FC (soccer/football).

Austin Eckroat

Things To Know

- Won the 2024 World Wide Technology Championship to claim his second career victory on TOUR, becoming the first PGA TOUR University alum to claim two victories on the PGA TOUR. Notably won his second collegiate event at the 2019 Cabo Collegiate held at Querencia Golf Club, located 45 minutes away from El Cardonal at Dimante.
- Claimed his first PGA TOUR victory in his 50th start at the 2024 Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches, becoming the second PGA TOUR University alum to win on TOUR (Ludvig Aberg, 2023 RSM Classic).
- Earned his first PGA TOUR card via the 2022 Korn Ferry Tour Finals a year after joining the Korn Ferry Tour via a No. 3 finish in the inaugural PGA TOUR University Class of 2021. Joined Davis Thompson, Trevor Werbylo, and Kevin Yu as PGA TOUR University Class of 2021 alums who earned PGA TOUR cards for the 2022-23 season.
- Missed guaranteed starts for the 2022 Korn Ferry Tour season by one stroke at Final Stage of Q-School and began the year with conditional status, only gaining entry to two of the first 12 events (both missed cuts). Everything changed at the AdventHealth Championship in mid-May, when he earned his third start as the 150th player into the 156-man field. It was the first event after the third reshuffle of the season, which meant Eckroat needed four consecutive top-25s to continue earning starts ahead of the next reshuffle. Eckroat rattled off finishes of T23-T23-T25-T25, shuffled up the priority ranking, and eventually finished No. 34 on the Korn Ferry Tour Regular Season Eligibility Points List to gain entry to Korn Ferry Tour Finals, where he earned his first PGA TOUR card.
- Plays most often at the famed Oak Tree National in his hometown of Edmond, Oklahoma. Austin broke the course record with a 10-under 61 in June 2020. Oak Tree notably hosted the 1984 U.S. Amateur and 1988 PGA Championship, and it claims Bob Tway, Scott Verplank, Viktor Hovland, and Taylor Moore among a contingent of PGA TOUR players who called the course home through the years.
- Grew up a huge Oklahoma State fan and the family had football season tickets when he was growing up; he did not truly consider many other colleges and committed to Oklahoma State his freshman year of high school.
- Huge fan of Formula 1 Racing and wants to go to a race at some point in the future; he became a fan in the early 2020s after watching the movie Rush, as well as the Netflix series Drive to Survive. As a kid, Austin was also a huge fan of the 2001 movie Driven, which starred Sylvester Stallone and Burt Reynolds.

Background

- Born and raised in Edmond, Oklahoma and graduated from Edmond North High School. Edmond is roughly 50 miles southwest of Stillwater (Oklahoma State University) and 15 miles north of Oklahoma City.
- Named a 2015 and 2016 AJGA Junior All-America Second Team selection. The 2015 second team also featured Sahith Theegala and Cameron Young.
- Played collegiately for four seasons at Oklahoma State University (2017-21), where he helped the Cowboys win the 2018 NCAA Championship as a freshman and earned All-America honors each of his final three seasons in Stillwater. Also won twice individually and logged three top-20s individually at NCAA Championships, finishing T19 in 2018 (freshman) T8 in 2019 (sophomore), and T17 in 2021 (senior).

- Favorite golf memory was making his first birdie on a par 3 at age 6. It remains a vivid memory for him; he hit a 6-iron to about 6 inches.
- Favorite memory as a golf fan was seeing Tiger Woods win the 2007 PGA Championship at Southern Hills Country Club in Tulsa, Oklahoma; he was 8 years old at the time.

Family

- Married wife, Sally, on November 19, 2022 in Oklahoma City (wedding photos on his instagram). Austin and Sally have known each other since Austin was age 2. They were in the same "day care" and elementary school together. The two did not see each other for about 10 years when Sally moved to Oklahoma City and Austin remained in Edmond, but they eventually rekindled during Austin's sophomore year at Oklahoma State. The two had kept up through the years and Austin asked her out to dinner right before he left for the 2019 U.S. Open at Pebble Beach.
- Parents are Steve and Natalie. Has one sister, Taylor, who also attended Oklahoma State.

Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Favorite professional sports teams are the Kansas City Chiefs (NFL football) and Oklahoma City Thunder (NBA basketball).
- Hunting is among his hobbies and off-course interests.
- In addition to the NFL and NBA, he also enjoys watching Formula 1 racing and college basketball and football.
- Enjoys playing video games, especially games in the Call of Duty franchise.

Inner Circle/Special Connections

- Helped Oklahoma State win the 2018 NCAA Championship as a true freshman alongside future PGA TOUR winners Viktor Hovland and Matthew Wolff, as well as multi-time Korn Ferry Tour graduate Kris Ventura and Zach Bauchou. Fellow Class of 2022 Korn Ferry Tour graduate Sam Stevens was a senior on the 2018 national title team, but Eckroat replaced him in the starting lineup for the NCAA Regional and NCAA Championship. Eckroat went 3-0 in match play, and Oklahoma State swept an Alabama team led by future PGA TOUR winners Lee Hodges and Davis Riley in the championship round.
- Played two seasons alongside Hovland (2017-18, 2018-19) and one season alongside Kris Ventura and Sam Stevens (2017-18) while at Oklahoma State.
- Teammates at the 2019 Arnold Palmer Cup included PGA TOUR members Will Gordon, Alex Smalley, and Brandon Wu.
- Played on the victorious United States team at the 2021 Walker Cup; his teammates included future PGA TOUR winner Davis Thompson and multi-time Korn Ferry Tour winner Pierceson Coody.

Other

- In January 2022, while still in limbo with only conditional status on the Korn Ferry Tour, received sponsor exemptions for two PGA TOUR events - Farmers Insurance Open and AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am - in an 11-minute span. "I got an email from the [Farmers Insurance Open] tournament director in San Diego, Marty Gorsich, and I got an exemption into that week. Then I get a phone call from California, and I was just thinking it was Marty

Gorsich. And I go to answer and it's like, 'Steve John here with the AT&T [Pebble Beach Pro-Am],' and I was super excited. It was almost an overload of emotions."

