



# ***THE MASTERS***

## **BETTING PRIMER**

# **GOLF BETTING TIPS**

FOR THE BIGGEST MAJOR OF THE YEAR

**THIS FREE GUIDE INCLUDES**

- GOLFER PROFILES
- HOW TO BET ON GOLF
- FIRST ROUND LEADERS / TOP 10 / TOP 5
- EARLY BEST BETS

Greetings, all.

The 2024 Masters Primer serves as a comprehensive look at what to expect from this year's tournament, but is also a great learning tool for how to bet on golf. Our golf coverage is second to none at VSiN thanks to Wes Reynolds, Kelley Bydlon, and Matt Brown, the stars of our Long Shots Podcast.

All three are also regular co-hosts on air to talk other sports, but Wes (VSiN Tonight, The Lookahead), Matt (The Handle), and Kelley (Live Bet Sunday) will also be doing a special edition of Long Shots on Tuesday, April 9 at 11 p.m. ET with replays overnight on Wednesday morning and Thursday morning in advance of the tournament.

So, that's what you can hear, but what can you read? In this Primer, you will see:

- Player capsules for every golfer in the Masters field from Wes Reynolds
- Tips on "How to Bet on Golf" from Kelley Bydlon
- A "Masters Stock Report" of golfers trending up or down from Matt Brown
- Early best bets

Our guys will have more picks and predictions in advance of the Masters at VSiN.com and they'll be doing their thing throughout the golf season for other events as well.

We're glad you're here to check us out and encourage you to take advantage of our "Masters" promo code that unlocks a \$199 annual subscription at [VSiN.com/pro](https://www.vsin.com/pro), which will get you access to all of our Augusta National insights, but also an all-access pass to everything we do for the next calendar year.

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# GOLF BETTING 101

Sportsbook / Golf Odds / The Masters Odds

## TOURNAMENT LINES

By Kelley Bydlon

### TOURNAMENT WINNER

#### The Masters 2024

THU 11TH APR 6

#### OUTRIGHT WINNER

Scottie Scheffler	+400
Rory McIlroy	+1000
Jon Rahm	+1200
Viktor Hovland	+2000
Jordan Spieth	+2000
Brooks Koepka	+2000
Xander Schauffele	+2200
Joaquin Niemann	+2200
Ludvig Aberg	+2200
Patrick Cantlay	+2500
Justin Thomas	+2500

With the continued spread of legalized sports betting across the U.S. and the first major of the year approaching, what a perfect time for a “Golf Betting 101” piece! In this story, I will briefly highlight my weekly approach to handicapping golf, but where I really want to focus some time is discussing the popular golf betting markets that are available for almost everyone to bet, and how I personally approach betting each.

A lot of this will be my own personal opinion on how to best bet into each market, but like other sports, there are more ways than one to skin a cat, as they say. How I bet golf now is very different from how I bet it 10 years ago. And for me it's been a perfect example of how you should always be fine-tuning your processes and be open to changing your betting styles as we have far more markets open to all of us now than we did in the past.

## Handicapping a Tournament

I won't spend too much time on this, because if you listen to our golf betting podcast Long Shots, then you probably have a good feel for this already, and if you've never listened to Long Shots, we think you should! A reminder, we record weekly during the PGA Tour season and the podcast can be found on Wednesday morning when it gets posted wherever you listen to podcasts. You'll hear Matt Brown, Wes Reynolds, and myself hit every week on the following:

- Course Scouting
- Stat Models
- Recent Form
- Course History/Correlated Courses

First place to start is with the course. How long is it? How big are the greens? How wide are fairways? What defenses/obstacles does the course present? What type of player has won here in the past?

At the end of your course scouting, that's what you really want to have figured out - which golfers have the best skill sets to win at this course?

How Matt, Wes, and I choose to go about that is figuring out which Strokes Gained stats and other stats will matter the most each week. We each utilize different stat engine websites to help sort out and rank golfers for that week over certain timespans. Whether it's by weeks, months,

or number of rounds is what you'll hear us reference most often. The beginning of the season, and the Fall Swing can be a bit different, but usually we are looking at which golfers have had the most success in the stats we deem to be the most important over the past few tournaments they've played in. That gives us a good idea of each golfer's recent form. We then compare those rankings to the odds and try to decide on which bets we find value.

