



# Grant Thornton

## INVITATIONAL

Grant Thornton Invitational  
Tiburón Golf Club | Naples, FL | December 13-15, 2024

### First-Round Notes December 13, 2024

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**Course Setup:** 36-36 – 72; LPGA: 6,788 yards, PGA: 7,382 yards

**Weather:** Partly cloudy with dry conditions throughout the day. East-northeasterly winds increasing to 12-17 mph along with gusts in the 20-25 mph range. The temperature will reach a high near 77°F.

**Purse:** \$4 million total, \$2 million per Tour; winner team's portion is \$1,000,000 (each player receives \$500,000)

**How to Watch:** [Golf Channel/NBC TV & Streaming Times](#)

**Format:** Three-round 54-hole stroke-play event with 16 teams of two. **R1/Scramble**, R2/Foursomes, R3/Modified Four-Ball

- Scramble: Each player hits a tee shot and then the team selects the ball to be used for the next stroke. From there, both players hit their next shots from that spot. This process continues until the ball is holed.

#### QUICK LINKS

[Interview Transcripts](#)  
[LPGA Tour Online Media Center](#)  
[PGA TOUR Online Media Center](#)  
[Tournament Website](#)

LEADERBOARD			
Pos.	Team	To par	Score
1	Patty Tavatanakit & Jake Knapp	-14	58
T2	Jennifer Kupcho & Akshay Bhatia	-13	59
T2	Brooke Henderson & Corey Connors	-13	59
T4	Maja Stark & J.T. Poston	-11	61
T4	Allisen Corpuz & Sahith Theegala	-11	61
T6	Jeeno Thitikul & Tom Kim	-10	62
T6	Lydia Ko & Jason Day	-10	62
T8	Celine Boutier & Matthieu Pavon	-9	63
T8	Lauren Coughlin & Cameron Young	-9	63
T8	Lilia Vu & Luke List	-9	63
T8	Lexi Thompson & Rickie Fowler	-9	63
T8	Nelly Korda & Daniel Berger	-9	63
T13	Megan Khang & Matt Kuchar	-8	64
T13	Andrea Lee & Max Greyselman	-8	64
15	Gabriela Ruffels & Nick Dunlap	-7	65
16	Mel Reid & Cameron Champ	-6	66

#### ABOUT THE LEADERS

[Jake Knapp](#) (World No. 87) & [Patty Tavatanakit](#) (World No. 26)

*Knapp on what went well for him and Patty Tavatanakit in the first round:*

"I think we kind of ham-and-egged it there on the front nine for a while, but at the same time I think we both just hit a lot of solid shots, had a lot of good looks and kind of fed off each other in terms of if somebody didn't hit a good shot. There wasn't really much strategy necessarily, it was more just try to go hit good golf shots and try to put ourselves in good opportunities and we were able to do that."

*Tavatanakit on why events like the Grant Thornton Invitational are so important for the health of golf:*

"Like we work hard. If anything, like no offense, like just as hard if not harder than you guys. That's why I feel like a lot of us, like we take golf as like a part of us and just to watch the guys play, they don't really have that tie to like them as a person. So I feel like, yeah, like we pour our hearts into the sport and just want to be recognized more and I feel like this event, like Grant Thornton Invitational, is just a great way to expose our love to the game and our hard work and everything. Like we're so dedicated to our job and we just want to do good and be as good as them, too."

- Tavatanakit and Knapp posted 12 birdie and an eagle for a 14-under 58 on Friday
  - The pair opened their first round with nine consecutive birdies, tying the nine-hole scoring record at the event with a front-nine 27
- Both players are first-time participants in the Grant Thornton Invitational
- They are the only team in the field with a win from each player on their respective Tours
  - Tavatanakit won the 2024 Honda LPGA Thailand
  - Knapp won the 2024 Mexico Open at Vidanta
- Knapp is a rookie on the PGA TOUR with one win, while Tavatanakit is in her fifth season on Tour with two career wins

#### MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

- **Brooke Henderson and Corey Connors** (T2) open with a 13-under 59, including nine birdies and eagles on the par-5 14th and 17th holes
  - The duo finished runner-up by one stroke to champions Lydia Ko and Jason Day in 2023
  - Henderson recorded nine top-10 finishes in 2024 that included three third-place finishes
  - Connors had four top-10 finishes this season with a season-best finish of 6th at the RBC Canadian Open
- **Jennifer Kupcho and Akshay Bhatia** (T2, -13) opened with a first-round 59 with 11 birdies and an eagle
  - Three-time LPGA Tour winner Kupcho and two-time PGA Tour winner Bhatia are making their first starts at the Grant Thornton Invitational
  - Kupcho is a former champion of another team event, the 2022 Dow Championship alongside partner Lizette Salas
  - She has won three times on the LPGA Tour including a major championship, The Chevron Championship, with all three wins coming in the 2022 season
  - Bhatia has won in each of his last two seasons on Tour; 2023 Barracuda Championship and 2024 Valero Texas Open
- Defending champions **Lydia Ko** and **Jason Day** (T6, -10) shot a 62 with a front-nine 33 and back-nine 29
  - The duo are the winningest team in the Grant Thornton Invitational, with a combined 35 wins on the LPGA Tour and PGA TOUR
  - Ko is an LPGA Hall of Famer with 22 total wins including three major championship victories
  - Day has 13 wins and one major championship victory
- World No. 1 **Nelly Korda** and **Daniel Berger** opened with a nine-under 63
  - Berger replaced Tony Finau, who withdrew from the field due to a knee injury
  - Korda won a historic seven times during her 2024 LPGA Tour campaign and claimed both the Rolex ANNIKA Major Award and the Rolex Player of the Year
- **Lexi Thompson** and **Rickie Fowler** (T8) also shot a nine-under 63 on Fowler's 36th birthday
  - They celebrated on the first teebox prior to their first round; see [here](#)
- This is the second playing of the Grant Thornton Invitational, the first mixed-team co-sanctioned event between the PGA TOUR and LPGA Tour since the JCPenney Classic in 1999, won by John Daly and Laura Davies
- There are four Grant Thornton ambassadors in the field this week: **Cameron Champ**, **Rickie Fowler**, **Nelly Korda** and **Mel Reid**
- There are four teams in which both players participated in the women's and men's golf competitions at the 2024 Paris Olympics:
  - **Jeeno Thitikul** (Thailand) and **Tom Kim** (Republic of Korea)
  - Henderson and Connors (Canada)
  - **Celine Boutier** and **Matthieu Pavon** (France)
  - Ko (New Zealand) and Day (Australia)
- Two teams recorded two eagles during Friday's round including Henderson & Connors and **Allisen Corpuz & Sahith Theegala**

