

# Report (10 players)

## Sepp Straka

### Things To Know

- Sepp and his wife, Paige, welcomed their first child just before Christmas in December 2023: a boy named Leo. Sepp left the hospital wearing a Diet Coke hat. The 2024 Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches, which Sepp won in 2022, was Leo's first trip to a tournament.
- Proud to have made the TOUR Championship in each of the last three seasons, in part because of the tournament's partnership with Coca Cola. Will bring Diet Coke to tournaments if he knows they will only provide Pepsi. After Sepp lost in a playoff to Will Zalatoris at the 2022 FedEx St. Jude Championship, his wife, Paige, joked on Instagram, "I'm not saying he would have won if this were a Coke week, but I'm also not NOT saying it."
- Earned his first PGA TOUR title at the 2022 Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches, becoming the first Austrian and the 14th player from the University of Georgia to win on TOUR. Wife, Paige, flew in Sunday morning at 5:30 a.m. to surprise him, after spending Saturday night at her father's surprise 60th birthday party.
- Was born in Austria and lived in Vienna until he was 14, when his family moved to Valdosta, Georgia. Became the first PGA TOUR member from Austria. Took a trip to Austria in December 2022, his first time back in a few years and first trip there with his wife, Paige.
- Played at the University of Georgia from 2011 to 2016, where his teammates included his twin brother, Sam, Keith Mitchell, Joey Garber and Greyson Sigg. Was a co-captain with Lee McCoy his senior season. Remains a huge Georgia Bulldogs fan.
- Was so discouraged by his rough start to the 2018 Korn Ferry Tour season that by July, he had already registered for Q-School again. He won the following week at the AdventHealth Championship, and eventually secured his PGA TOUR card through Korn Ferry Tour Finals with a T3 finish at the season-ending Korn Ferry Tour Championship.
- Often plays Yahtzee! with the players he is staying with on the road, including Chris Kirk, Brendon Todd and Denny McCarthy.
- Reached the top 50 in the Official World Golf Ranking for the first time on April 30, 2022 (No. 50).
- Sepp is a nickname for Josef.

### Family

- Married Paige Dean (an Auburn graduate) the weekend before the start of the new season. The couple got engaged in December 2020 and were married on September 11, 2021 at Shoal Creek in Alabama. Georgia friends in attendance included UGA head men's golf coach Chris Haack, Keith Mitchell and Chris Kirk. Paige was certain she'd marry an Auburn man, but met Sepp at a bar in Auburn in November 2017 only to learn he was a UGA fan and the rest was history!
- His mother, Mary, first traveled to Austria to be with her boyfriend, who was designing a golf course in Salzburg. After they broke up, Mary remained in the country and began working in a golf shop, where she one day sold a glove to Peter, Sepp's father.
- Credits brother, Sam, with getting him into golf, despite both parents being big fans of the sport. Both boys grew up playing soccer (Sam was a forward and Sepp a goalie), but one day, after they attended a week-long junior golf camp, Sam told Sepp they were quitting the

soccer team and picking up golf. The twins went on to play at the University of Georgia together. Sam currently sells real estate in Valdosta.

## Other

- Represented Austria at the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo and finished T10. PGA TOUR member Matthias Schwab was also a member of Team Austria (T27). Sepp finished T35 in the 2024 Paris Olympics.
- In his PGA TOUR debut, opened the 2018 Procore Championship with a 63 to hold the solo-lead (went on to finish T46).

# Shane Lowry

## Things To Know

- 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.
- Represents The Bay Golf Club alongside teammates Ludvig Aberg, Wyndham Clark and Min Woo Lee in the inaugural TGL presented by SoFi, a primetime golf league in partnership with the PGA TOUR that launched in January 2025 on ESPN. The new golf league was created by TMRW Sports whose co-founders include Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy, and fuses advanced technology, innovation and live action for ESPN's primetime television audience. The Bay Golf Club is led by Avenue Sports Fund with Marc Lasry and Stephen Curry with limited partners including Andre Iguodala, Klay Thompson, Alex Albon, Leonardo Fioravanti, Kanoa Igarashi and John Stones.
- Shane has a love of all sports, but particularly Gaelic football, rugby and soccer. He sponsors the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) -- which promotes indigenous Gaelic games such as Gaelic football, rugby, soccer, hurling and rounders -- in Ireland and gets to as many matches as possible in his home county of Offaly to cheer on the underage teams.
- Began playing golf at 13, inspired by his uncles. He was a single-digit handicapper by age 15, with Lowry saying, "When I was a kid, I spent my summers playing pitch and putt on the local course with my mates. It was there, in Clara, County Offaly, Ireland that I learned the basics and short game without even knowing it. My family was not really into golf, so I taught myself how to play. I took every chance I had to get out on the course. I can't say it didn't frustrate my family and teachers a bit back then. I think they've forgiven me now though."
- Credits his strong short game to practicing on the green complexes at Esker Hills where he grew up playing: "I think the reason my short game is quite good is that all the greens (at Esker Hills) there are raised. I used to play a lot of golf on my own and I'd practice my chipping a lot. You'd always have to chip it up with a little bit of spin to get the ball close. I was never taught how to play them but I chipped and I chipped and I chipped and over time I developed it."
- Shane's father Brendan and uncles Sean and Mick won the All-Ireland football championship with county Offaly on the same team in 1982, it was a legendary final when they stopped a Kerry dynasty from winning five All Irelands in a row.
- Won his home event, the Irish Open, as an amateur in 2009 at Galgorm Castle. Turned pro immediately afterwards. "Life did change overnight. I wasn't even a student at that point, having left college. I was just an amateur golfer. I hadn't much money in my bank account I can tell you. Then all of a sudden you're on the European Tour. [The Irish Open] was a huge thing for the town and everyone in it. I had a parade in the town! Where we're from, when your team wins the county football championship, the whole team is paraded through the town. That was me! I couldn't believe it really. We went into the early hours that night."
- His Mother bet on him at 250-1 to win the Irish Open
- With his victory at the 2019 Open Championship at Royal Portrush in Northern Ireland, Lowry followed Pádraig Harrington as the second player from the Republic of Ireland to win a major championship. In his press conference following the win, Lowry revealed he broke down emotionally after a missed cut at the 2018 Open Championship (held at Carnoustie), saying, "Carnoustie, look, that just shows how fickle golf is. Golf is a weird sport, and you never know what's around the corner. That's why you need to remind yourself, and you need other people there to remind you, you need to fight through the bad times. I sat in the car park in Carnoustie, almost a year ago right to this week, and I cried. Golf wasn't my friend at

the time. It was something that (had) become very stressful, and it was weighing on me and I just didn't like doing it. What a difference a year makes, I suppose."

- His Grandmother hadn't had a Brandy since 2009 but she had two to get through her nerves watching Shane win The Open Championship in 2019.
- Lowry now spends the majority of his time in West Palm Beach, Florida, where he is a member of The Bear's Club and The Grove XXIII (Michael Jordan's private club). He still has a place in Ireland which he calls home.

## Background

- 2007 Irish Amateur Champion.
- First win as a professional on the DP World Tour was at 2012 Portugal Masters.

## Family

- Wife, Wendy, and two daughters, Iris (born 2017) and Ivy (born 2021)
- He and his wife Wendy eloped to New York City in 2016 and it is one of their favorite places to visit.

## Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Shane is also very interested in horse racing and has been involved with two horses with friends.
- In December 2022, Lowry opened a bar-restaurant called Old Warehouse Tullamore just a few minutes from where he grew up in County Offaly, Ireland. It's his first business outside of golf (his partner is Allan Clancy who has a portfolio of bars and restaurants in Ireland).

## Charity

- Enjoys giving back especially working with the The Children's Hospital in Ireland. He has been an ambassador for Temple Street Children's Hospital in Dublin for years and has their logo placed on the belly of his bag.

## Inner Circle/Special Connections

- Won 2024 Zurich Classic of New Orleans alongside friend Rory McIlroy.
- Has a close friendship with and a deep admiration for fellow Irishman Pádraig Harrington. Following his victory at the 2019 Open Championship, which Harrington watched greenside at the 18th hole at Royal Portrush, Lowry said Harrington "paved the way for the success of Irish golfers."

## Other

- A documentary about Shane's remarkable victory at the 2019 Open Championship at Royal Portrush and his ties to Ireland aired on Golf Channel during the 2023 Genesis Scottish Open five times and again in August 2023.
- In qualifying for the 2010 Open Championship, Lowry equaled Nick Faldo's course record 62 at Sunningdale.