Lastly, you'll want to look at course history for each golfer you're considering or how well they've done at courses with similar features (AKA Comp Courses). There are some tournaments where this will matter a lot and not nearly as much at some of the others.

Perfect example: The Masters is one of tournaments where it matters the most. Why? Well, you can probably guess why, but unlike all the other majors, it utilizes the same course every single year. And, unlike a regular PGA Tour event, every bit of experience you can have on this difficult course will give you a better and better chance when pitted against the best golfers in the world.

## Betting The Tournament

Alright cool Kelley, now I've done all my homework and I have a pool of golfers I'm ready to bet on. What are my betting options?

### Outrights

Who is going to win the tournament? It is the most common bet in golf and one of the most exciting bets in sports. Why? Well, you basically get a four-day futures bet to sweat at usually lengthy odds. We all want to bet a little to make a lot, so it's easy to see why betting outright is so popular and by far the most discussed bet type.

You have successful golf bettors who can bet this market very differently from each other, and even differently week to week on tour. Some will enter a tournament with close to 10 of these bets, and some won't have a single one. It's all about figuring out what works best for you. Ten years ago, I would bet a large amount of outright both before and during tournaments and look to bet live Yes/No prices throughout the event.

Nowadays, I take a very different approach. Yes, there are some weeks where I might enter an event with 5-6 outright, not many other bets, and even look to add on outright during a tournament. But if I'm doing that, it's probably an

event at a volatile track where we can see scores change rapidly. i.e. THE PLAYERS. What I'll most often do is bet 2-5 of these each week, and fill up my card with other bets. Over the course of the season, you're talking 10-15% of my money bet will be bet on outright.

I believe that if you're looking to bet golf nearly every week, these bets need to be less of a priority for you. Of course the big wins are fun, but you need to look to cash in other markets that are easier to win in and keep your golf betting bankroll growing - or at least not dying - until you hit that next outright. This is also the reason that I'm not opposed to hedging on these types of bets as much as I might be in other sports. The goal is long-term winning, not just winning one week.

### Tournament Matchups

Another simple to understand market is tournament matchups. Basically, who will finish with a lower score: Golfer A or Golfer B. For me, this is where all tournament betting starts. It's where you can often find the biggest edge, because you're simply betting 1v1 and not one guy vs. a group, or a whole field. If there are matchups posted that I like, I will bet those first and then decide from there how much more money I'd like to invest in that golfer and in which markets. Now, I say “if there are matchups posted that I like” because that's easier said than done. The oddsmakers are not dumb. They are very selective with which matchups they are willing to post, and you're oftentimes not going to like the opponent they have paired up with the golfer you are targeting.

### Finishing Positions

AKA Top 5/Top 10/Top 20/Top 40 finishes. These are the markets you will see me bet into the most. If I could bet tournament matchups on every golfer I'm targeting each week, I would, but like I hinted at above, you're not going to find a matchup posted you find value in on every golfer you're targeting every week. This is the next best way - in my opinion - to bet on those guys. A Top 10/20/40 finish can often be a good substitute for a matchup play.

There are other ways to utilize these markets as well. Maybe you're looking at a long shot in the outright market who just doesn't have a great win percentage. A Top 10 bet on them at fairly long odds can be a great substitute, or a great add-on. For many of us in the U.S. who don't have access to each-way betting, adding Top 5s to your outright plays can be a good way to cover yourself in case of a wild ending. For example, two seasons ago I had outright bets on

golfers who finished second or tied for second in 13 events. That can become quite a headache if you're not covering your outright with these kinds of bets.

One important house rule to learn on these types of bets is whether the book pays ties in full or employs “dead heat” rules. I usually look to only bet at books where ties pay in full, but you do get worse odds than at books that do use “dead heat”. If you're betting these markets, you NEED TO KNOW how dead heat rules work and which books utilize them.