Emiliano Grillo

Things To Know

- Pronounced GREE-lo
- Born in the city of Chaco, in the province of Resistencia in Argentina, he grew up playing the same course, Chaco Golf Club, as PGA TOUR winners José Cócero and Fabián Gómez.
- Was PGA TOUR Rookie of the Year in 2016 (the third member of the Class of 2011 to earn that status).
- Seven-and-a-half years (7 years, 7 months and 10 days to be exact) after winning his first PGA TOUR title in his first start as a member, the Argentinian finally got win No. 2 at the 2023 Charles Schwab Challenge. After a double bogey on the 18th at Colonial Country Club, Grillo put his shot (after a lucky bounce) on the par-3 second Playoff hole with Adam Schenk to five-feet and made the birdie for the win. While waiting for the Playoff to start, Emiliano invited two young fans inside the ropes to pass the time (the interaction was captured by PGA TOUR Content) allowing them to swing his clubs. When asked as to why after his win, Grillo said, "I guess it was a little bit of a trick to get my head out of the situation. Jose Coceres did it with me when I was seven, eight years old, and that was the greatest experience of my life. Just watching him and hitting his clubs. I kind of got to do it with them, and hopefully they'll remember that." One of the kids hugged him after the interaction because he needed a hug, and that sweet interaction pulled at the golf world's heartstrings.
- In 2023, he qualified for his eighth straight FedExCup Playoffs.
- Represented Argentina in the 2016 Summer Olympics. Is currently in the qualified rankings for Paris 2024. He also played on the 2017 Presidents Cup International Team at Liberty National.
- Has completed the rare feat of winning on all three Tours: 2014 Visa Argentina Open, 2015 Korn Ferry Tour Championship, 2015 PGA TOUR Fortinet Championship/2023 Charles Schwab Challenge

Background

- Left Chaco at age 14 to work on his game and then left Argentina at age 16 to attend the IMG Academy in Bradenton, Fla.
- Emiliano won the Copa Pereyra Iraola twice (2007 and 2009) in Argentina. This is the low amateur trophy in the Argentine Open for making the cut, a huge and respected honor. He was 15 and 17 respectively.
- Played in the 2008 Eisenhower Cup at Royal Adelaide and finished T9 in the team competition. Also represented Argentina at home at the 2010 Eisenhower Cup (World Amateur Team Championships) at Buenos Aires Golf Club and the Olivos Golf Club . His team finished in 25th place.
- Coming to the U.S. from Argentina at the age of 16, Grillo is fully bilingual. His English is almost as strong as his Spanish

Family

- Emiliano met his fiancée, Alexia Garcia Morris, when they were toddlers. They were schoolmates and friends but when Emiliano moved schools, and eventually to the States, they lost touch. The pandemic allowed for them to reconnect and now they live together in San Diego with their son and the rest is history.
- Son, Andre Milan Grillo was born on March 3rd, 2022 and Emiliano loves being a father.

Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- He loves soccer and is a diehard fan of Argentina's River Plate football club. He always keeps track of big games or competitions going on or coming for River. During the 2023 WMPO, he showed off Lionel Messi's No. 10 Argentinian jersey to the raucous Friday crowd with mixed results on Twitter. <https://twitter.com/PGATOUR/status/1624199949024886784> Has been extremely excited about the success of fellow countryman, Lionel Messi, with Inter Miami and looks forward to seeing him play soon.
- If you look at the front side of his golf bag you'll see a date in there in Spanish format: 9/12/18, which is December 9, 2018. River won the 2018 Copa Libertadores Final after beating fierce rival Boca Juniors 3-1 in Madrid, Spain on that date.
- Emiliano has a sweet tooth. One of his favorite treats are alfajores (an Argentinian pastry ... pronounced alpha-HOR-es); he likes to try different brands from all over his native country. He's had brands send him boxes to the U.S. and he does reviews on his Instagram account.
- Fishing is one of his biggest passions. Joking, he has even said that if he could earn as much as he does in golf, he would consider giving it a shot as his sport. It's something he has done his entire life, going out fishing at the river in Chaco since he was a little boy.

Inner Circle/Special Connections

- Member of famed "Class of 2011" and competed alongside Jordan Spieth, Justin Thomas, Daniel Berger, Xander Schauffele. Kurt Kitayama and Ollie Schniederjans during amateur golf days.

Other

- Played in the 2013 World Cup at Royal Melbourne GC with Fabian Gomez won by Jason Day (individual) and Day/Adam Scott (Team AUS).
- Emiliano loves the renovated Bronco he won at the Charles Schwab Challenge and enjoys driving it around San Diego. He takes it to the Callaway facility often to show it off.

Mackenzie Hughes

Things To Know

- Mackenzie was selected to the 2024 Presidents Cup International Team captained by fellow Canadian Mike Weir. Hughes joined fellow Canadians Corey Connors and Taylor Pendrith (both captain's picks) on the International Team. The 2024 playing at The Royal Montreal Golf Club was Hughes' Presidents Cup debut, and Hughes said of the experience, "Being on the International Team was the highlight of my career. It was magical. I knew it would be, and it lived up to all the hype and more." Hughes provided one of the highlights of the week, as he chugged a beer on the first tee and riled up the home crowd prior to the start of the first day's matches.
- Was the first player to earn victories on PGA TOUR Canada (2013 Cape Breton Celtic Classic), Korn Ferry Tour (2016 Price Cutter Charity Championship), PGA TOUR (2016 RSM Classic).
- The Canadian trio of Hughes, Corey Connors, and Taylor Pendrith were inducted into the Kent State Athletics Hall of Fame (also known as the Varsity K Hall of Fame) in 2021. Other notable members of the Varsity K Hall of Fame include 2003 Open Championship winner Ben Curtis (inducted in 2006), former NFL wide receiver Julian Edelman (inducted 2015), four-time All-Pro First Team tight end Antonio Gates (inducted as a basketball player in 2010), and legendary football coaches Lou Holtz (inducted 1990) and Nick Saban (inducted 2015).
- Represented Canada at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics (played in 2021) alongside childhood friend and fellow multi-time PGA TOUR winner Corey Connors.
- Motto he lives by: "Success is never owned. It is rented, and the rent is due every day."
- Resides in Charlotte, North Carolina, where he is a member of Quail Hollow Club. Moved to Charlotte in 2012 after his wife, Jenna, was offered a job there. Now with three kids, Mackenzie and Jenna believe the city of Charlotte is the perfect place to raise a family, and the couple see themselves living there for many years to come.