# Justin Thomas

## Things To Know

- Earned his 16th PGA TOUR title at the 2025 RBC Heritage, ending a winless drought which spanned 2 years, 10 months, 29 days (previous title came at the 2022 PGA Championship). Prior to the winless drought, had earned a PGA TOUR victory in seven consecutive seasons (2015-16 season through 2021-22 season).
- The former cover star of PGA TOUR 2K21 is once again featured in the latest release of the popular video game, PGA TOUR 2K25, one of two playable pros to have appeared in all three games.
- Welcomed daughter, Molly Grace, with wife Jill in November 2024.
- Represents Atlanta Drive GC alongside teammates Patrick Cantlay, Billy Horschel, and Lucas Glover in the inaugural TGL presented by SoFi, a primetime golf league in partnership with the PGA TOUR that launched in January 2025 on ESPN. The new golf league, which will complement the PGA TOUR season, was created by TMRW Sports whose co-founders include Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy, and fuses advanced technology, innovation and live action for primetime television audiences. Atlanta Drive GC is part of Arthur M. Blank's AMB Sports and Entertainment (AMBSE) portfolio.
- Became the ninth PGA Championship winner whose father was a PGA of America professional -- his 2017 victory at Quail Hollow Club was the first since Keegan Bradley in 2011. With his second title in the event in 2022 at Southern Hills, he joined Raymond Floyd as the only other player who was the son of a PGA professional to win multiple PGA titles (Floyd accomplished the feat in 1969, 1982). Father Mike was the longtime pro at Harmony Landing in Justin's hometown of Goshen, Kentucky; Late Grandfather Paul was the head professional at Zanesville Country Club, 50 miles east of Columbus, Ohio, for 26 years. Paul competed in the same events as Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus and Ben Hogan.
- Has developed a close friendship with Tiger Woods who he first met in 2015 on the range at THE PLAYERS Championship during his rookie season. The pair frequently practice together at home in South Florida but also hang out - with Thomas known for needling him - like how Thomas reminds him their age difference by recalling being seven years old in the gallery of the 2000 PGA Championship at Valhalla in his hometown as Woods won his fifth major. Justin and his father Mike played alongside Tiger and his son Charlie in the PNC Championship in 2020 (where the Thomas' won) 2021, 2022 and 2023, with Charlie referring to the Thomas' as family.
- Passionate Alabama football fan having been an accomplished golfer at the school from 2011-13.
- Returned to the Player Advisory Council (PAC) in 2025, having previously served in 2024. The 16-member PAC advises and consults with the PGA TOUR Policy Board (Board of Directors) and Commissioner Jay Monahan on issues affecting the TOUR.

## Family

- Grandfather, Paul, who was known as PT, passed away on February 6, 2021, the Saturday evening of the WM Phoenix Open. Paul attempted to play on the PGA TOUR in 1957 with little success; he qualified for the 1960 PGA Championship (Firestone Country Club) and 1961 PGA Championship (Olympia Fields). He also competed in the 1962 U.S. Open at Oakmont. After a 26-year career at Zanesville Country Club in Ohio, PT finished his career at Peek'n Peak Resort in New York prior to retirement.

- The 2021 PLAYERS Championship marked Thomas' first win since his grandfather's passing in February 2021. One of two tattoos is in honor of his grandfather - his signature on the inside of his right upper arm - which he inked shortly before his grandfather passed. In his post-win interview at the 2021 PLAYERS, Thomas held back tears and said "I wish he could have been here."
- Father, Mike, second-oldest of four sons, followed his father into the club pro ranks. Mike is the only coach Justin has ever had. He retired after a long career as head pro at Harmony Landing Country Club in Goshen, Kentucky outside of Louisville where Thomas honed his skills at an early age. The pro shop has memorabilia from all three generations, including balls from each one of Thomas' wins, dating back to his early junior days.
- Mother, Jani, travels to most tournaments.
- Wife, Jillian Wisniewski (Wiz-new-ski), also from Kentucky, graduated from the University of Kentucky in May 2015 with a degree in journalism with an emphasis in broadcast. The couple got engaged in October 2021 and wed in early November 2022 in Franklin, Tennessee. Jordan Spieth served as his best man with fellow professionals Rickie Fowler and Bud Cauley also members of the wedding party. Entertainment host Jason Kennedy was the officiant. Thomas and Jillian live in Jupiter, Florida with their dog, Franklin.
- Welcomed daughter, Molly Grace, with wife Jill in November 2024.

### Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- When going on "boys trips" with three / four of his close friends, who often want to just play golf, will bring a left-handed set of clubs to use throughout the trip. Has one friend in particular who hates losing to him playing left-handed, with Justin saying, "I have one friend who talks a lot of s\*\*\*, and I just love beating him left-handed, because then he can't say anything. I remind him of that quite often." Has only played a couple 18-hole rounds left-handed but says he will typically shoot in the mid-40s for nine holes.
- Avid shoe collector. Also enjoys collecting / gifting Rolex watches, his sponsor, to mark special occasions / dates. He had a Rolex watch engraved with the date he first got to #1 in the Official World Golf Ranking (May 13, 2018).
- Grew up a Boston Red Sox fan thanks to his Uncle Bill (his mother, Jani's brother-in-law) who is from the area. Every birthday and Christmas he would give Justin Red Sox gear. His first Red Sox jersey was a David Ortiz jersey. All of his social handles, and email address, feature the number '34'. Threw out the first pitch at Fenway Park in 2018 ahead of his title defense at the Dell Technologies Championship, a former FedExCup Playoffs event.
- Fan of the Florida Panthers, the NHL team based in the Greater Miami area.
- Entered the golf course design business with Panther National, a luxury golf community in Palm Beach County, Florida. Thomas co-designed the property, the first new golf course in the area in nearly two decades, with Jack Nicklaus. The project broke ground on February 22, 2022 and officially opened on November 17, 2023. The opening featured a star-studded exhibition match with Rickie Fowler, Xander Schauffele, Morgan Hoffmann, Erik van Rooyen and Lexi Thompson.
- Featured in a spread "The Young Gentleman of Golf" in the Cigar Aficionado June 2022 issue. Said his foray into cigars came from his late grandfather Paul who always had one on him, and then later at Alabama; Every time the school beat Tennessee, it was tradition to light up a cigar after the game. Thomas said "we were fortunate that it's happened every single year." His cigar of choice: Montecristo No. 2.

### Charity

- Launched the Justin Thomas Foundation in 2019 in his hometown of Louisville, Kentucky with the mission to impact children in need, junior golf and military families, reflecting altruistic aspirations of the Thomas family. The Foundation has made significant charitable contributions to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Kentucky and The First Tee of Louisville.
- Since 2016, hosts the Justin Thomas Junior Championship, a 54-hole, stroke-play tournament on the American Junior Golf Association (AJGA) schedule. The event is played at Harmony Landing Country Club, Thomas' home course where his father Mike served as head pro. Mike serves as tournament chairman of the event which raises money through a junior-am fundraising tournament for The Justin Thomas Foundation, and has endowed an ACE Grant college scholarship each year for a junior golfer from Kentucky, providing financial assistance for college. In 2023, Thomas announced a personal commitment of \$40K to provide a \$500 stipend to every player in the tournament field, making the tournament as accessible as possible. Thomas had an impressive junior career with the AJGA from 2006-10, where he won three times and was a two-time Rolex Junior All-American.
- After experiencing a skin cancer scare, has been very vocal about protecting your skin and wearing sunscreen. Debuted his own sunscreen line called "Wear SPF" in April 2022 with a portion of proceeds from every sale of WearSPF going directly to the Justin Thomas Foundation.

### Inner Circle/Special Connections

- After parting ways with longtime caddie, Jimmy Johnson, following the Ryder Cup in September 2021, Thomas lured Jim "Bones" Mackay back to caddying after a successful first foray into TV broadcasting with NBC/Golf Channel. The pair would remain a partnership until the 2024 Valspar Championship, with their split announced ahead of the 2024 Masters Tournament. Prior to their partnership, Bones had previously filled in for Thomas after Johnson had some health issues, first in 2018, and most notably winning the 2020 WGC-FedEx St. Jude Invitational together. The 2022 PGA Championship marked their first win as an official player-caddie partnership and they were together for the 2022 Presidents Cup and 2023 Ryder Cup.
- Thomas knew Michael Jordan long before they were both members at The Bears Club or at Jordan's private club, The Grove XXIII in South Florida. He first met MJ as a teenager in Kentucky. Every year, MJ and a group of friends would play Harmony Landing (where Mike Thomas was head pro) before the Kentucky Derby. Thomas would caddie for the group as early as 13, and finally got a chance to play with MJ years later (playing from the same tees).
- Thomas is very close with former Alabama football coach Nick Saban. During the media day for the 2022 PLAYERS Championship, Saban surprised Justin on the 16th tee at TPC Sawgrass and the pair played three holes together just before the 2022 PLAYERS Championship.
- Made his PGA TOUR debut at the 2009 Wyndham Championship at the age of 16 where he shot a 65 in the first round and made the 36-hole cut, finishing T78. Thomas earned the spot in the field after winning an AJGA tournament at Sedgefield (one of three AJGA titles in his junior career). Thomas' dad, Mike, caddied for him. Thomas next TOUR start would come at the 2012 Greenbrier Classic where he finished T46 as an amateur.
- Thomas won the 2009 FootJoy Invitational, a premier AJGA event conducted at Sedgefield that awarded the winner an exemption into the PGA TOUR's Wyndham Championship from 2008-2012. He entered the final round three strokes behind 54-hole co-leader Jordan Spieth and posted seven birdies in the final round to win by two shots over Anthony Paolucci and future college teammate and close friend Tom Lovelady. That field also included future PGA TOUR players Richy Werenski (5th), Emiliano Grillo, Kramer Hickok, Tyler McCumber, Michael Kim, Seth Reeves, Austin Cook, Byeong Hun An and Keith Mitchell.