### Live Betting

Whether you're looking to add or hedge on pre-tournament positions, or get in on a golfer for the first time for an outright or finishing position bet, or even round-to-round matchups, live betting is great in golf. The time it takes in between shots gives you plenty of time to get in. With most tournaments, I will end up adding a couple bets live, and play a couple third/fourth-round matchups. I recommend holding back some of your pre-tournament bankroll to use in-tournament.

### First Round Leader

Depending on where you live, you might have more shops that offer First Round Leader (FRL) bets than others. It is a market that I've found some success in the past few years, and am even looking to expand my betting here as we get more shops in Vegas posting them, and posting FRL finishing position markets. Now, in sports like the NBA, I'll often stay away from first quarter bets, because I'd prefer for more of the game to unfold, allowing for more time for my handicap to play out.

For most people, I'd say the same about this market. It's not for everybody, and I wouldn't recommend it for newer bettors. If you're someone who thinks they have a strong feel for very short-term recent form, it's one I would recommend exploring. If you're someone like me, you might easily fall in love with guys who never win, but here I only need them to win that first round to cash.

### Other Bets To Consider

As I mentioned above with the first round leader, there are new markets going up seemingly every other week at different books. I encourage you to always explore the new markets and try to find ways where there might be value betting them. Top Nationality, Over/Under winning score, and others I will play now and then but not often enough to write about here.

However you decide to bet the Masters though, good luck!

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# THE ULTIMATE MASTERS GOLFER BREAKDOWN

By Wes Reynolds

Participation in the Masters Tournament is by invitation only and the tournament has the smallest field of the major championships. There are several criteria by which invitations are awarded, including all past winners, recent major champions, leading finishers in the previous year's majors, leading players on the PGA Tour in the previous season, winners of full-point tournaments on the PGA Tour during the previous 12 months, leading players in the Official World Golf Ranking, and some leading amateurs.

There were three changes to invitee criteria between the 2023 and 2024 tournaments. The first was to give the current NCAA Division I Men's Individual Champion a spot in the field, if he remains an amateur at the time of the tournament. In addition, Augusta National clarified that players who qualify for the Tour Championship must remain eligible to play in that event to qualify for the Masters. Also, with the PGA Tour returning to a calendar-year season schedule, Augusta National noted that winners of fall PGA Tour events would continue to qualify for the Masters. The below list details the qualification criteria for the 2024 Masters Tournament and the players who have qualified under them; any additional criteria under which players qualified are indicated in parentheses.

## 1. All past winners of the Masters Tournament

Fred Couples, Sergio García, Dustin Johnson, Zach Johnson, Hideki Matsuyama (17,19), Phil Mickelson (4,13), José María Olazábal, Jon Rahm (2,15,18,19), Patrick Reed (13), Scottie Scheffler (5,13,14,16,17,18,19), Charl Schwartzel, Adam Scott (19), Vijay Singh, Jordan Spieth (13,18,19), Bubba Watson, Mike Weir, Danny Willett, Tiger Woods  
Past winners not expected to play: Tommy Aaron, Ángel Cabrera, Charles Coody, Ben Crenshaw, Nick Faldo, Raymond Floyd, Trevor Immelman, Bernhard Langer, Sandy Lyle, Larry Mize, Jack Nicklaus, Mark O'Meara, Gary Player, Craig Stadler, Tom Watson, Ian Woosnam, Fuzzy Zoeller

## 2. Recent winners of the U.S. Open (2019–2023)

Wyndham Clark (17,18,19), Bryson DeChambeau (16), Matt Fitzpatrick (13,17,18,19), Gary Woodland

## 3. Recent winners of The Open Championship (2019–2023)

Brian Harman (18,19), Shane Lowry (19), Collin Morikawa (4,13,17,18,19), Cameron Smith (5,14,19)

## 4. Recent winners of the PGA Championship (2019–2023)

Brooks Koepka (13,19), Justin Thomas (19)

## 5. Recent winners of The Players Championship (2022–2024)

## 6. The winner of the gold medal at the Olympic Games

## 7. The winner and runner-up in the 2023 U.S. Amateur Championship

Neal Shipley (a)

Nick Dunlap forfeited his invitation for winning the U.S. Amateur by turning professional but qualified under category 17 by winning the 2024 American Express.