Background

- Born in Dundas, Ontario, Canada. Dundas is a community in Hamilton, Ontario nicknamed Valley Town, as it is nestled in a valley surrounded by the Niagara Escarpment along Lake Ontario.
- Got his start in golf at seven, when his parents brought him along to the driving range at Dundas Valley Golf and Curling Club (Stanley Thompson-designed course) instead of hiring a babysitter. In 2017, the par-3 course at Dundas Valley was renamed the 'Mackenzie Hughes Par 3' as a homage to the place where it all began for Hughes. (Photo of 1st tee sign available in Catalyst files)
- Won back-to-back Canadian Amateur Championships in 2011 and 2012. Notably earned the victories over future PGA TOUR winners Corey Connors (T3 in 2011, 4th in 2012) and Taylor Pendrith (T20 in 2011, T5 in 2012).
- Played four seasons at Kent State University (2008-12), where he earned three collegiate victories and finished with a career scoring average of 73.67. Hughes was a three-time All-Mid-American Conference First Team selection (2010-12), as well as the 2009 MAC Freshman of the Year, and helped Kent State win four consecutive MAC Championships (2009-12) during his time with the program.
- Alongside teammates and fellow Canadians Corey Connors and Taylor Pendrith, Hughes helped Kent State qualify for the 2012 NCAA Championship at Riviera Country Club, where they defeated Florida State University (led by Daniel Berger and Brooks Koepka) in a playoff

to earn the eighth and final spot in match play. Kent State fell to the Justin Thomas-led Alabama Crimson Tide in match play. Other notables in the 2012 NCAA Championship field were Patrick Cantlay (T4), Thomas (T7), Max Homa (T9), Keith Mitchell (T9), and Patrick Rodgers (T9). Hughes was teammates with Conners and Pendrith for his final two seasons at Kent State (2010-11 / 2011-12 seasons), as Conners' and Pendrith's time with the program both spanned 2010-14.

- Represented Canada at the 2012 World Amateur Team Championship (Eisenhower Trophy) with Corey Conners and Albin Choi. Canada finished T6, while a United States team featuring Justin Thomas won the title.

Family

- Married to wife Jenna (2016) and has three children: sons Kenton Robert (2017) and Cohen Alan (2020), and a daughter, Ellie Mae (2022); Kenton is named in part as tribute to Kent State, where Mackenzie and Jenna met. According to Jenna, "Mac is an amazing father and nothing brings him more joy than playing with his kids or watching their sporting events."
- Jenna and Mackenzie met in an extra-credit project during their freshman year at Kent State. Jenna is originally from upstate New York. According to good friend Corey Conners, Hughes "spent a long time convincing Jenna to go out with him at Kent State."
- Jenna and family try to travel with Mackenzie on TOUR as often as they can. Jenna, Kenton and Cohen were on-site to see his second PGA TOUR win at the 2022 Sanderson Farms Championship. Hughes says, "It's nice having them on the road with me, which I know eventually won't always happen. There are many families out there that also travel and have kids similar ages that we'll hang out and do fun things with. We also have a daycare on the road for our kids. These teachers travel with the TOUR and help kids learn and discover things from a young age. The environment for families is great."
- Mother, Sandra, is a vascular access nurse in Ontario, Canada; she worked on the front lines during the COVID-19 pandemic, and Mackenzie calls his mom his "biggest supporter."
- Also counts his in-laws (Jenna's parents Alan and Karen) as an integral part of his support system.

Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Grew up a loyal Toronto sports fan, supporting the Maple Leafs (NHL hockey), Raptors (NBA basketball), and Blue Jays (MLB baseball). Adopted the Carolina Panthers (NFL) as his football team after moving to Charlotte, and roots for his wife's hometown NFL team, the Buffalo Bills.
- Will not eat anything chocolate.
- Avid scrap pickleball player.

Charity

- Mackenzie and wife Jenna created the Mackenzie Hughes Family Foundation in 2023. The mission of the foundation is to make a positive difference for children and families through financial assistance, community experiences and creating lifelong memories.