- In November 2023, teamed up with Spanish racing driver Carlos Sainz Jr. to win the Netflix Cup, the first live sports event on Netflix. The match play event played at the Wynn Golf Club in Las Vegas paired PGA TOUR pros - and stars of Netflix's "Full Swing" - with Formula 1 racers featured on Netflix's 'Drive to Survive.' In addition to Thomas, Rickie Fowler, Tony Finau and Max Homa participated.

## Other

- Made professional debut in 2013 at St. Andrews at the age of 20 years, 4 months and 28 days via the Alfred Dunhill Links on the DP World Tour (September 26-29, 2013). The event has a three course rotation (Angus Scotland and Kingsbarns Golf Links), Thomas' first round was at St. Andrews where he carded a 66. Missed the cut after rounds of 73-71. The event, won by David Howell in a playoff over Peter Uihlein, included top-10 finishers Shane Lowry (T3), Tommy Fleetwood (5). Professional start came weeks after the 2013 Walker Cup where Thomas played alongside Max Homa as the U.S. defeated Team GB&I, which included Matt Fitzpatrick.
- At the 2013 Palmer Cup at Wilmington Country Club in Delaware, met Arnold Palmer who recalled playing with Thomas' grandfather, Paul Thomas, on the PGA TOUR in the late 1950s, early 60s. It was at the Palmer Cup that Thomas was taught by Mr. Palmer to always make his autograph legible.
- In July 2022, was named Best Male Golfer by the ESPY Awards for the first time, two months after capturing his second major victory at the PGA Championship at Southern Hills. Won the accolade over Scottie Scheffler, Cameron Smith and Jon Rahm. Tiger Woods has won the award a record seven times, most recently in 2013.
- Called representing the U.S. in the Olympic Games in Tokyo 2020 "the coolest thing I've ever been a part of."
- Has represented the United States in three Presidents Cups (2017, 2019, 2022) and three Ryder Cups (2018, 2021, 2023), most recently at the 2023 Ryder Cup at Marco Simone Golf & Country Club in Rome, Italy, where he was one of six Captain's Picks for the U.S. team.
- Honored May 6, 2024 in Louisville, Kentucky as a Kentucky Colonel by Governor Andy Beshear, and Louisville Mayor Craig Greenberg. May 6th has been proclaimed "Justin Thomas Day" in Louisville, KY. A Hometown Hero banner was also unveiled, which is one in a series of public displays for Louisville's native sons and daughters like Muhammad Ali, Jack Harlow and more.

# Keith Mitchell

## Things To Know

- Won his first PGA TOUR title at the 2019 Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches in what was his second season on TOUR.
- Has been a visor guy from "day one." Keith notes he posted a picture on Instagram of himself wearing a visor at 4 or 5 years old. Keith also said, "My dad always wore a visor... he was the cool guy wearing the visor, so I started wearing the visor." Keith wore a visor all the way through his college years, after which he signed with Nike and wore a hat. Keith eventually signed with different apparel companies and brought the visor back.
- Earned the nickname "Cashmere Keith" given his reputation as one of the most stylish players on TOUR and his penchant for wearing cashmere sweaters. Keith says the best fashion advice he ever received was from his father, Jerry, who said, "Elegance is simplicity."
- In April 2024, appeared on the cover of the Style issue of Golf Digest, which recognized him as the "Best Dressed on TOUR." In a Q&A with Marty Hackel, the longtime fashion director at Golf Digest, Mitchell gave opinions on the state of men's golf fashion ("Too scripted!"), white belts (they need to go), pro golfers' scripted outfits compared to their personal style ("If more golfers could wear their own style on the course, I think a lot of guys would blossom. Then again, I also think some players are helped by their uniforms."), as well as his own personal style choices on for the golf course ("I like to wear something I can go straight to dinner in at a nice restaurant, or vice versa if there's something to do before I get to the course."), and which golfers of the past he's looked to for style inspiration ("Arnold Palmer and Seve Ballesteros are the easy ones. Johnny Miller when he wasn't completely loud.")
- Developed a friendship -- which blossomed into a menswear partnership -- with Sid Mashburn, a fashion designer who designed for J. Crew, Ralph Lauren, and Tommy Hilfiger prior to launching his own brand (Sid Mashburn). Keith first heard about Sid Mashburn during his college years at University of Georgia. As a young pro in 2014, Keith visited a Sid Mashburn store and recalled, "I could barely afford to buy a pair of jeans and was treated like a guy buying a \$10,000 suit. That stuck with me." A couple years later, Keith met Sid at a pop-up store in New York. In 2021, the two struck up an official partnership (which was highlighted by GQ), with Sid saying via his website's blog, "Keith has been a customer and friend off the course... and we've always dug his spirit and enthusiasm (for clothes, cars, records, watches) whenever he was in the shop. His observation was that golf-wear (just like office-wear) was getting super casual and losing some of the tradition and formality of its roots. He had no idea one of my favorite coffee table books happens to be Arnold Palmer: A Personal Journey... so we were on the same wavelength from the get-go." When Keith is in Atlanta, he often brings friends to the Sid Mashburn store to "play ping-pong and drink bourbon."
- Has served on the Player Advisory Council (PAC) since August 2022, and (along with Maverick McNealy) was elected co-chairman of the PAC in April 2025. Mitchell and McNealy will replace Peter Malnati and Webb Simpson as Player Directors on the PGA TOUR Policy Board on January 1, 2026. Mitchell will serve a three-year term on the PGA TOUR Policy Board. The 16-member PAC advises and consults with the PGA TOUR Policy Board (Board of Directors) and Commissioner Jay Monahan on issues affecting the TOUR.

## Background

- Grew up in Chattanooga, Tennessee and played a lot of golf at The Honors Course in nearby Ooltewah, Tennessee.

- Attended The Baylor School, a private school in Chattanooga, Tennessee from 2003-10; he qualified for five state championships with the golf team, making his first appearance as an eighth-grader in October 2005. Played multiple seasons on the golf team with future PGA TOUR winners Harris English (Class of 2007) and Stephan Jaeger (joined team in summer 2006, graduated 2008). Mitchell helped The Baylor School win four consecutive state championships from 2005-08.
- Another notable attendee of The Baylor School was PGA TOUR winner Luke List (Class of 2003).
- Played four seasons at the University of Georgia (2010-14), where his teammates included future PGA TOUR winners Harris English (2010-11 season), Russell Henley (2010-11 season), and Sepp Straka (three seasons -- 2011-14). Mitchell and Straka were roommates for three years. Mitchell graduated in 2014 with a degree in Business and Real Estate.
- Very proud of his path to the PGA TOUR, particularly the season he spent on PGA TOUR Latinoamerica in 2015. Learned a lot from travels to unfamiliar places and how to deal with adversity. Played the 2016 and 2017 seasons on the Korn Ferry Tour, earning TOUR membership via the 2017 Korn Ferry Tour Finals after being the first man out (No. 26) in the regular season. [NOTE: beginning with the 2023 season, the Korn Ferry Tour Finals ceased awarding a separate set of PGA TOUR cards and became part of the season-long points race.]

## Family

- Got married to his wife, Claire, in Hawaii in January 2022, and played the following week at the Sony Open in Hawaii (T7).
- Mother, Cynthia, plans girls trips to his tournaments with her best friends, who have all known Keith his entire life. The members of the group, who call themselves the "Auntorage," travel to tournaments every few months and wear matching hats.
- Father, Jerry, is a longtime member of the R&A.
- Sister, Brindley, attended the University of St. Andrews in Scotland from 2009 to 2013. Would visit her as much as he could throughout college.

## Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- When at home in St. Simons Island, typically drives a 1977 Jeep Cherokee Chief he restored with the help of fellow TOUR winner Michael Thompson. Keith bought the Jeep in fall 2018.
- Will often listen to music on vinyl records when at home. Two of his all-time favorites are Carolina Confessions from Marcus King, and Live at the Regal from B.B. King. Keith says, "Music to me is another one of those things that I love and I'm very passionate about. I tend to categorize my music into whatever mood I feel, or the situation that presents itself. I really like blues and that sort of guitar vibe."
- In addition to carefully curating his on-course style, has a deep fascination for watches. Keith says, "I'm fascinated by the sophistication of workmanship in watches that goes back hundreds of years." Keith's favorite watch in his collection is a Laurent Ferrier with a jade dial. Keith also noted that when he and his wife, Claire, got married, they each bought Cartier Tank watches engraved with their initials and wedding date. Keith claims to have bought all his watches at a jeweler run by a friend in Carmel, California, and he visits the store every time he plays at Pebble Beach Golf Links.
- Perhaps the most significant watch in Keith's collection is a Rolex Datejust. When Keith was in eighth grade, his grandfather passed away, and his father, Jerry, gifted him the Rolex Datejust with the engraving "To Keith with love, Papaw and Dad." Keith explained the watch's history, saying, "When my dad graduated from medical school, he bought my

granddad this Rolex Datejust as a gift for putting him through school." Shortly after Keith earned his PGA TOUR card in late 2017, he bought his father a Rolex Datejust and had it engraved "Thanks for the love and support, Keith." Keith also bought his mother, Cynthia, a Rolex before he bought anything big for himself.

- Deep into his coffee routine at home and enjoys taking time to make the perfect cup of coffee.
- On Tuesday of tournament week at THE NORTHERN TRUST in 2021, rang the closing bell at the New York Stock Exchange to promote the beginning of the FedExCup Playoffs, checking off an item on his bucket list.

## Charity

- Established the Keith Mitchell Foundation -- based in his hometown of Chattanooga, Tennessee -- in 2020, and is passionate about providing opportunities to people in the area who did not have the same opportunities as he did growing up. Has enjoyed participating in fellow TOUR player foundation events (i.e., Zach Johnson's) and looks forward to putting on fun charitable events to help people in Chattanooga.
- Co-sponsored the AJGA's Mizuno Junior Championship for three years (2022-24). The 2022 event was contested at Golden Bear Golf Club at Indigo Run in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, while the 2023 and 2024 events were contested on the Plantation Course at Sea Island Resort in St. Simons Island, Georgia.

## Inner Circle/Special Connections

- Knows Peyton Manning and first met him at age 4, as Mitchell grew up playing The Honors Course, where Manning frequently played during his NFL offseasons. Partnered with Manning and Andy Roddick, among others, on Sweetens Cove, an award-winning nine-hole public golf course outside of his hometown of Chattanooga.
- Once beat two-time Super Bowl champion quarterback Eli Manning in a football contest at a charity event at Sweetens Cove. Former NFL wide receiver Eric Decker was so impressed by his throwing motion that he asked if Keith played quarterback in high school. During a press conference ahead of the 2022 AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am alongside partner Josh Allen, Keith called Decker's question the biggest compliment he has received in his career, on or off the golf course.
- During the PGA TOUR's West Coast swing in 2024, played a match at Los Angeles Country Club with NFL quarterback Jared Goff, retired seven-time MLB All-Star David Wright and another friend. Mitchell recalled, "(Goff) ended up making a putt on No. 18 to beat us. He made a gross birdie to clip us by one. He's good. We had to strengthen his grip a little bit; he was hitting it out to the right."
- Attended the 2004 Open Championship at Royal Troon at age 12 and recalled, "Darren Clarke gave me his glove -- I'll never forget that."

## Other

- Entered the final round of the 2024 Valspar Championship with a two-stroke lead, but carded a 77 in the final round and finished T17. A year later, was an 18-hole co-leader at the 2025 Valspar Championship and reflected on the rocky finish the year prior, saying, "I still think about it. It's still definitely in the back of my mind, and I want it to stay there for, hopefully, the rest of my career to just motivate me to remember what it feels like when you let those

kind of nerves get in your way. You look at a lot of guys in their career, everybody has a few of those, and that was mine."

- Made his PGA TOUR debut at the 2017 Valspar Championship as an open qualifier (finished T11).

# Hideki Matsuyama

## Things To Know

- Represents Boston Common Golf alongside teammates Rory McIlroy, Keegan Bradley and Adam Scott in the inaugural TGL presented by SoFi, a primetime golf league in partnership with the PGA TOUR that launched in January 2025 on ESPN. The new golf league was created by TMRW Sports whose co-founders include Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy, and fuses advanced technology, innovation and live action for ESPN's primetime television audience. Boston Common Golf is owned by John Henry, Tom Werner, Mike Gordon and Fenway Sports Group.
- Following his bronze medal-winning performance at the 2024 Paris Olympics, made his sixth consecutive appearance for the International Team at the 2024 Presidents Cup in Montreal, Canada.
- The 2022 Sony Open in Hawaii marked his eighth PGA TOUR title to tie K.J. Choi for most wins by an Asian-born player. Matsuyama usurped Choi with his victory at the 2024 Genesis Invitational, which marked his ninth PGA TOUR win.
- In April 2021, became the first Japanese player to win a men's major championship when he won the Masters Tournament.
- Following his victory at the 2021 Masters, Matsuyama was the recipient of the Prime Minister's Award; he received the Certificate of Commendation from Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga. Inscribed on the Certificate of Commendation include the following text: We hereby honor you and your achievement that has greatly contributed to the promotion of sports in Japan, conveys the importance of perseverance to our people, and provides dreams and hopes that are truly remarkable.
- Turned professional in 2013 and was the first rookie to lead the Japan Golf Tour money list, as he won four times on the circuit in 2013. Prior to his rookie season on the Japan Golf Tour, won on the circuit as an amateur in 2011.
- Was a student at Tohoku Fukushi University in Sendai, Japan when the city was devastated by an earthquake and tsunami in March 2011, but was in Australia training at the time. Returned to find his dorm room destroyed and struggled to find food. A few weeks later, made his debut at the Masters having won the Asian Amateur. He was the first Japanese amateur golfer to play in the Masters.

## Background

- Born: February 25, 1992 in Matsuyama, Ehime, Japan
- Was introduced to golf at age 4 by his father, Mikio. His father took him to the driving range with him one day and Hideki told him "I want to hit a ball too." Mikio cut down a secondhand 9-iron and gave it to Hideki, but it was still too long for a 4-year-old boy, so Mikio had to teach Hideki how to stand steadily over the ball and help him with his posture.
- First broke 100 when he was in 2nd grade competing in the first tournament he ever played in, the "Shikoku Junior."
- When Hideki was in 4th grade, his father qualified to play in the Chushikoku Open and asked for permission to have Hideki be his caddie. Mikio wanted to show his son the "strong play" of good players up close, but even more important than showing him their swings, he wanted him to see firsthand how they handled the mental part of the game. Mikio saw this as "mental training" for Hideki. After being advised by Coach Akio Takahashi of Meitoku Gijuku Jr./Sr. high school in Kochi prefecture, Hideki transferred there in search of a better golf environment.

- College: Tohoku Fukushi University in Sendai, alma mater of fellow professionals Hiroshi Iwata and Yusaku Miyazato. Hideki planned on turning pro right after high school, but as a senior in high school (after losing in the third round of the Japan Amateur Championship) Coach Abe from Tohoku University came to his home in Ehime and told him he could become a mediocre pro now if he wanted to, but if he really wanted to have an active career as a pro, he needed to practice more first. That's when he decided to attend college and play for Coach Abe.
- Hideki's family wasn't wealthy, and they would rarely be able to go to the range. But because Hideki was so captivated with golf, his father decided that he himself would try and become a better golfer in order to help teach Hideki how to play better. He would practice in local competitions and eventually joined a club and would go there often, always taking Hideki with him. Hideki would sit and practice his approach shots while he waited for his dad to finish. This gave Hideki the chance to polish his short game. Consequently, Hideki's favorite club growing up was his sand wedge. "When I was a junior I was always small and couldn't hit the ball very far, but I loved hitting onto the practice greens and approach greens with my sand wedge. I always had my sand wedge. Ironically, now its one of my worst clubs (laughs)." Mikio's practice eventually paid off and he was able to qualify for the Japan Amateur Championship at the age of 52.
- Growing up, if someone gave him a toy to play with, he would immediately get bored with it and just give it away to a friend. But for some reason, even as a kid that never obsessed over anything, he never got tired of golf. "My memory is a bit rusty, but I remember when I was just starting out I'd hit like 1,300 balls a day. I have no idea why I thought that was even fun. But I guess because I had no idea then may be why I am still doing the same thing now."

## Family

- Married his college sweetheart Mei in January 2017 and welcome a baby girl Kanna in July of that year.
- When questioned about his personal life during the 2017 PGA Championship, he had this to say: "No one really asked me if I was married, so I didn't have to answer that question. But I felt that after the PGA would be a good time, because our baby is born and I thought that would be a good time to let everyone know."

## Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- He enjoys watching baseball, especially Japanese players. Admires baseball players: Yu Darvish, Shohei Ohtani, Kenta Maeda.
- Likes playing catch (baseball) and table tennis during his free time.
- Brings a rice cooker wherever he goes, so he always has rice balls and bananas in his bag. His now former caddy (Daisuke Shindo) introduced him to beef jerky, which he now really likes a lot as well. The one food he brings with him back from Japan is "Uruki" soy sauce. It's brewed in Ehime near his grandparents home (about an hour away from his parents house). Whenever he would go and visit his grandparents he always knew they were getting close when he could smell the aroma of the soy sauce being made nearby.
- When he goes home to Japan, he likes to fish. "I caught a 12-pound Hamachi (yellowtail) when I was 10 years old. Twelve pounds isn't that big, but it is for a 10-year-old. It's my fondest memory of fishing with my grandparents. I might have had bigger ones after that, but that is one I'll never forget."

- He started using an interlock grip during his junior year in high school. He also used interlock when he was younger but then switched to overlap. He eventually returned to interlock on his own because he felt overlapping was making him turn the ball over too much.
- Known to use Srixon balls marked with the number 78. He uses the number 78 because it was his player registration number when he won the 2021 Masters.
- He wears five-toe socks during his competition rounds, while training and during other athletic activities. In the past, with normal socks, there have been times when his toenails have cut into his skin causing him to bleed.
- Big foodie and loves Sake.
- Interested in photography.

### Charity

- "Matsuyama Foundation" For Tohoku earthquake support. Launched prior to the 2013 President's Cup. 1 birdie = 10,000JPN (~\$100); 1 eagle = 20,000JPN (~\$200) Also donated his President's Cup participation fee (\$150k) to earthquake relief

### Inner Circle/Special Connections

- After former caddie Daisuke Shindo retired from full time caddying in 2018, Hideki's good friend and college teammate Shota Hayafuji began looping for him during the 2019 season. The two have known each other since junior high school in Japan and attended the same high school and college. Shota himself went viral after famously grabbing the pin flag on 18, removing his hat and bowing to Augusta National in a show of respect. My heart was full of gratitude and it was the natural thing for me to bow and show respect to the Masters," Hayafuji said through interpreter Bob Turner. "I was saying 'Thank you very much!' I bowed to the course mainly because I was thankful. I wasn't thinking about doing it and it just happened -- like an instinct," he said.

### Other

- Finished T4 at the 2020 Olympic Games (July-August 2021) in his home country of Japan. Did not compete in 2016 in Rio.

# Nick Taylor

## Things To Know

- Earned his fifth PGA TOUR win in his 284th start at the age of 36 years and nearly 9 months at the 2025 Sony Open in Hawaii, where he defeated Nico Echavarria in a sudden-death playoff. Taylor improved to 3-0 in sudden-death playoffs on TOUR. The win in Hawaii also marked Taylor's third consecutive season with a TOUR victory (2023 RBC Canadian Open, 2024 WM Phoenix Open, 2025 Sony Open in Hawaii).
- Nick appears in Season 3 of Full Swing (Ep 2) with good friend, Adam Hadwin, as they go through the ups and downs of the life on TOUR in 2024 which included both missing out on the Presidents Cup 24 roster (when it was played in their home country).
- Taylor made history in 2023 when he became the first Canadian to win the RBC Canadian Open since 1954 (Pat Fletcher - not officially recognized by the PGA TOUR). The victory came on the fourth hole of a sudden-death playoff, with Taylor holing a 72-foot eagle putt to defeat Tommy Fleetwood. Canadians Adam Hadwin, Mike Weir and Corey Connors were greenside for the playoff. It was the first time the tournament was played at Oakdale Golf & Country Club in Toronto, which will host again in 2026. The RBC Canadian Open, which is the second-oldest non-major on the PGA TOUR schedule, changed its 2024 tournament logo to a silhouette of Taylor flipping his putter in the air in reaction to his winning putt. The tournament made the change permanent in 2025.
- Home course is Ledgeview Golf and Country Club in Abbotsford, British Columbia (also the home club of fellow Canadian and PGA TOUR winner Adam Hadwin).
- Made his Olympics debut at Paris 2024, representing Canada alongside Corey Connors. Taylor finished T30 at Le Golf National. Prior to golf returning to the Olympics in 2016, the last time the Olympics featured golf was in 1904 (St. Louis), when Canadian George Lyon won the gold medal. As a senior in college at University of Washington, Taylor served as an Olympic torchbearer for the Winter Games in Vancouver in February 2010 in his hometown of Abbotsford, British Columbia.
- Played four seasons at University of Washington (2006-10), where he was college teammates for the 2006-07 season with fellow PGA TOUR winner Joel Dahmen (they both joined the program as true freshmen in 2006). Taylor and Dahmen were roommates for two years.
- Prior to winning the 2024 WM Phoenix Open, Taylor had previously attended the tournament as a fan in his mid-20s. Somewhat of a "hometown tournament," the Taylor family splits time between Scottsdale and Canada.

## Background

- Born in Winnipeg, Canada, but grew up in Abbotsford, British Columbia (Greater Vancouver), where the family moved before Taylor turned 3.
- Won the 2007 Canadian Amateur Championship at Riverside Country Club in Saskatoon, which marked the last time the champion was determined through a match play competition. Only a few years later, Mackenzie Hughes won back-to-back Canadian Amateur Championships (2011, 2012).
- Reached the quarterfinals of the 2007 U.S. Amateur Championship at The Olympic Club in San Francisco; he was ousted by Colt Knost.
- Played four seasons at the University of Washington (2006-10) in Seattle, which is just over two hours from his hometown of Abbotsford. Taylor won the 2010 Ben Hogan Award, which annually recognizes the outstanding male amateur and collegiate golfer of the year, was a two-time Pac-10 Conference Co-Golfer of the Year (2009, 2010), and was credited with four

individual victories. Taylor recorded a pair of top-10 finishes at the NCAA Championship, including a T2 finish (shared second place with Jorge Campillo from University of Indiana, with both finishing three strokes behind individual national champion Kevin Chappell from UCLA) in 2008. Other notable players in the field at the 2008 NCAA Championship were Oklahoma State University's Rickie Fowler (T4), University of Florida's Billy Horschel (6th), University of Georgia's Russell Henley (22nd), Brian Harman (T71), and Harris English (T73).

- In the 2009 University of Washington golf team media guide, Taylor's then-coach Matt Thurmond wrote, "I've never coached anyone that can raise his game so much in difficult conditions and high-pressure situations. Nick can hit the best shot at the biggest moment."
- Earned the 2009 Mark H. McCormack Medal as the leading player in the World Amateur Golf Ranking upon conclusion of the 2009 amateur season (following the European and U.S. Amateur Championships). Taylor was ranked No. 1 in WAGR for 20 weeks (June through October of 2009); he overtook Morgan Hoffmann to reach No. 1, and he eventually ceded the No. 1 ranking to Victor Dubuisson.

## Family

- Nick met his wife, Andie, in high school (Yale Secondary in Abbotsford). Andie's father, Phil Dodd, was the President of Ledgeview G.C. and knew Taylor well before he and Andie started dating in grade 12.
- Son, Charlie, born in 2019 and daughter, Harper in May 2023.
- The family splits time between Scottsdale, Arizona and Canada. Andie and the kids travel to the majority of tournaments but were not onsite for the 2023 RBC Canadian Open win as Harper was just born. When Nick made it to the playoff, their neighbors crashed their gathering with the Taylor-extended family.
- Nick's older brother, Josh, was a successful amateur golfer who also earned a scholarship to the University of Texas El-Paso.

## Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Fan of Toronto Blue Jays (MLB) and Seattle Seahawks (NFL). Threw out first pitch at Toronto Blue Jays game (against the Yankees) the week of 2019 RBC Canadian Open.
- Mario Kart 64 expert (video game).
- Loves astronomy; has visited NASA's Johnson Space Center.
- Loves Star Wars.
- Spends time focusing on fitness and nutrition.

## Charity

- Started the The Nick Taylor Charity Classic with his wife, Andie, in 2017. The event's mission is to build community, academic success and athletic excellence. The NTCC has raised over \$1.2 million to date in charitable proceeds for various beneficiaries in Abbotsford and Chilliwack, BC, along with \$450k in scholarship funds for the University of the Fraser Valley.

## Inner Circle/Special Connections

- In addition to being close with Joel Dahmen, he's good friends with fellow Canadians - Adam Hadwin, Corey Connors and Mackenzie Hughes.

- Played under head coach Matt Thurmond in his four years at University of Washington, where Thurmond served as head coach for 15 seasons (2001-16). Thurmond took over as head coach of Arizona State University in summer 2016.