## 8. The winner of the 2023 Amateur Championship

Christo Lamprecht (a)

## 9. The winner of the 2023 Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship

Jasper Stubbs (a)

## 10. The winner of the 2024 Latin America Amateur Championship

Santiago de la Fuente (a)

## 11. The winner of the 2023 U.S. Mid-Amateur Golf Championship

Stewart Hagestad (a)

## 12. The winner of the 2023 NCAA Division I men's golf individual championship

Fred Biondi forfeited his invitation by turning professional.

## 13. The leading 12 players, and those tying for 12th place, from the 2023 Masters Tournament

Russell Henley (18,19), Viktor Hovland (16,17,18,19), Xander Schauffele (18,19), Sahith Theegala (17,19), Cameron Young (19)

## 14. The leading four players, and those tying for fourth place, in the 2023 U.S. Open

Rory McIlroy (17,18,19)

## 15. The leading four players, and those tying for fourth place, in the 2023 Open Championship

Jason Day (17,18,19), Tom Kim (17,18,19), Sepp Straka (17,18,19)

## 16. The leading four players, and those tying for fourth place, in the 2023 PGA Championship

Cameron Davis (19), Kurt Kitayama (19)

## 17. Winners of tournaments on the PGA Tour between the 2023 Masters Tournament and the 2024 Masters Tournament

Ludvig Åberg (19), Keegan Bradley (18,19), Nick Dunlap, Austin Eckroat, Tony Finau (18,19), Rickie Fowler (18,19), Lucas Glover (18,19), Emiliano Grillo (18,19), Lee Hodges, Stephan Jaeger (20), Chris Kirk, Jake Knapp, Luke List, Peter Malnati, Grayson Murray, Matthieu Pavon, Nick Taylor (18), Erik van Rooyen, Camilo Villegas

## 18. All players who qualified for and are eligible for the 2023 Tour Championship

Sam Burns (19), Patrick Cantlay (19), Corey Conners (19), Tommy Fleetwood (19), Tyrrell Hatton (19), Max Homa (19), Sungjae Im (19), Si-woo Kim (19), Taylor Moore, Adam Schenk (19)

## 19. The leading 50 players on the Official World Golf Ranking as of December 31, 2023

Eric Cole, Harris English, Ryan Fox, Adam Hadwin, Nicolai Højgaard, Min Woo Lee, Denny McCarthy, Adrian Meronk, J. T. Poston, Justin Rose, Will Zalatoris

## 20. The leading 50 players on the Official World Golf Ranking as of April 1, 2024

Byeong Hun An

## 21. Special invitations

Ryo Hisatsune, Joaquín Niemann, Thorbjørn Olesen

*The following are capsules for every golfer in the Masters field and their recent odds to win at DraftKings.*

## Ludvig Åberg 22/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Ludvig Åberg has already won on both the PGA TOUR and the DP World Tour yet is making his first Masters appearance and his major championship debut. He finished runner-up in the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am in February and eighth in The PLAYERS Championship in March. Last June, he concluded his collegiate career at Texas Tech as the top-ranked amateur in the world and the recipient of the Fred Haskins, Ben Hogan, and Jack Nicklaus Player of the Year awards. He earned his first DP World Tour win in September at the Omega European Masters in Switzerland, was part of the winning European Ryder Cup team in Italy in October and earned his first PGA Tour win in St. Simons Island at the RSM Classic in November. The talented Swede is likely a future major champion at some point, but he is being priced as such already before ever having played in a major championship.

## Byeong Hun An 100/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 4/1

**Best Career Finish:** T-33rd (2017)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Byeong Hun (aka Benny) An is making his fifth career appearance at the Masters, his first since 2020. An earns the return invitation to Augusta National courtesy of ranking in the OWGR Top 50 as of April 1, 2024. The Korean was the runner-up last fall in the Wyndham Championship and started 2024 in Hawaii with a T-4 at The Sentry and was runner-up to Grayson Murray in a playoff at the Sony Open. Benny An seemed destined for stardom in 2009 when he became the youngest ever player to win the U.S. Amateur at age 17. An had been suspended from the PGA TOUR for three months in 2023 (August 31 – December 1) for violating the tour's anti-doping policy. He tested positive for a substance banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency that was included in an over-the-counter cough medicine in South Korea. While he has four professional victories, An has yet to win on the PGA TOUR. He is one of the better drivers of the golf ball in the game but has yet to put it all together.

## Keegan Bradley 150/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 7/6

**Best Career Finish:** T-22nd (2015)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Keegan Bradley is making his eighth Masters appearance. Last year in his first start at Augusta National since 2019, he finished T-23. He was runner-up in Honolulu to Grayson Murray at the Sony Open in January. The New England native earned his Masters invitation via an emotional victory in front of his family in Hartford at The Travelers Championship for his sixth career PGA TOUR win and second of the 2022-2023 season. The former PGA Champion (2011) and Rookie of the Year is typically a good striker but a poor putter and has never quite figured out these fast Bentgrass greens at Augusta.

## Sam Burns 45/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 2/1

**Best Career Finish:** T-29 (2023)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Sam Burns is making his third Masters appearance. He has recorded four Top 10 finishes in La Quinta, Pebble Beach, Phoenix, and Los Angeles to start 2024. He is back in the Masters field having qualified for the 2023 Tour Championship. Burns has become a regular winner on the PGA TOUR having won five times over the last three calendar years and made his Ryder Cup debut for Team USA last year. However, he has yet to post a Top 10 finish in any major championship. Aside from putting well on Bermuda greens (hence the nickname "Bermuda Burns"), Burns does not have one thing that he consistently does great but does manage to put enough things together to be a consistent Top 20 player in the world.

## Patrick Cantlay 25/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 7/5  
**Best Career Finish:** T-9th (2019)  
**Top 5s:** 0  
**Top 10s:** 1  
**Top 20s:** 3

Patrick Cantlay is making his eighth Masters appearance. He earned Low Amateur honors in 2012 and has finished inside the Top 20 at Augusta National in three of the past five years. He started 2024 with three Top 12 finishes and had seven Top 5s in 2023 but has not won anywhere since August 2022 despite being a Top 10 ranked player. The 2021 PGA TOUR Player of the Year certainly has the talent to not only compete but win major championships. However, Cantlay has just one Top 5 finish in 27 career major championships. Cantlay has had a lot on his plate lately with being one of the six player directors on the new PGA TOUR board, always being the subject of rumors of jumping to LIV Golf, plus having to discuss his Ryder Cup controversies pertaining to demanding compensation for his participation on the team. Although he was the 54-hole leader at Riviera for the Genesis Invitational back in February, his game has been a bit below his typical high standard to start 2024.

## Wyndham Clark 28/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0  
**Best Career Finish:** Debutant  
**Top 5s:** 0  
**Top 10s:** 0  
**Top 20s:** 0

This time last year, Wyndham Clark was the OWGR No. 82 player and was not in the Masters field. One month after last year's Masters, Clark won his first PGA TOUR event at the Wells Fargo Championship, and then won his first major championship at the U.S. Open. Clark now arrives at Augusta National as the No. 4 player in the world. Outside of World No. 1 Scottie Scheffler, perhaps no player has been in better form this spring as Clark finished runner-up in consecutive weeks to Scheffler both at the Arnold Palmer Invitational and THE PLAYERS Championship. Clark also won the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am in February with a course-record 60 at Pebble Beach. His U.S. Open victory was the first time he had even contended in a major, so there is some cynicism from the market regarding Clark being a consistent major championship contender, but he keeps answering the skeptics.

## Eric Cole 150/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0  
**Best Career Finish:** Debutant  
**Top 5s:** 0  
**Top 10s:** 0  
**Top 20s:** 0

Eric Cole is making his first Masters appearance. He earned his first Masters invitation having moved inside the Top 50 in the Official World Golf Ranking with four Top 3 finishes last year including two runner-up finishes (Honda Classic, ZOZO Championship). The 2023 PGA Tour Rookie of the Year had seven other top 15s last year. Prior to his success on the PGA Tour, he won over 50 mini-tour events. His father, 1966 Amateur champion and PGA Tour winner Bobby Cole, competed in five Masters Tournaments. The form in 2024 has certainly cooled a bit with just one Top 10 finish thus far this season.

## Corey Connors 80/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 6/4  
**Best Career Finish:** T-6th (2022)  
**Top 5s:** 0  
**Top 10s:** 3  
**Top 20s:** 3

Corey Connors is making his seventh Masters appearance. He has finished inside the Top 10 at Augusta National in three of the past four years with a T-10 in 2020, T-8 in 2021 and T-6 in 2022. The Canadian also finished T-18 in the Arnold Palmer Invitational and T-13 in THE PLAYERS Championship in consecutive weeks in March. In 2023, he won the Valero Texas Open for his second career PGA TOUR win, and qualified for his fourth Tour Championship at East Lake which earned him a return appearance to Augusta. Connors is always one of the best in the game with his irons as he is always near the top for Strokes Gained: Approach, but the short game has been a long weakness for him.



## Fred Couples 1500/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 38/31

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (1992)

**Top 5s:** 5

**Top 10s:** 11

**Top 20s:** 19

Fred Couples is making his 39th Masters appearance. “Boom Boom” won the 1992 Masters as World No. 1 by two strokes over 1976 champion Raymond Floyd. Last year, he broke a four-year missed cut streak and made more history at Augusta National when he became the oldest to ever make the Tournament cut at 63 years, 6 months, 5 days of age and moved into second place behind Jack Nicklaus in total cuts made with 31. He has 11 top-10 finishes at Augusta National and has completed 72 holes in the Masters in five different decades. Couples also made a record-tying 23 consecutive cuts in the Masters in 1983-2007. He has played four PGA TOUR Champions events thus far in 2024 with his best finish being T-21 at the Chubb Classic in March.

## Cameron Davis 150/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 1/1

**Best Career Finish:** 46th (2022)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Cameron Davis is making his second Masters appearance, and his first since 2022. Last May, he shot a final-round 65 in the PGA Championship at Oak Hill to finish T-4. It was his best performance in a major and earned him his second invitation to the Masters. His best 2024 finish thus far is a T-18 in the Arnold Palmer Invitational in March. He won the Australian Open in 2017 and earned his lone career PGA TOUR win at the Rocket Mortgage Classic in Detroit in 2021. The Australian is still seeking his hot form from the second half of 2023 where he had six Top 10 finishes in his last nine events of the calendar year.

## Jason Day 40/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 12/9

**Best Career Finish:** T-2nd (2011)

**Top 5s:** 3

**Top 10s:** 4

**Top 20s:** 6

Jason Day is making his 13th Masters appearance. He finished runner-up in his debut at Augusta National in 2011 and finished third in 2013 and T-5 in 2019. Day recorded top-10 finishes in Maui, Pebble Beach, and Los Angeles to start 2024. After starting 2023 with top 20s in each of his first seven worldwide starts, he won the AT&T Byron Nelson in Texas in May to earn his 13th career PGA Tour win and end a five-year winless drought. The Australian finished runner-up in The Open at Royal Liverpool in July and, in August, qualified for the Tour Championship at East Lake for the first time since 2018. Day's short game is typically world class, but he has been way off with his irons this season.

## Bryson DeChambeau 40/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 7/5

**Best Career Finish:** T-21st (2016) Low Amateur

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Bryson DeChambeau is making his eighth Masters appearance. In his Augusta National debut in 2016, he earned Low Amateur honors, and, in the 2019 Masters, he shared the opening-round lead with Brooks Koepka. Finished T-4 in last year's PGA Championship at Oak Hill for his fourth top-10 performance in a major in the past four years. He won the 2020 U.S. Open at Winged Foot by six strokes to join Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods as winners of the U.S. Open, U.S. Amateur and NCAA Individual Championship. DeChambeau won twice last fall on LIV Golf. He has started 2024 with three Top 10 finishes out of four LIV events. The distance off the tee is still there, as he leads LIV Golf in driving distance, but he has yet to figure out the greens at Augusta. Nevertheless, he is in better form coming in this year as opposed to last year.