Inner Circle/Special Connections

- Helen Ross wrote a great piece on the friendship between Mackenzie Hughes and Corey Conners, which has endured nearly two decades. The two grew up 75 miles from each other, idolizing Mike Weir (and Tiger Woods, of course). They were members of the Canadian National Team, college teammates at Kent State, represented Canada at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics (played in 2021), and were in each other's weddings. The story is full of great quotes from the two of them and photos from their friendship, as well as a painting of the two of them as children that Conners' grandmother had commissioned. Hughes said, "For two kids that grew up and trained together and came from small towns in Ontario, to both be finding some pretty good success on the PGA TOUR and to do it together is really quite extraordinary. But that's why you dream big, and you work hard."
- Served as a standard bearer in Mike Weir's group at the 2004 RBC Canadian Open, which was roughly a year and a half after Weir's historic victory at the 2003 Masters Tournament (Weir became Canada's first Masters champion).
- Had "goosebumps and shivers" the first time he played with Tiger Woods, which was during the third round of the 2018 PLAYERS Championship, and ended up shooting his best round of the season. He had the chance to meet Woods about two months earlier at the Arnold Palmer Invitational, as Woods was sitting five feet away from Hughes in the locker room, but he couldn't muster up the courage to walk over and say hello.
- Friends with former NFL quarterback Alex Smith. The two met during 2018 AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am.
- Played under legendary head coach Herb Page for all four seasons at Kent State University (2008-12). A native of Markham, Ontario, Page became the first coach inducted into the "Builder" category of the Canadian Golf Hall of Fame, with his induction taking place during RBC Hall of Fame Day at the 2019 RBC Canadian Open. Page served as head coach for the Kent State men's golf program for 42 seasons (fall of 1977 through summer 2019) and was instrumental in the launch of the women's golf program, which played its first season in 1998-99 (Page served one season as head coach in 2012-13). Page's teams were frequently stocked with Canadians, including Hughes (2008-12) and fellow future PGA TOUR winners Corey Conners (2010-14) and Taylor Pendrith (2010-14). Another notable player in Page's tenure at Kent State was Ben Curtis (1996-2000), who won the 2003 Open Championship en route to 2003 PGA TOUR Rookie of the Year honors. Under Page, the men's program won 23 Mid-American Conference Championships and made 17 NCAA Championship appearances.
- Prior to his coaching career, Page was a three-sport athlete at Kent State, earning eight varsity letters (four in golf, two in football, two in ice hockey) from 1970 through 1974. In football, Page was a placekicker for two famed Kent State teams -- the 1972 squad which won the program's first (and still the only) MAC Championship, and the 1973 team which won nine games (a school record until 2012). Page's teammates on the 1972 team included defensive back and future coaching icon Nick Saban, as well as Pro Football Hall of Fame linebacker Jack Lambert. Page was inducted into the Kent State Athletics Hall of Fame (also known as the Varsity K Hall of Fame) as a student-athlete in 1985, and again as a coach in 2019. Saban joined Page in the Varsity K Hall of Fame in 2015.

Lanto Griffin

Things To Know

- Griffin learned to play golf at a 2,700-yard nine hole course called "The Hill" where he used to play 45 holes a day for just \$9.00. Says that is his favorite golf memory.
- Lanto came from humble beginnings and received his first set of golf clubs at the age of 8. His dad, who taught him how to play, passed away from an aggressive form of brain cancer when Griffin was 12. The day after his dad passed, the head pro at a local course (Blacksburg Country Club), Steve Prater, called and offered free golf and lessons for as long as Griffin needed them, in addition to granting Lanto a free membership to the Club.
- Griffin says that there is a zero percent chance he'd be playing golf without his dad's illness. He was not a 'country club' kid growing up and was helped through all levels of his golfing career by people close to him. Lanto described it as a "village mentality" - other juniors' parents would pay for and take Griffin to tournaments. Even after graduating college and turning professional, the city of Blacksburg helped finance his pro career.
- One of Lanto's dreams was to start a junior golf tournament with Steve Prater and give back to the community that raised him. This came to fruition in June 2021 when Lanto hosted his first AJGA Event, The Lanto Junior Championship, at Blacksburg Country Club, June 7-10, 2021. Money raised through The Lanto Junior Championship benefitted two causes close to Lanto's heart: The Lanto Charity Trust, which assists families battling devastating or terminal illnesses that cannot afford to support their need including treatment, transportation, and living expenses, and the AJGA's Achieving Competitive Excellence (ACE) Grant, which provides financial assistance to young men and women who aspire to earn a college golf scholarship through competitive junior golf.
- Lanto is pronounced Lawn-toe.
- On July 25, 2022, underwent Microdiscectomy surgery on his L5-S1 disc after originally rupturing it in May of 2020 and re-rupturing it in January of 2022 while picking his dog, Troy, up in the middle of the night. This came after not being able to swing a club since the '22 John Deere Classic and living with intense nerve pain for two months. Forced him to miss the FedExCup Playoffs. Was No. 65 in the standings when he opted for the surgery. Returned to the PGA TOUR at the 2023 Farmers Insurance Open.
- First child, Navy Collins Griffin, a daughter, was born on October 25, 2024, less than two months prior to Griffin earning his PGA TOUR card back through PGA TOUR Q-School presented by Korn Ferry. Griffin earned medalist honors, highlighted by a closing 63 at TPC Sawgrass' Dye's Valley

Background

- Born in Mount Shasta, California but moved to Blacksburg, Virginia at a young age.
- Was named after a spiritual master, Lord Lanto – says he's never come across another person with his name. Lanto said his parents were hippies. Full name is Lanto Maitreya (My-tray-a) Griffin. Both Lanto and Maitreya are ascended masters, meaning they moved beyond the needs of the earth plane and achieved spiritual mastery of their bodies, minds and spirits to achieve oneness with the Divine.
- Earned an endowed golf scholarship to Virginia Commonwealth University. Graduated in 2010 with a degree in marketing. Played with Dustin Johnson in his very first college golf tournament – In that same tournament, Lanto also beat every player on Virginia Tech's team (which was extra sweet because he grew up wanting to go to Virginia Tech, but the coach told him his GPA wasn't high enough)

- Griffin said that throughout his journey in pro golf, he considered quitting 40-50 times and says there were numerous times where he had no more money to go on, but someone in his hometown came up with enough money for him to keep the dream alive. He ran out of money in 2014 (missed 6 straight cuts on the eGolf Tour) and talked to fellow pro (at the time) and good friend Willy Wilcox about his dilemma. Wilcox offered to caddie for Griffin. They finished fourth at The Greenbrier, netting Griffin around \$17K that he used to finance his career going forward.
- In April of 2019, Lanto and Oliver Chapman, his best friend growing up who played college golf at Ohio State, were playing a fun round at TPC Sawgrass when Griffin just casually grabbed a putter out of Chapman's bag and started draining putts. That same day- which was the Saturday of the 2019 Masters - Griffin received a putting tip from Hall of Famer Vijay Singh, who had missed the cut at the Masters. Singh told him "keep your right elbow inside and bend down a little more." Griffin kept the putter in the bag, took Singh's advice and went on to win the very next week, the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail Championship on the Korn Ferry Tour in Prattville, Alabama- a key win that helped him lock up his PGA TOUR card for the 2019-2020 season. Griffin has kept that putter in his bag EVER SINCE, and he used that putter to win the Houston Open.