#### QUOTABLES

*Akshay Bhatia on what worked well for him and Jennifer Kupcho today (T2, -13):*

"I feel like she hit it really straight for most of the day. She capitalized on all the par 5s pretty much off the tee. And she went first on every putt and I felt like once I saw the line, I had a pretty good idea of what the putt was doing if she didn't make it. Besides 18, thankfully I didn't have to hit that one. Other than that, we really enjoyed just trying to get to know each other. It's going to be a fun couple days and we're in the 59 club now, so proud of that today."

*Kupcho on seeing the two Tours collide this week at the Grant Thornton Invitational (T2, -13):*

"I think it's just, I mean it's really exciting. I don't know very many PGA guys, so it's interesting just to hear him and his caddie talking out of the fairways or through every shot. It's just different I would say than definitely how I think. It's just interesting to see what they're doing. It's exciting to see our tours together just for the growth of the game as well."

*Brooke Henderson on finishing runner-up last year with Corey Connors (T2, -13):*

"I think we make a really great team. It's a lot of fun for me to be paired with Corey and I was really happy that we were able to do this again this year. I feel like the runner-up finish was so fun last year, but also stung a little bit. So hopefully just take that as a little extra motivation into these next two days and try to put some solid scores up on the board and just see what happens."

*Connors on what went well today for their team (T2, -13):*

"I think Brooke hit a lot of good shots, made some big putts. We had some putts that were tricky and she made them look easy. She was rolling it really great today and it was fun to see a bunch of those go in and to be able to just pick up the mark and move onto the next. She rolled the ball great."

*Celine Boutier on how much fun it is playing with Matthie Pavon this week after they both played in the Olympics (T8, -9):*

"Yeah, super fun. I think we actually met at the Olympics for the first time, so definitely good memories anytime you can play for your home country or have like a team behind is just always fun. And we know some of the French fans are out watching, so it's nice to be able to represent and hopefully give them something to cheer for."

*Pavon on what Boutier's done on the LPGA Tour and how inspiring it is (T8, -9):*

"Yeah, a hundred percent. This is why I feel like it's a great tournament because I'm not sharing a lot of time during the year with Celine and she's probably the best player ever in France. She won a major, she had a very, very successful career so far. It's all about like watching what she's got and what she does better than most other players and that's very nice for me."

*Lauren Coughlin & Cameron Young on the No. 1 rule that they have for team golf (T8, -9):*

"Don't apologize. Especially in all shot. It's very cliché, because you can try a little too hard because you're trying to do really well for your partner. You don't need to feel bad if you hit a bad shot," said Coughlin. Young added, "'I think that's the nail on the head. We're all really good at golf and we all hit awful golf shots, it's going to happen. Well, I hope it doesn't, but more than likely something happens and you've just got to keep moving."

#### **[ON LPGA.COM AND PGATOUR.COM](#)**

[Featured Teams: 2024 Grant Thornton Invitational](#)

[The Format: 2024 Grant Thornton Invitational](#)

[How to Watch the 2024 Grant Thornton Invitational](#)

[Field Breakdown: 2024 Grant Thornton Invitational](#)

[LPGA star Nelly Korda spotted using new TaylorMade Qi35 Max prototype driver at Grant Thornton Invitational](#)

[Jessica Korda Booth Interview Part 1 | 2024 Grant Thornton Invitational](#)

[Jessica Korda Booth Interview Part 2 | 2024 Grant Thornton Invitational](#)

[Ally Ewing Celebrated End of LPGA Tour Career with New Puppy, Founders Award](#)

#### **SOCIAL SNAPSHOT**

[A big birthday celebration on the first tee 🎂 @Lexi gave a cake to @RickieFowler to help him celebrate 🎉](#)

[Sahith and Allisen's secret weapon: Their dads 💖](#)

[Confirmed: @JDayGolf is a big Lydia fan 🤩](#)

[Bussin. This gen-z slang quiz with @megan\\_khang1023 and Matt Kuchar exceeded all our expectations 🤯](#)

[Rickie and Lexi's secret weapon this week? @Lexi's dog Leo 🐕](#)

#### **Tournament Scoring Records:**

Scramble: 56 (-16), Nelly Korda & Tony Finau (2023)

Foursomes: 66 (-6), Lydia Ko & Jason Day (2023)

Modified Four-Ball: 60 (-12), Madelene Sagstrom & Ludvig Åberg (2023)

18 holes: 56 (-16), Nelly Korda & Tony Finau (R1, 2023)

36 holes: 124 (-20), Lydia Ko & Jason Day (2023)

54 holes: 190 (-26), Lydia Ko & Jason Day (2023)