## Santiago de la Fuente (A) 1000/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Santiago de la Fuente is making his first Masters appearance. He earned the invitation by winning the Latin America Amateur Championship at Santa Maria Golf Club in Panama in January by two strokes over Omar Morales with a final-round 64. That victory not only earned him an invitation to the Masters, but also to the U.S. Open and The Open in 2024. The 22-year-old Mexican amateur was the low amateur at the Mexico Open in February. In 2023, the University of Houston senior earned All-America honors, was a member of the International team in the Arnold Palmer Cup and, for the second consecutive year, represented Mexico in the Eisenhower Trophy.

## Nick Dunlap 250/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Nick Dunlap is making his first Masters appearance. He was playing collegiate golf at University of Alabama, but that all changed back in January when he became the first amateur to win on the PGA TOUR since Phil Mickelson in 1991 with his victory at The American Express in La Quinta, CA. After his victory, he moved up over 4,000 places in the Official World Golf Ranking to No. 68 and, the day before he turned professional in January, became No. 1 in the World Amateur Golf Ranking. Last August, he won the U.S. Amateur at Cherry Hills Country Club in Colorado after defeating Neal Shipley in the final, 4&3. Dunlap joined Tiger Woods as the only winners of both the U.S. Junior and Amateur Championship titles and joined a list that includes Bobby Jones, Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, and Woods as winners of the Havemeyer Trophy. Since this triumph in January, he has missed three of five cuts, and his best finish was a T-48 at the Arnold Palmer Invitational.

## Austin Eckroat 180/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Austin Eckroat is making his first Masters appearance. He won the Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches back in March to earn his first career PGA TOUR win and the invitation to the Masters. Last year was Eckroat's rookie season on the TOUR where he had four Top 10 finishes, including runner-up in the AT&T Byron Nelson in Texas, fifth in the Dominican Republic, T-8 in St. Simons Island and T-10 in the U.S. Open at The Los Angeles Country Club. His Top 10 performance in the U.S. Open included shooting a first-nine 29 in the final round to tie the championship record for lowest nine-hole score. The one-time member of Oklahoma State University's NCAA Championship-winning team in 2018 has made 10 of his last 11 cuts but has struggled with his putter a bit.

## Harris English 180/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 4/3

**Best Career Finish:** T-21st (2021)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Harris English is making his fifth Masters appearance. He has six Top 25 finishes worldwide in 2024, including seventh in Los Angeles in February and T-10 in Honolulu in January. Last year, he had seven top 15s worldwide, including runner-up in the Arnold Palmer Invitational, T-3 in Charlotte, and T-8 in the U.S. Open at The Los Angeles Country Club. The 2023 form got him into the OWGR Top 50 and earned him a return to the Masters. English has Top 10s in the U.S. Open in three of the past four years, finishing fourth in 2020 at Winged Foot and third in 2021 at Torrey Pines. While he has been in the mix regularly of late at the U.S. Open, English has not had much success at Augusta and has never finished in the Top 20 in four appearances.

## Tony Finau 45/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 6/6

**Best Career Finish:** T-5th (2019)

**Top 5s:** 1

**Top 10s:** 3

**Top 20s:** 3

Tony Finau is making his seventh Masters appearance. He has made the cut in each of his six appearances at Augusta National, including top-10 finishes in 2018, 2019 and 2021. Thus far in 2024, he finished runner-up in Houston, T-6 in San Diego in January and T-13 in the Mexico Open in February in defense of his 2023 title there. After starting 2023 with top 25s in each of his first eight worldwide starts, he won the Mexico Open for his sixth career PGA TOUR win. After an over five-year winless drought from March 2016 – August 2021, Finau has won five times on the PGA TOUR in the past three years. Finau's approach game has been terrific in 2024, but his putting has been dreadful and the main culprit for only having one Top 10 in eight starts this season. He rarely seems to have all facets of his game on point at the same time. Either his ball striking is great while his short game is poor, or his short game is firing, and his ball striking is suffering. While his win equity on the TOUR has improved, he has not finished in the Top 10 at a major championship since the 2021 PGA Championship.