Family

- His father, Michael, ran a health food store and his mom, Julie, was an organic gardener with a masters degree in teaching who later decided to stay at home to raise Griffin and his three siblings.
- Griffin, in an interview: "Our parents were hippies. My brother, sisters and I were raised strict vegetarian, and my dad would rather hang out with us than go to his job managing a health-food store. My siblings had their interests, but I loved sports. Dad coached some of my baseball and soccer teams. We didn't have much money, but we had a great life."
- Lanto and longtime girlfriend Maya Brown got engaged in October 2021, and married on September 3, 2022, at the Dormie Club in West End, North Carolina (outside of Pinehurst). Fellow PGA TOUR winner Nate Lashley was one of his groomsmen.

Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Loves to cook. Not many people know he has never eaten red meat and that his diet consists of fish and poultry. Griffin's brother and sister, Mitra and Allian, don't eat red meat, either. Parents Julie and Michael were "big hippies and very healthy," he explains. His father, who died when Griffin was 12, ran a health food store and his mom tended to her organic garden.
- Favorite movies: Step Brothers and Dumb and Dumber. "Both have been stamped on my wedges and I quote them daily."
- Growing up he LOVED to watch the TV show The Price is Right - still watches it to this day. Other favorites include Dateline, Forensic Files, 60 Minutes, Family Guy.
- Enjoys listening to podcasts while he practices, mostly true crime podcasts.
- Is a sports fan of Virginia Tech athletics, San Francisco 49ers football (born in Northern California, grew up a fan of Steve Young, Jerry Rice). Also fan of Virginia Commonwealth University golf and basketball, his alma mater.

Charity

- Established the Lanto Griffin Foundation (a public foundation) in 2021. The foundation's mission is committed to uplifting the community in the Roanoke and New River Valley area,

focusing on assisting families battling devastating or terminal illnesses that cannot afford to support their needs. In addition, the foundation looks to provide support for disadvantaged youth, so they excel in sports with a goal of receiving college scholarships. The Lanto Charity Classic, held annually at Ballyhack Golf Club in Roanoke, Virginia, is the primary fundraiser for the foundation. As of 2025, the Lanto Griffin Foundation had given back in excess of \$500,000 to the Roanoke Valley community since the foundation's establishment in 2021.

- In 2023, the Lanto Griffin Foundation provided \$50,000 for the construction of an indoor practice facility at the New River Valley Junior Golf Academy at Blacksburg Country Club, his longtime home course.
- In March of 2022, launched the Lanto Griffin Junior Tour alongside Steve Prater and Brad Ewing, bringing a local junior tour to the greater Blacksburg, Virginia area. Griffin said, "We just want to have beginners all the way up to players that can play in college. So for competitive golfers, being able to go out and keep score, put a score on the scorecard, compete against other people, that's the best way to grow your game."
- Since 2021, has hosted the AJGA's Lanto Junior Championship at Blacksburg Country Club each June.
- Finished second in the 2019 Birdies for Love competition and used the \$150,000 to start the Lanto Griffin Charity Trust. The Charity Trust focuses on supporting families battling terminal illnesses and to provide scholarships for youth to help them achieve their dreams in all sports.
- Lanto is an ambassador for Virginia State Golf Association Youth On Course initiative.

Inner Circle/Special Connections

- Proposed to longtime girlfriend Maya Brown on 11/16/21 during a photo shoot, with their dog Troy wearing a tag which read, "Will you marry my dad?" The couple now live in Jacksonville Beach but met in North Carolina during a Korn Ferry Tour event, on the dating app Bumble. In fact, only one month into their relationship, Lanto won the 2017 Nashville Open - earlier, Lanto had encouraged Maya to come watch him play. Little did she know that he would win. That same week, Maya put an "M" on his golf ball, and ever since then he's kept the "M" on each of his golf balls.
- Vijay Singh has become a close mentor and friend. Vijay and Lanto became close during quarantine, working out daily and practicing together.
- Some of his good friends on TOUR include: Nate Lashley, Brandon Harkins, Joel Dahmen, Tedd Potter Jr, Bronson Burgoon, Aaron Baddeley, Bill Haas, Chad Campbell, Boo Weekley, Corey Connors, Sebastian Cappelen, Henrik Norlander.
- In June 2021, Lanto Griffin and his first golf coach, Steve Prater, were both inducted into the 2021 class of the Roanoke Valley Golf Hall of Fame.

Matt McCarty

Things To Know

- Followed his Three-Victory Promotion from the Korn Ferry Tour with his first PGA TOUR victory at the 2024 Bank of Utah Championship, the inaugural playing of the event. McCarty previously won three times in a six-start stretch in July and August 2024 as he earned the Korn Ferry Tour's Three-Victory Promotion, which granted him eligibility for the 2024 FedExCup Fall events.
- In 2024, followed Jason Gore as the second player in history to earn the Three-Victory Promotion and earn a PGA TOUR win in the same season. Gore previously accomplished the feat in 2005, winning three times on the Korn Ferry Tour and winning the 84 Lumber Classic on TOUR.
- Became the 13th player in Korn Ferry Tour history to earn the Three-Victory Promotion, which was established in 1997. Prior to McCarty, the last player to earn the Three-Victory Promotion was Mito Pereira, who accomplished the feat amid the 2020-21 season, which spanned two years as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to McCarty, the last player to win three times in a single calendar year season was Wesley Bryan in 2016. Clinched the No. 1 position on the 2024 Korn Ferry Tour Points List one event prior to the season-ending Korn Ferry Tour Championship, as he built a substantial lead via his three victories.
- Says the biggest difference between the player he is now and the player who joined the Korn Ferry Tour as a rookie in 2022 is his distance. McCarty was a shorter hitter coming out of college and put a greater emphasis on working out and gaining distance in his three years on the Korn Ferry Tour.
- Attended the WM Phoenix Open for a number of years growing up in Scottsdale, Arizona, with some of his favorite viewing spots being No. 7 tee and No. 13 green. As a youngster, served as a standard bearer at the tournament, and remembered Ken Duke being incredibly friendly. Later attended the event as part of a "boys trip" while in college (2020). Also played the Champions Course at TPC Scottsdale growing up, as Matt remembered the junior rate being \$20.
- His personal mantra: "Be where your feet are."

Background

- Continues to reside in Scottsdale, Arizona. Plays and practices at TPC Scottsdale when not on TOUR.
- Born in Scottsdale, Arizona, but actually spent much of his childhood in Seattle. The family relocated to Scottsdale around the time Matt was 10 / 11 years old.
- Some of his earliest golf memories were going to the Riverbend Golf Complex (in Kent, Washington, south of Seattle) with his dad. The two frequented the covered driving range (very important given the rainy weather in the region) and par-3 course. Matt also began playing golf left-handed because he learned the game mirroring his dad's right-handed swing.
- Got deeper into golf by playing with his dad, Scott, and his dad's friends at Dobson Ranch Golf Course, a municipal course in Mesa, Arizona. Also grew up playing McDowell Mountain Golf Club in Scottsdale. Occasionally got to play the Champions Course at TPC Scottsdale, as they offered an affordable junior rate.
- Grew up taking lessons with Dave Williams (not to be confused with the famous University of Houston golf head coach bearing the same name) at McCormick Ranch Golf Club in Scottsdale, Arizona.

- One of Matt's favorite memories was beating his dad in their annual Thanksgiving match around the time he was 12 or 13 years old.
- Incredibly thankful for his opportunity to play at Santa Clara University, where he played five seasons (2016-21) and earned three All-West Coast Conference honors (2018, 2019, 2021). McCarty was lightly recruited and was thankful for the environment, support system, and opportunity to play a wide variety of golf courses in California, which were very different from the courses he grew up playing in his native Scottsdale, Arizona. McCarty followed Jim Wiechers as the second Santa Clara alum to earn PGA TOUR membership. Wiechers played 11 consecutive seasons on TOUR from 1967 through 1977. McCarty will also make note of the fact two-time NBA Most Valuable Player Steve Nash played college basketball at Santa Clara in the 1990s.
- Earned a bachelor's degree in finance, and a master's degree in marketing from Santa Clara.
- Turned professional in 2021 and earned Korn Ferry Tour membership for the 2022 season via Q-School (now formally known as PGA TOUR Q-School presented by Korn Ferry). Recorded top 75 finishes on the Korn Ferry Tour Points List in his first two seasons on Tour (No. 55 as a rookie in 2022, No. 35 in 2023).

Family

- NOTE: Matt's parents (Scott and Deanna) are divorced, but Matt maintains relationships with both of them. Deanna still goes by Deanna McCarty, but please avoid any references of "Scott and Deanna McCarty" together. Please see a PGA TOUR media official if additional context is required.
- Has two younger sisters -- Amanda and Lauren.
- Grandpa, Ray Prokopchak, played one season of football at Arizona State University in 1958. Although he is not credited as a letterwinner, Prokopchak was listed on the program's all-time roster as having worn No. 85 for the 1958 season -- which was College Football Hall of Fame inductee Frank Kush's first season as head coach of the Sun Devils.

Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Uses a 10-finger grip. It was simply the way he learned to play the game and never saw the need to change.
- Fan of the Seattle Seahawks (NFL football) and Arizona State University. Matt spent part of his childhood living in Seattle, and his grandfather played football at Arizona State, leading to his affinity for those teams. Also supports the Phoenix Suns (NBA basketball) and the Chicago Cubs (MLB baseball), with the latter being a result of his dad's family being from Chicago.
- Big gamer. Also enjoys cooking and traveling.
- Investor in Studio Golf SF, a bar and grill featuring three golf simulators. Located in downtown San Francisco, the business is expected to open in summer 2025.

Charity

- Partnered with the Junior Golf Association of Arizona, a junior golf circuit he played as a youngster, to sponsor the long-running Mesa Junior Championship, which is contested at Dobson Ranch Golf Course, a municipal course in Mesa where McCarty honed his game alongside his father. The 2025 playing of the tournament -- now known as the Matt McCarty Mesa Junior Championship -- was contested June 25-26. McCarty says of sponsoring the event, "I grew up playing the course with my dad. To come back now and support the next generation of Arizona golfers, it means the world to me."

- Working with his mom and his business manager, Matt created Team McCarty's Heart Under Par for Cancer. Under the fundraising initiative, Matt donates \$10 for every stroke he is under par during the season to Cancer Support Community Arizona. Matt first made his annual pledge in 2022. In June 2023, Matt presented a \$1,000 check to Cancer Support Community Arizona. His interest in Cancer Support Community Arizona was encouraged by his mother, a breast cancer survivor whose battle began around the time Matt was 12 years old. Matt recalled, "I remember how tough it was for all of us when she was diagnosed, and I was really excited to support an organization that helps people in similar circumstances." Although Deanna did not utilize the resources available through Cancer Support Community Arizona - which, according to its website, include more than 100 free monthly programs such as support groups, cancer recourse navigation, social activities, mind and body therapies, nutritional counseling, and educational seminars - she was aware of the organization and supported its mission. Matt also comes from a family which recognizes the importance of giving back, with Matt's philanthropic grandmother being a key influence throughout his upbringing.

Inner Circle/Special Connections

- Spent a lot of time playing and practicing at Dobson Ranch Golf Course in Mesa, Arizona during his formative golf years. Dobson Ranch was also the home course for multi-time PGA TOUR winner Chez Reavie, who attended nearby Dobson High School prior to playing collegiately at Arizona State University. The two met for the first time at the 2024 Bank of Utah Championship, which McCarty went on to win.
- Shares a deep friendship with his caddie, Devrath Das (just goes by Dev, or Das - rhymes with Nas, like the rapper). The two were classmates and spent three seasons together on the golf team at Santa Clara (2016-19). The two typically get a house together while on the road, and Matt says just having a close friend to pass time on the road with has been tremendous. The two usually just watch movies or play video games to pass downtime.
- Close friends with fellow Korn Ferry Tour graduate Mason Andersen. The two played junior golf against one another in Arizona, and later played the 2023 and 2024 seasons together on the Korn Ferry Tour.
- Developed a close friendship with fellow Korn Ferry Tour graduate Mac Meissner (pronounced MIZE-nur) as the two played the Korn Ferry Tour together in 2022 and 2023.
- McCarty prepped at Desert Mountain High School in Scottsdale, Arizona. NFL All-Pro tight end Mark Andrews (Class of 2014) is also a Desert Mountain High School alum.

J.J. Spaun

Things To Know

- Received an autographed skateboard from Tony Hawk in the weeks following his victory at the 2025 U.S. Open. Also received congratulatory messages from comedian George Lopez and professional baseball player Mookie Betts, among many others, following the U.S. Open victory.
- Earned his second PGA TOUR title at the 2025 U.S. Open at Oakmont Country Club, sinking a 64-foot, 5-inch birdie putt on the 72nd hole of regulation to clinch a two-stroke victory. Became the first player since Webb Simpson (2012) to win the U.S. Open in his second start at the event (previously missed cut at 2021 U.S. Open, contested at Torrey Pines). Spaun bogeyed five of his first six holes in the final round, then (after a mid-round suspension of play due to inclement weather) rallied to victory with a 3-under 32 on the back nine.
- Three days after his victory at the 2025 U.S. Open, told media members at a Travelers Championship press conference his golf career embodied a Confucius quote. The quote Spaun referenced is: "Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but rising every time we fall."
- Following a missed cut at the 2024 RBC Canadian Open in early June, stood No. 183 in the FedExCup. With the potential of losing PGA TOUR status looming, Spaun adopted a more thankful mentality with regards to his career, which he expanded on following his victory at the 2025 U.S. Open. "I just started saying... I'm just happy to have the career I've had. That kind of took a lot of pressure off my back as far as expectations on the golf course." Spaun later drew inspiration from the 2004 movie Wimbledon, which he watched on an international flight in December 2024. Spaun said of the movie, "It was this... not washed up but like older tennis player and he's thinking of quitting, he wants to retire at Wimbledon, and he wins Wimbledon. And it kind of resonated with me... you can't give up yet. I was watching it and was like, 'Maybe that can be me.'"
- Spaun was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes at the end of 2018 after unexplained weight loss and fatigue impacted him throughout the year. After nearly three years of exercising and adjusting his diet, Spaun still felt lethargic and kept losing weight (by that point he had lost nearly 50 pounds), which led him to a specialist. In February 2021, Spaun learned he was misdiagnosed, as he was actually type 1, late onset. Spaun said, "When I got re-diagnosed -- and diagnosed correctly -- it gave me new life. I started to feel better, started to keep weight on, get muscle mass back." Spaun is approved by the TOUR to wear a Libre blood-sugar monitor and check his levels while competing. If his blood sugar is low, he can faint. If it gets too high, his vision starts to blur.

Background

- Grew up playing Arroyo Seco Golf Course, a par-3 course in South Pasadena, California.
- Attended San Dimas High School in San Dimas, California, the same high school that Bill and Ted attended in the movie "Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure."
- Played four seasons at San Diego State University (2008-12), where he was credited with five collegiate wins, earned two All-America honors, and was named the 2012 Mountain West Conference Golfer of the Year.
- While at San Diego State University, the men's golf team annually worked at the Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines, with team members cleaning shoes of the TOUR pros in the locker room to raise money for the program. Spaun recalled, "It was good memories to go from cleaning shoes to now playing in the tournament."

- Spaun detailed his journey to professional golf throughout the week of his runner-up finish at the 2025 PLAYERS Championship, saying, "I didn't have the pedigree of a junior golfer growing up. I wasn't raised or groomed to be a professional golfer. I walked on to a California state school (San Diego State University). I kind of blossomed as I took on this journey... I didn't know what my ceiling was. If you were to say before I turned pro, 'Hey, you're going to win a PGA TOUR event and you're going to play nine, 10 years out there, you're going to make some good money, and you're going to have fun doing it,' that would be a great accomplishment in my terms."
- Turned professional in 2012 and spent his first three professional seasons on PGA TOUR Canada (2013-15), eventually finishing atop the 2015 Order of Merit for a promotion to the Korn Ferry Tour. Spaun needed only one season on the Korn Ferry Tour to earn PGA TOUR membership, as he finished in the top five of the 2016 Korn Ferry Tour standings to earn his TOUR card.
- After a No. 174 finish in the 2020-21 FedExCup standings, regained PGA TOUR membership for the 2022 season via the 2021 Korn Ferry Tour Finals (a system which, from 2013-22, awarded a second set of 25 PGA TOUR cards through a season-ending series of three or four events featuring the top 75 players from the Korn Ferry Tour Points List and Nos. 126-200 from the FedExCup standings). Spaun regained his TOUR card with a T2 finish at the Albertsons Boise Open (the first of three Finals events that year) in August 2021, and earned his first PGA TOUR title less than six months later at the 2022 Valero Texas Open.

Family

- He and wife, Melody have two daughters, Emerson Lili (November 2020) and Violet (June 2023).
- According to J.J., his mother's side of the family is predominantly half Filipino and half Mexican.
- Mother, Dollie. Father, John.
- When Dollie was pregnant with J.J., she asked her doctors if she could still play golf. They approved, so Dollie got her exercise playing rounds at Arroyo Seco, a par-3 course in South Pasadena, California. She played until she was eight months pregnant. Dollie says, "People would always tell me that my son was going to be a golfer when he grew up." Dollie also recounted, "(J.J.) used to watch TV as a little kid and he'd tell me, 'Mom, I don't want to watch cartoons. I want to watch Golf Channel.'"
- As a baby, J.J. would watch from his stroller as his father, John, hit range balls. When J.J. was old enough to walk, he'd go into the family's garage and hit whatever he could into a hitting net (balls, tees, even sockets from the toolbox) John had hung up. Following his victory at the 2025 U.S. Open (on Father's Day), J.J. said, "My dad introduced me to the game and always supported me every step of the way. What better gift to give him than being able to win the U.S. Open." John was on site and following J.J. the entire week at Oakmont.

Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Huge Los Angeles Dodgers (MLB baseball) fan. He played with Mookie Betts at the 2022 AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am.
- Grew up skateboarding and dreamt of becoming the next great skateboarder, with his icons being Tony Hawk, Andrew Reynolds, and Erik Ellington. Around the time he was five years old, a skating accident led to Spaun to rethink his dream. Spaun recalled, "I kind of went right under this car (reversing down a driveway) and literally was sitting under it. The lady thought she ran over a cat. Everyone is screaming, dad pulls me out, I have all this grease and oil all

over me. That freaked me out. I definitely had scar tissue on what I was trying to accomplish skateboarding." Spaun continued to skateboard and, in April 2020, he landed a backside flip and posted the video to his social media channels, explaining it was "at least 15 years since I've landed one of those." Although he will occasionally "cruise around the neighborhood" on his longboard, Spaun essentially gave up skateboarding in his early 30s, saying, "Falling now is like falling off a 10-story building."

- Plays the guitar and has an interest in music. Can play Led Zeppelin's "Stairway to Heaven" on the guitar. Previously used custom Led Zeppelin headcovers early in his professional career.
- Previously a season-pass holder for Disneyland. His trips to Magic Kingdom typically began with a ride on the Pirates of the Caribbean attraction.
- He had a practice putting and chipping green installed in his backyard.

Charity

- Finished second in the 2018 RSM Birdies Fore Love competition, allowing him to donate the \$150,000 prize to charity. He selected Los Angeles United Way to support Disaster Relief and Creating Pathways out of Poverty Funds.
- At the 2020 Travelers Championship, won The Umbrella at 15 1/2 (15 and a half) Challenge. The annual closest to the pin contest awards a \$10,000 charitable contribution to a charity of the winner's choosing. Spaun chose Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (now known as Breakthrough T1D), which, according to its website, aims to "lead the way to more effective solutions by connecting the brightest minds to advance treatments, influence policy, and improve access to care." Upon learning of Spaun's choice for the donation, Andy Bessette (at the time an Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer for Travelers) introduced himself and told Spaun his son had been diagnosed as Type 1 before college. This led Bessette and his wife, Cherrie, to match Spaun's donation to what is now known as Breakthrough T1D.

Inner Circle/Special Connections

- Friendly with fellow multi-time PGA TOUR winner Max Homa, as the two are both members at Whisper Rock Golf Club in Scottsdale, Arizona.
- Played the 2016 Genesis Invitational as the recipient of the Charlie Sifford Memorial Exemption.

Russell Henley

Things To Know

- College teammates at University of Georgia included PGA TOUR winners Harris English, Keith Mitchell and Brian Harman.
- Fan of Georgia football. After winning the 2022 World Wide Technology Championship, said the following while Georgia was playing Tennessee: "I was playing while the game was going on, so I didn't get to see it. I heard on No. 13 or so that we were winning 21-3, so I was very happy to hear that. I'm still kind of living off of last year's National Championship, though. Yeah, it's a fun time of the year to be a Georgia fan."
- Watched the 2022 College Football Playoff National Championship (Georgia vs. Alabama) with fellow Georgia players on Monday of the 2022 Sony Open in Hawaii. All 10 Georgia players in the field would go on to make the cut with Henley coming close to victory (lost to Hideki Matsuyama in a one-hole playoff).

Background

- Born and raised in Macon, Georgia; Attended the University of Georgia, where he won the 2010 Haskins Award as most outstanding collegiate golfer. Graduated in 2011 with a degree in Consumer Economics.
- Was named Georgia's Student-Athlete of the Year for the 2009-10 season and helped the Georgia Bulldogs win the Southeastern Conference title in his junior and senior years.
- Won his first start as a PGA TOUR member at the 2013 Sony Open in Hawaii.

Family

- Russell and Teil Henley have three children: Son, Robert (2018); Daughters, Ruth (2019) and Jane (2022).
- Wife, Teil Duncan, is an accomplished artist whose impressionistic paintings and prints are sold all over the world. She paints out of a studio in their backyard in Columbus, Georgia.

Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Self-taught, Henley has played guitar since he was eight years old. His best friend and brother-in-law, they actually married sisters, always seemed to be in a band, and Henley loved music, too, particularly newer country music and anything from the '90s. Through PGA TOUR opportunities, has played onstage with O.A.R. (2015 Genesis Invitational) and Darius Rucker.

Charity

- Each September, Russell hosts the Five Star Kevin Brown Russell Henley Celebrity Classic in his hometown to benefit the Rescue Mission of Middle Georgia, a faith-based, life recovery program for men, women, and children, in addition to the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.
- Macon Volunteer Clinic, founded by Russell's father, provides free primary medical care and dental care to uninsured, working adults in the Macon-Bibb County area and whose income is equal to or less than 200% of the federal poverty level.

Inner Circle/Special Connections

- Played on 2011 Walker Cup team with Jordan Spieth, Patrick Cantlay, Patrick Rodgers and Harris English, among others.