## Other

- Is the only Canadian male in history to win the trifecta of the Canadian Junior Boys Championship (2006), Canadian Amateur Championship (2007) and RBC Canadian Open (2023).
- Was low amateur at the 2009 U.S. Open (Bethpage Black) won by Lucas Glover, his second major start (made his major and PGA TOUR debut at the 2008 U.S. Open at Torrey Pines, won by Tiger Woods). Became the third amateur in U.S. Open history to record a 65 or lower with a second-round 65.
- Finished T16 at the 2005 Junior World Championships (Boys 15-17 Division) at Torrey Pines. Other notable players in the field that week were Joseph Bramlett (T3), Jason Day (T8), and Tom Whitney (T35).

# Sam Burns

## Things To Know

- Qualified for his fourth consecutive TOUR Championship in 2024.
- On the same day as his Match Play win in 2023, his childhood idol David Toms won the Galleri Classic on the PGA TOUR Champions. "Growing up watching him play, I can remember sitting on the back of the range and just watching him hit golf balls. It's still one of the most amazing things I've ever seen, just the way he could hit it. So straight and just like his tempo is amazing. Still is. To be able to win on the same day is really cool."
- Three wins during the 2021-22 PGA TOUR season included a playoff victory over good friend Scottie Scheffler at the 2022 Charles Schwab Challenge. Burns said of the victory, "We're probably best friends. But at the same time I can assure you, he wanted to beat me more than anybody else and I wanted to beat him more than anybody else, and it just happened to be the two of us at the end." The win held added meaning given the fact Burns' childhood hero, David Toms, is a past champion of the event. Burns says watching Toms win the 2011 Charles Schwab Challenge remains his favorite golf memory from his youth.
- Owns a house in Choudrant (SHOE-drint), Louisiana, which doesn't even qualify as a 'town,' it's actually a village. With a population of less than 1,000, one stoplight (and a Subway), Burns bucked the trend of his fellow PGA TOUR professionals who set up in popular destinations like South Florida or Scottsdale. He instead decided to buy a home in The Orchards at Squire Creek, a housing development adjacent to Squire Creek Country Club, a private Tom Fazio design about an hour from Shreveport, Louisiana - where Burns grew up.
- A returning member of the Player Advisory Council (PAC) in 2025. The 16-member PAC advises and consults with the PGA TOUR Policy Board (Board of Directors) and Commissioner Jay Monahan on issues affecting the TOUR.

## Background

- Played two seasons with the LSU Tigers before electing to turn professional following his sophomore season in the summer of 2017.
- The top player in college golf during his sophomore season while being named the NCAA Division I Jack Nicklaus National Player of the Year and a PING First-Team All-American by the Golf Coaches Association of America. Also named the SEC Player of the Year and a First-Team All-SEC selection in 2017.

## Family

- His mother, Beth, insisted his brother Chase, who was 12 at the time, teach 4-year-old Sam how to hit golf balls in the backyard. Chase handed Sam an 8-iron from a brand-new junior set he received for Christmas and dropped a ball for Sam to hit. Chase expected Sam to whiff, but Sam instead launched the ball 70 yards with a 5-yard draw. He did that five times in a row before their father Todd walked outside to watch for himself as Sam hit a perfect sixth ball in a row.
- Brother, Chase, and father, Todd, played football at Louisiana Tech. Chase redshirted in 2007 as a freshman and was a member of the scout team in 2008. Todd played in the early 1980s but is not listed on any historical roster.
- Sam played football like his dad and brother but gave it up to pursue golf. Mostly played strong safety and some at quarterback.

- Proposed to girlfriend of four years, Caroline, Friday night of the 2019 RBC Heritage. The two both grew up in Shreveport, Louisiana and met in a class at church when they were little kids. They went to different high schools and didn't start dating until Sam was a freshman at LSU. Caroline was Sam's first Valentine at 5 years old. The two stayed in Palmetto Bluff, South Carolina outside of Hilton Head during tournament week, and he decided to propose there because Caroline had spent a lot of time there as a kid. They wed on December 14, 2019 in Palmetto Bluff.
- Sam and his wife, Caroline, welcomed their first child, a son named "Bear," in April 2024. Regarding the name: "It was one area where I had some say," Burns joked. "But we both like the name. We wanted to do something a little different."

### Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Grew up and enjoys hunting, and said during Barstool's Fore Play podcast that he has a pretty good turkey call. Has been on hunting trips with David and Carter Toms. The first time they hunted together, Sam was placed in a prime position to shoot but missed everything.
- Is able to participate in several outdoor activities around his home in Choudrant and loves bow hunting and fresh-water fishing
- Big fan of college football and is passionate about his LSU Tigers.

### Charity

- For a period of time early in his career, Sam donated a portion of each tournament paycheck to the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. He has never visited the hospital before, but he first became passionate about it through the work his wife Caroline's sorority did in college.
- Passionate about charities helping those with Juvenile Diabetes. His best friend is a type 2 diabetic.

### Inner Circle/Special Connections

- David Toms is a big supporter of Sam's. Growing up in Shreveport, Louisiana, Sam grew very close with David and his son, Carter, who was his teammate at LSU. Sam used to practice at Toms' 265 Golf Academy in Shreveport. Sam and David are still very close and go duck hunting together during their off time.
- Grew up with APGA Tour player Ryan Alford, who received a sponsor exemption to compete in the 2022 Farmers Insurance Open. The two met when they were 6 years old and lived five minutes away from one another in Shreveport, Louisiana. They competed together in a nine-hole junior league and later as high school teammates at Calvary Baptist Academy.
- Was paired with Tiger Woods in the final round of the 2018 Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches. Burns shot 68, Tiger shot 70. As they walked off the first tee, he put his hand on Tiger's shoulders and told him: "Can you believe all these people came out here just to watch me?"

# Sungjae Im

## Things To Know

- Earned a spot on the 2024 Presidents Cup International Team and made his third appearance in Montreal, Canada. Was picked to play in the 2019 Presidents Cup in Royal Melbourne, delivering 3.5 points for the International Team to emerge as the joint points earner. Featured in the 2022 edition at Quail Hollow and won 2.5 points for the team.
- After living from hotel to hotel, bought a house in the TPC Sugarloaf community just outside of Atlanta at the end of 2020.
- Born in Cheongju, South Korea and moved to Jeju Island -- home to Nine Bridges, the golf club which hosted THE CJ CUP from 2017-19 -- when he was four years old. Began playing golf competitively at nine years old.
- Followed his mom, Mi Kim, to the practice range when he was four and has been hooked to golf ever since.
- Came to the United States in 2017 to compete in the Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament (now PGA TOUR Q-School presented by Korn Ferry). Im finished runner-up to Lee McCoy and earned Korn Ferry Tour membership for the 2018 season.
- Earned PGA TOUR membership for the first time after a dazzling rookie season on the Korn Ferry Tour in 2018. At age 19, Im won his Korn Ferry Tour debut at the circuit's season-opening event in The Bahamas in January 2018, with Im following Jason Day (2007) as the second teenager to win on the Korn Ferry Tour. Im finished solo second the following week in The Bahamas and led the Korn Ferry Tour standings for the entire season. Earned a second victory en route to being named the 2018 Korn Ferry Tour Player of the Year. At season's end, Im became the third-youngest graduate in Korn Ferry Tour history (20 years, 5 months, 24 days), only trailing Jason Day (19 years, 11 months, 23 days in 2007) and Si Woo Kim (20 years, 3 months, 6 days).
- Became the only rookie to reach the 2019 TOUR Championship, among 23 in the 2018-19 season. Became the fourth-youngest player in the history to qualify for the TOUR Championship, trailing behind Jordan Spieth (2013, 2014) and Si Woo Kim (2016).
- Followed Stewart Cink (1996-97) as the second player to be named the Korn Ferry Tour Player of the Year (2018 for Im) and PGA TOUR Rookie of the Year (2018-19) in consecutive seasons.
- Earned his maiden PGA TOUR victory at the Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches in 2020 with Albin Choi on the bag. They worked together for the first time that week, and knew each other from the Korn Ferry Tour.
- Shot a pair of 66s in weekend of 2022 TOUR Championship to finish T2, one behind winner Rory McIlroy, to post career best finish in FedExCup. Also became Asia's best finisher since the inauguration of the FedExCup in 2007.
- Won the gold medal for Korea in the team competition at the 2023 Asian Games in Hangzhou, China by 25 strokes alongside Si Woo Kim and two amateur partners. Also won the silver medal in the individual category, finishing one stroke behind Hong Kong's Taichi Kho. NOTE: WINNING THE GOLD MEDAL EXEMPTS SUNGJAE AND SI WOO FROM MANDATORY 21-MONTH MILITARY SERVICE.
- NOTE TO MEDIA OFFICIALS, BROADCAST ANNOUNCERS: Please do not voluntarily discuss the military exemption. If asked by the media, the following messaging has been agreed with Sungjae's agent. Q: Was it a relief for you to earn exemption from Military Service with the gold medal in Asian Games? A: I was focused on the opportunity to represent my country and helping the team win the gold medal while I also won the individual silver medal. I was really happy to contribute to the win in China as we have not won the

team gold since 2010. This will allow me to focus on my golf career on the PGA TOUR and I hope I can continue to inspire young Korean golfers to succeed in the game. Q: But are you happy you don't have to do Military Service now? A: I think I'm now able to focus even more on my golf career. Should there be follow up questions from media, our Media Officials will need to step in to say the player has already answered on the matter, and request to move on to other golf questions.

## Background

- Attended Korean National Sport University and turned professional in 2015.

## Family

- Father, Ji Taek Im. Mother is Mi Kim. Got married on December 17, 2022 in Seoul.(Note: Due to privacy, name of wife is not being shared)

## Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Has a photographic memory. Once he looks at an object or a picture, he can tell instantly if something has changed.
- Got his driver's license in December of 2018. Splits time driving with his dad to different tournament spots.
- Tries to eat Korean food at least once a week on the road.
- Favorite food is the "Jeju Black Pig" and he loves how his mom prepares it with onions and soy sauce. He has yet to find that dish in America.
- Favorite American foods include pizza, pasta, and Subway sandwiches
- Music interests/Musical inclinations: Korean K-Pop

## Inner Circle/Special Connections

- Manager/Interpreter: Moon Jo.

## Other

- Made 35 starts on TOUR in his rookie season (most of any player in the 2018-19 season). Skipped only two events where he was qualified to play (2019 Puerto Rico Open and 2019 Barracuda Championship).
- A day after winning the Arnold Palmer Award as the 2018-19 PGA TOUR Rookie of the Year, made the first ace of the 2019-20 season with a hole-in-one at a Military Tribute at the Greenbrier (223-yard, 15th hole). Became the first player since Tiger Woods to make multiple aces on the PGA TOUR before the age of 22.
- Spent his time during the COVID-19 shutdown in 2020 in Tampa, Florida at Saddlebrook Resort. Went straight after THE PLAYERS Championship to stay with a family friend. Practiced out of TPC Tampa Bay and the Palmer Course at Saddlebrook.
- Was forced to withdraw from the 2022 PGA Championship after testing positive for COVID-19 a week prior to the year's second major while he was home in Korea to compete in a domestic event.

# Tony Finau

## Things To Know

- One of eight PGA TOUR players featured in the latest release of the popular video game, PGA TOUR 2K25, and has appeared in all three iterations of the game.
- Tony and his wife, Alayna, have six children (three boys and three girls), most recently welcoming daughter Layton in January 2025 (Layton is a combination of parent's names: aLAYna and TONy). Children include Jraice (2011), Leilene (2012), Tony, Jr. (2015), Sage (2016), Sienna-Vee (2021), Layton (2025).
- Tony and his wife, Alayna, renewed their vows after being married for 12 years in November 2023 in Los Cabos surrounded by close family and friends. Their five children encompassed the bridal party - Jraice (best man), Leilene (maid of honor), Sienna-Vee escorted Tony down the aisle and Tony, Jr. and Sage escorted Alayna down the aisle.
- In January 2022, Tony and Alayna started homeschooling their children to allow them to travel to more tournaments as a family. When they travel, they have on average 15-16 bags.
- On being a dad and traveling with his family, "I look at myself, I'm kind of a part-time golfer, full-time father. That's kind of my thing. My kids are only young once and my boys are only young once, I want to make sure I'm there for them as much as possible. That's also why I have them travel with me."
- Began wearing green on Sundays as a tribute to his late mother, Ravena, who tragically passed away in a car accident in 2011 when she was just 47. Ravena's favorite color was green and that's what pushed Finau to start wearing green during the final round. "I know she's there, I know she's following me."
- Picked up his third PGA TOUR win at the 2022 3M Open, which was the first win in Finau's career where his entire family (wife and then five kids) was in attendance. Finau said, "It is so special just to have my family here with me and to celebrate this win with me. They mean everything to me."
- One week after winning the 2022 3M Open, Finau set a tournament record (26-under 262) to win the Rocket Classic for his fourth PGA TOUR title. Finau became the first player in three years to win consecutive PGA TOUR events in the FedExCup Regular Season (Brendon Todd, 2019). Finau famously said after the victory, "They say a winner is just a loser that just kept on trying, and that's me to a T."
- Upon earning PGA TOUR membership for the 2015 season (via the 2014 Korn Ferry Tour standings), became the first Tongan and Samoan member of the PGA TOUR.

## Background

- Lives in Lehi, Utah (outside Salt Lake City) but has a winter home in Scottsdale.
- Grew up in a one-income household with six siblings. His father, Gary (Kelepi), got Tony and his brother, Gipper, into golf -- even though he didn't know anything about the game -- by having the boys hit into a mattress with nylon netting and carpet scraps in the family's garage. "My dad knew scratch about golf. He'd watch us hit the ball, check his book, and say 'try doing this with your hands.'"
- To help pay for travel expenses to junior golf tournaments, would raise money by performing fire-knife dances, a Polynesian tradition. Scars and burns on his forearms remain visible today.
- First golf memory was watching Tiger Woods at the 1997 Masters: "I could relate to him. Obviously how exciting he was, but someone with a bit of color playing the game. That's when I was like, maybe I can play golf. If he can do it, so can I." A decade later, Finau Monday qualified for and made his PGA TOUR debut at the 2007 U.S. Bank Championship in

Milwaukee, the same PGA TOUR event where Woods famously made his professional debut in 1996. Finau, 17 years old at the time, made the cut and led the field in driving distance (331.6 yards).

- Turned professional on his high school graduation day at the age of 17. That same day, he was in Las Vegas earning a spot in the final round of a high-stakes golf tournament called "The Ultimate Game."
- Before earning his PGA TOUR card in 2015, played on PGA TOUR Canada (2013) and Korn Ferry Tour (2014). As a Korn Ferry Tour rookie, won the 2014 Stonebrae Classic at TPC Stonebrae by three strokes over three players, including future PGA TOUR winner Daniel Berger, which propelled him to PGA TOUR membership at season's end.

## Family

- Marks his balls with his kids' initials, "My rule basically is whoever is making birdies and giving me good vibes on the course, they stay in. If you wanna go swimming or take a couple vacations on the beach or are scared of the dark, you're out. I've been doing this for a while and it keeps it light and fun on the course. It also allows me to be with my kids without being with my kids."
- His father, Gary (Kelepi), grew up in Tonga, but moved to Los Angeles with his family and started working for Delta Airlines, who eventually transferred him to Salt Lake City. Gary would work double shifts as a baggage handler to help make extra money for Tony's golf expenses.
- His mother, Ravena, was killed in a car accident on November 7, 2011, the day prior to the birth of his first son. Tony was 22 at the time. Gary referred to Tony as a "Mommy's boy."
- Wife, Alayna, played high school and college volleyball. Tony met her at a party on New Year's Eve, and they ran into each other three times in one week, including at the Sony Open in Hawaii. He asked for her number after the tournament.
- Younger brother, Gipper, also played professional golf and was the youngest player to make a cut on the Korn Ferry Tour (16 years, 20 days at the 2008 Utah Championship) until 2024, when Miles Russell made the cut at the 2024 LECOM Suncoast Classic at 15 years, 5 months, 18 days of age. Gipper's last PGA TOUR-sanctioned start was a missed cut at the 2017 Utah Championship on the Korn Ferry Tour.
- Cousin, Jabari Parker, was a standout college basketball player at Duke University and was the No. 2 overall pick in the 2014 NBA Draft by the Milwaukee Bucks.

## Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Interests include playing the guitar, basketball and cooking. Has said if he didn't have a career in golf, he would have pursued cooking as a profession. He enjoys cooking curries for his family and is focused on eating healthier in 2023.
- Fell in love with basketball and boxing as a teen. Playing center in basketball, he averaged 10.8 points and 12.0 rebounds per game as a high school senior at West High School (Salt Lake City); received scholarship offers to play in college, but wanted to play golf. Was recruited by Weber State University.

## Charity

- The Finau family celebrated "Tony Finau Day Utah" on February 22, 2025 by visiting The Tony Finau Learning Center, opened in August 2024. The center focuses primarily on literacy

support for elementary education, but it also offers support for the whole family and serves the West Valley, UT community.

- Started the Tony Finau Foundation in 2015 to expose the game of golf and its integrity to children and their families. The foundation provides educational funding, scholarships, a practice facility and mentoring to underprivileged youth. Tony announced the launch of the foundation's merchandise store in December 2022. Merchandise features his TF logo and 100% of the proceeds go to the foundation.
- In 2021, the Tony Finau Foundation was named the Korn Ferry Tour Charity of the Year. Tony's foundation is one of the charities annually benefitting from the Korn Ferry Tour's Utah Championship. Tony flew straight to Utah after back-to-back wins (2022 3M Open and 2022 Rocket Mortgage Classic) for his foundation's pro-am, which is held annually each Monday of the Utah Championship.

### Inner Circle/Special Connections

- Has become good friends with Ryan Smith, owner of the NBA's Utah Jazz (basketball), who caddied for Finau at the 2021 Hero World Challenge.
- When Tony is at the family's winter home in Scottsdale, he plays golf frequently at Silver Leaf Club with Max Homa.

### Other

- Member of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints.
- Went viral at the 2018 Masters when he popped his ankle out of its socket -- and back into place -- while celebrating an ace during the Par 3 contest.
- Following his second PGA TOUR win at 2021 FedEx St. Jude Championship, famously visited McDonald's at 3 a.m. and ordered a McFlurry, large fries, 10-piece McNuggets, double quarter-pounder with cheese and a Big Mac (total calories: 2,740).
- In 2017, Governor Herbert declared February 22nd Tony Finau Day in Utah.

# Rory McIlroy

## Things To Know

- Won the 2025 Masters Tournament to complete the career grand slam, becoming the sixth player in history to accomplish the feat. Followed Gene Sarazen, Ben Hogan, Gary Player, Jack Nicklaus, and Tiger Woods as winners of all four major championships. Victory at the 2025 Masters also ended an 11-year major championship drought, as McIlroy had last won the final two majors of the 2014 season (The Open Championship in July, PGA Championship in August).
- Of completing the career grand slam, McIlroy said, "It's a dream come true. That was my dream. My dream was to win the four major championships in golf. To be able to say that I've done that, I always go back to eight-year-old Rory that said that, and he would be, hopefully, very proud of the person he's turned into. I had a dream from a very young age, and I've put everything into fulfilling that dream."
- Became the first European player to complete the career grand slam, and followed Gary Player of South Africa as the second international player to accomplish the feat. Of the discussions about whether McIlroy is the greatest European player in history, McIlroy said following his victory at the 2025 Masters Tournament, "Sir Nick Faldo has six majors, Seve (Ballesteros) has five, I now have five. But I also am the first European to win the career grand slam, so I would say there's an argument to be made. You think about Gary Player on that list (of career grand slam winners) with nine major championships, probably the greatest international player ever, that's something I'd like to be able to say about myself when all is said and done."
- In describing his emotions immediately following his victory at the 2025 Masters Tournament, McIlroy alluded to his devastating final round at the 2011 Masters Tournament, saying, "I released 14 years of disappointments, of frustrations, of pent-up emotion I probably kept in this entire time." In his champion's press conference, McIlroy added, "It's the best day of my golfing life. I'm very proud of myself. I'm proud of never giving up. I'm proud of how I kept coming back and dusting myself off and not letting the disappointments really get to me."
- With victories at the 2025 PLAYERS Championship and 2025 Masters Tournament, followed Tiger Woods (2001) and Scottie Scheffler (2024) as the third player in history to win both events in the same year.
- 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.

## Background

- From Holywood, a town of around 12,000 people in the metropolitan area of Belfast in County Down, Northern Ireland. He was raised as a Catholic, and identifies as Irish and Northern Irish.
- He was first introduced to golf by his father, Gerry (a scratch player), who coached him; McIlroy began by swinging a plastic club and trying to mimic his dad's swing. Enjoys playing with his dad to this day - the pair frequently play together at Seminole in South Florida.
- McIlroy became the youngest golfer at the Holywood Golf Club at the age of seven.
- The idea of him as a child prodigy or 'golf's next big thing' was given some credence when at just 9 years of age, he claimed the under-10 World Championship in Doral, Florida.
- McIlroy attended St. Patrick's Primary School and Sullivan Upper School.

- Left school at age 16 to concentrate on amateur golf. To support their son's golf game, McIlroy's father held down several jobs to earn additional income, and Rosie, his mom, worked extra shifts at the local 3M plant.
- Shot 61 at Royal Portrush (the course record) when he was 16 at the Northern Ireland Open. He recalls every shot of the round and has said, "I probably had more confidence [at 16] than I do now."
- At the age of 15, McIlroy was part of Europe's winning 2004 Junior Ryder Cup team at Westfield Country Club, held in conjunction with the Ryder Cup Muirfield Village Golf Club; Tony Finau was on the U.S. Team.
- Initially, McIlroy signed a letter of intent in 2004 to play college golf at East Tennessee State University. However, after becoming the youngest-ever winner of both the West of Ireland Championship and the Irish Close Championship in 2005, he decided to not attend college and continue playing golf around Europe (Seamus Power benefitted from scholarship funds available when McIlroy vacated the spot at East Tennessee State).
- After turning professional in 2007, McIlroy joined the DP World Tour (formerly European Tour). He had his first win on the DP World Tour in 2009 (Dubai Desert Classic in February 2009), and on the PGA TOUR in 2010 (Wells Fargo Championship in May 2010). At the age of 22, McIlroy was the youngest player to achieve 10 million in career earnings on the DP World Tour, and the youngest Affiliate Member to earn a Tour card. In 2012, he became the youngest player to reach \$10 million in career earnings on the PGA TOUR.
- In 2014, McIlroy won The Open Championship at Royal Liverpool, beating Rickie Fowler and Sergio Garcia by two strokes. McIlroy's father won approximately \$342,000 after making a bet with two of his friends that McIlroy would win The Open before the age of 26 (the 2014 event was the last chance for his father/friends to cash in).

## Family

- McIlroy is the only child to Rosie and Gerry McIlroy.
- Married to Erica Stoll. McIlroy did not properly set his alarm for his Sunday singles match at the 2012 Ryder Cup; Erica was head of Volunteer Management for Championships for the PGA of America and noticed his car had not yet left. The two were married in April 2017 at Ashford Castle in Ireland.
- He and his wife Erica welcomed first child, daughter Poppy, born in August 2020.

## Interests/Hobbies/Quirks

- Along with Tiger Woods and TMRW Sports, founded TGL, a prime-time golf league which debuted on January 7, 2025. The league features six three-player teams competing in head-to-head matches in a purpose-built, tech-driven arena in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. McIlroy is a member of Boston Common Golf along with teammates Keegan Bradley, Adam Scott and Hideki Matsuyama. The team is owned by John Henry, Tom Werner, Mike Gordon and Fenway Sports Group.
- Symphony Ventures is an investment partnership established in 2019 by McIlroy and his management team, Sean O'Flaherty and Donal Casey, focused on investment opportunities across health, wellbeing and golf sectors; if he's not on the golf course and not with his family, he wants his time to be used on activities and investments that are interesting to him, personally.
- Among his investments, McIlroy invested in Alpine (pronounced AL-peen), a Formula 1 Racing Team, joining other notable investors which include actor Ryan Reynolds and NFL players Patrick Mahomes and Travis Kelce.

- Hobbies include football (Manchester United), rugby, cars, movies, music and basketball.
- He is also a fan of the Northern Ireland National Team and Ulster Rugby.

### Inner Circle/Special Connections

- His caddie is Harry Diamond, a childhood friend. They began working together in 2017. McIlroy met Diamond when he was seven and Diamond was 12, on the putting green at Hollywood Golf Club. "I was an only child, and Harry was a big brother," he said in an interview. They were the best man at each other's weddings.

### Other

- McIlroy earned an MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire) in 2012 at the age of 22 for his services to sport. Other PGA TOUR players to receive an MBE include Luke Donald and Justin Rose.
- He named his first dog after Ernie Els, calling him Theo (Els' first name).
- McIlroy claimed his 21st win on TOUR at the 2022 RBC Canadian Open, where he successfully defended a title for the first time on the PGA TOUR. With the victory, he became the 35th player to reach 21 PGA TOUR wins. His regular caddie, Harry Diamond, was not on the bag as he was waiting for the birth of his second child. Instead, his other longtime friend, Niall O'Connor, was on the bag.
- Representing Ireland, lost out on an Olympic Bronze Medal at the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo when he was knocked out on the third hole of a seven-man playoff (eventually won by C.T. Pan of Chinese Taipei). McIlroy said, "I've never tried so hard in my life to finish third." Furthermore, McIlroy - who skipped the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio - said, "I made some comments before that were probably uneducated and impulsive, but coming here experiencing it, seeing, feeling everything that goes on, not just Olympic golf but just the Olympics in general, that sort of Olympic spirit's definitely bitten me and I'm excited how this week's turned out and excited for the future."
- Finished T5 at the 2024 Olympic Men's Golf Competition contested at Le Golf National in Paris.