## Matt Fitzpatrick 40/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 9/8

**Best Career Finish:** T-7th (2016)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 2

**Top 20s:** 3

Matt Fitzpatrick is making his 10th Masters appearance. He has finished inside the Top 15 in each of the past two years at Augusta National. In 2023, he celebrated emotional wins with his family in Hilton Head Island (RBC Heritage) and St Andrews, where the Englishman won the Alfred Dunhill Links Championship and the pro-am portion of the event with his mother Susan. In 2022, he won the U.S. Open at The Country Club in Brookline, Massachusetts, the same course where he won the 2013 U.S. Amateur. On the other hand, he has been slow to start in 2024 largely due to poor ball striking, which is typically one of his strengths, especially with the added distance off the tee. Having only made four of seven cuts this year, Fitzpatrick finally showed some signs of life at THE PLAYERS with a Top 5 finish. He is always a solid putter, but he has not exactly been flushing it with the irons.

## Tommy Fleetwood 50/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 7/6

**Best Career Finish:** T-14th (2022)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 3

Tommy Fleetwood is making his eighth Masters appearance. He has finished inside the Top 20 in three of the past six years at Augusta National. After a worldwide winless drought of over a full calendar year, Fleetwood won the DP World Tour's Dubai Invitational in January. In 2023, he finished runner-up in both the Canadian Open and the DP World Tour's season-ending event in Dubai, recorded Top 10s in both the U.S. Open and The Open, qualified for the Tour Championship at East Lake for the third time and secured the clinching point for Europe in the Ryder Cup in Italy. The black mark on Fleetwood's record though is that, while he has seven DP World Tour victories, he has never won on the PGA TOUR. The Southport, England native has seven Top 10s in major championships, including runner-up performances in the 2018 U.S. Open and 2019 Open. If he is going to have contending major championship performances like those, he will have to, like his fellow Englishman Fitzpatrick, improve on his approach play.

## Rickie Fowler 80/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 10/9

**Best Career Finish:** 2nd (2018)

**Top 5s:** 2

**Top 10s:** 3

**Top 20s:** 5

Rickie Fowler is making his 11th Masters appearance and returns to Augusta National for the first time since 2020. He earned the return trip by winning the Rocket Mortgage Classic in Detroit back in July to earn his sixth career PGA TOUR win and end a four-year winless drought. Fowler has a very good record here with Top 12s in five of his past seven starts at Augusta National, including runner-up to Patrick Reed in 2018. Also in 2023, he was in the final group at the U.S. Open at the Los Angeles Country Club before setting for a T-5 finish. Unfortunately for Fowler, he has not been able to continue these good showings in 2024. His best finish this season is a T-35 at the Genesis Invitational in a 70-player field. Fowler has lost strokes off the tee and on approach in every event he has played this season. Jack Nicklaus famously said, "Augusta is where you bring your game, not where you find your game." Rickie is still searching for it right now.

## Ryan Fox 150/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 1/1

**Best Career Finish:** T-26th (2023)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

New Zealand's Ryan Fox is making his second Masters appearance after a respectable T-26 on debut last year. Fox's best showing thus far in 2024 is a T-14 at the DP World Tour's Dubai Invitational in January. He has missed four of six cuts on the PGA TOUR this season and is far removed from the form he showed in the last four months of 2023 where he won the DP World Tour's flagship event at the BMW PGA Championship in England and finished runner-up in St Andrews and T-3 in the Irish Open. Furthermore, he made the cut in all four major championships last year and these showings in the biggest events moved him into the OWGR Top 50, which earned him this return appearance to the Masters. He had started 2023 by winning the Seve Ballesteros Award as the 2022 DP World Tour Player of the Year in a vote by his fellow players after recording eight top-four finishes that season. He has lost strokes off the tee in every stateside start but one this season.

## Sergio Garcia 150/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 24/15

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2017)

**Top 5s:** 2

**Top 10s:** 4

**Top 20s:** 6

Sergio Garcia is making his 25th Masters appearance 25 years after his Augusta National debut in 1999 when he was the Low Amateur (T-38) on the same day that fellow Spaniard Jose Maria Olazabal won the second of his two Masters titles. In 2017, Garcia earned a Masters title of his own defeating Justin Rose in a playoff to follow Seve Ballesteros and Olazabal as Masters champions representing Spain. Like Jon Rahm in 2023, Garcia won on what would have been Ballesteros' birthday on April 9. Garcia is one of seven Low Amateurs to go on to win the Masters with Cary Middlecoff, