



Presented by



2026 Ford Championship presented by Wild Horse Pass

Whirlwind Golf Club – Cattail Course | Phoenix, AZ | Mar. 26-29, 2026

Tuesday Pre-Tournament Notes

Mar. 24, 2026

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QUICK LINKS

[Interview Transcripts](#)
[LPGA Tour Online Media Center \(OMC\)](#): includes links to daily and archival tournament information, Stats Box, LPGA Statistical Database, photo/video assets and more
[Tournament Website](#)
[How To Watch – TV/Streaming Times](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA

LPGA Tour: @LPGA, @LPGAMedia (X), @lpga_tour (Instagram, TikTok)

Tournament: @ford_champ_ (Instagram, X)

MEDIA AVAILABILITY SCHEDULE

(All times are local and subject to change; MST)

Wednesday, March 25

9:30 a.m. – Carla Bernat Escuder (2026 Epson Tour Rookie; received a sponsor invitation from Ford; 2025 Augusta National Women's Amateur champion)

Approx. 10 a.m. – Lindy Duncan (veteran LPGA Tour player; potential member of 2026 U.S. Solheim Cup Team; 2025 Heather Farr Perseverance Award winner)

12 p.m. – Anna Nordqvist (Arizona State University alum; 2026 European Solheim Cup Team captain; Phoenix-area resident)

1 p.m. – Yana Wilson (2026 LPGA Tour rookie; participant in the Ford Power Her Drive mentorship program)

NOTABLE PLAYERS

- [Rolex Rankings No. 1 Jeeno Thitikul](#)
 - Second start at the Ford Championship
 - Finished fourth in 2025
 - Won in her second start of 2026 at her home event at the Honda LPGA Thailand
 - Finished T14 in her last start at the Fortinet Founders Cup

- 2025: 19 cuts made in 20 starts with 14 top-10 finishes and three wins
 - Successfully defended her title at the 2025 CME Group Tour Championship to close out the season
 - Won earlier in the year at the Mizuho Americas Open and the Buick LPGA Shanghai
 - Had six consecutive top-10 finishes, including four top-two finishes
 - Her 14 top 10s were the most she has recorded in a single season since her rookie year in 2022, when she recorded 16
 - Earned Rolex Player of the Year honors for the first time in her career and earned the Vare Trophy for lowest scoring average for the second time
- Career: Eight wins, 57 top 10s, \$17.7 million in official career earnings
 - In 2024, earned two wins and recorded 12 top 10s in 17 starts
 - Won the Dow Championship and the CME Group Tour Championship
 - Won the 2024 Aon Risk Reward Challenge
 - Broke Lorena Ochoa's single-season earnings record with a season total of \$6,059,309
 - 2023 Vare Trophy recipient
 - 2022 Louise Suggs Rolex Rookie of the Year
 - Member of the Thailand Team at the 2023 and 2025 Hanwha LIFEPLUS International Crown and represented Thailand at the 2024 Paris Olympics
- **Rolex Rankings No. 2 Nelly Korda**
 - Korda is making her third start at the Ford Championship
 - 2024 – Won, 2025 – T22
 - Won in the 2026 LPGA Tour season opener at the Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions
 - Finished runner-up in her last start at the Fortinet Founders Cup
 - 2025: 19 cuts made in 19 starts with nine top-10 finishes
 - Finished runner-up three times in 2025
 - CME Group Tour Championship
 - U.S. Women's Open presented by Ally
 - Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions
 - Did not miss a cut in 2025, the first time in her career she did not miss a cut in a single season
 - Career: 16 wins, two major championship victories, 76 top 10s, \$16.7 million in official career earnings
 - In 2024, earned seven wins, including five in consecutive starts
 - Became the first player since 2011 to win seven times in a single season
 - Became the third player in LPGA Tour history to have a season with six or more wins, capture a team victory in the Solheim Cup and earn Player of the Year honors, alongside Beth Daniel (1990) and Annika Sorenstam (2003)
 - 2024 Rolex Player of the Year and Rolex ANNIKA Major Award winner
 - Two-time Olympian for the United States, 2020 Gold Medal winner in Tokyo
 - Four-time U.S. Solheim Cup Team member

- **Rolex Rankings No. 3 Charley Hull**
 - Hull is making her third start at the Ford Championship
 - 2024 – WD after R1, 2025 – T11
 - She has made two starts in 2026
 - Finished T10 at the HSBC Women’s World Championship and T17 at the Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions
 - Hull won the PIF Saudi Ladies International on the Ladies European Tour in February, the fifth win on the LET
 - 2025: 14 cuts made in 16 starts with one win and three additional top 10 finishes
 - Claimed her third LPGA Tour victory at the Kroger Queen City Championship
 - Competed on the first ever World Team at the 2025 Hanwha LIFEPLUS International Crown
 - Career: Three wins, 43 top 10s; \$11 million in official career earnings
 - Won the 2022 Ascendant LPGA Benefiting the Volunteers of America and the 2016 CME Group Tour Championship
 - Seven-time member of the European Solheim Cup Team
 - Youngest member of the European Solheim Cup team at 17 years, 4 months and 25 days
 - Has represented England at two International Crowns (2016, 2018) and two Olympics (2016, T7 and 2024, T27)
 - Her No.3 position in the Rolex Rankings is the highest ranking ever for an Englishwoman
 - Also competes on the Ladies European Tour
 - Has five career victories
 - Was named 2013 LET Rookie of the Year
 - Won the 2014 Order of Merit and Player of the Year
- **Defending Champion and Rolex Rankings No. 4 Hyo Joo Kim**
 - Third start at the Ford Championship, first as defending champion
 - Defeated Lilia Vu on the first playoff hole
 - Finished T11 in 2024
 - Won at the Fortinet Ford Championship her last time out
 - Won wire-to-wire, the second time in her career and first since the 2023 Ascendent LPGA benefiting Volunteers of America
 - Making her fourth start of the 2026 season
 - Has two top 10 finishes and one win
 - Career: Eight wins, 65 top 10s, \$11.0 million in official career earnings
 - Represented the Republic of Korea at the 2020 Tokyo and 2024 Paris Olympics
 - Represented the Republic of Korea at the 2023 and 2025 Hanwha LIFEPLUS International Crown
 - Finished as KLPGA leading money winner in 2014 and 2020

NOTABLE TOURNAMENT INFO

- Third edition of the Ford Championship
 - 2025-present: Ford Championship presented by Wild Horse Pass, played at Whirlwind Golf Club

- 2024: Ford Championship presented by KCC and played at Seville Golf and Country Club
- Second professional golf tournament to take place at Whirlwind Golf Club; Gila River Golf Classic (Korn Ferry Tour event), 2001-2005
- Asterisk Talley (a) and Carla Bernat Escuder received sponsor invitations this week
 - Talley is No. 1 in the Rolex AJGA Rankings
 - She has won both of the AJGA events she has entered in 2026
 - She has 13 total wins as an amateur
 - She has made five starts on the LPGA Tour since 2024 most recently at the 2025 ShopRite LPGA Classic powered by Wakefern
 - She has verbally committed to competing at Stanford University
 - Bernat Escuder turned professional in 2025 and made her professional debut at the 2025 CPKC Women's Open
 - She most notably won the 2025 Augusta National Women's Amateur
 - She has made five starts on the LPGA Tour, all in 2025
 - She is a rookie on the Epson Tour in 2026 and has made three starts with one top 10 finish at the Orlando Health Championship, T4

STAT LEADERS

Official Money: Hyo Joo Kim, \$602,140

Scoring Average: Hannah Green, 67.88

Greens in Regulation: Nelly Korda, 82.54%

Scrambling Percentage: Madelene Sagstrom, 77.42%

Average Driving Distance: Riley Smyth, 301.00 yards

SEASON-LONG INITIATIVES

Race to CME Globe

The Race to the CME Globe is a season-long points competition with LPGA Tour Members accumulating points in every official LPGA Tour event to qualify for the season-ending tournament, the CME Group Tour Championship. The player who wins the CME Group Tour Championship is named the "Race to the CME Globe Champion." The top 60 points earners and ties earn a spot into the season finale with the entire field competing for an \$11 million purse, highlighted by a \$4 million winner's check, which is the largest winner's prize in the history of women's golf.

- **Nelly Korda** moved to first with her runner-up finish at the Fortinet Founders Cup
 - Has 820.000 points
- **Hyo Joo Kim** moved to second after her win at the Fortinet Founders Cup and has 768.000 points
- **Jeeno Thitikul** moved to third at 671.000 points after starting her season with four-straight made cuts
- In 2025, **Jeeno Thitikul** earned the most points with 4,066.950 in 20 starts

Aon Risk Reward Challenge: No. 17 at Whirlwind Golf Club, Cattail Course

The Aon Risk Reward Challenge is a unique, season-long competition on the LPGA Tour that highlights the game's best players as they navigate some of the most strategically challenging holes on tour. Players will take their best two scores from each Aon Risk Reward Challenge hole, with the winners having the best average score to par at the end of the regular season. The winner will take home the Aon trophy and a \$1 Million prize.

- **Hannah Green** leads at -1.500

- **Jennifer Kupcho** won the 2025 Aon Risk Reward Challenge
- No. 17 at Whirlwind Golf Club, Cattail Course
 - The 17th hole at Whirlwind Golf Club is a long dog-leg right par-5 that can provide an excellent scoring opportunity to players who make better decisions.
 - Playing as the easiest par- 5 on the course, a birdie here will be crucial to stay ahead of the field. Accuracy is critical, as bunkers guard both sides of the hole.
 - Of the players that carry the fairway bunkers, 33% are expected to go for the green in two, a decision which is expected to gain .45 strokes over those who lay up. The key decision players face on the 17th hole is whether to go for the green or lay up to a preferred yardage.

CME Group Cares Challenge

The CME Group Cares Challenge is a season-long charitable giving program that turns aces into donations. CME Group donates \$20,000 for each hole-in-one made on the LPGA Tour in 2025, with a minimum guaranteed donation of \$500,000 to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, which is leading the way in how the world understands, treats and defeats childhood cancer and life-threatening diseases.

- **Ruoning Yin** made the first hole-in-one of the LPGA Tour season at Blue Bay LPGA
- \$20,000 was donated, bringing the all-time amount donated to \$3.4 million
- There were 22 holes in one throughout the 2025 season
- The total for 2025 was \$440,000 donated toward St. Jude Children's Research Hospital
- 333 all-time eligible holes-in-one since the program started in 2019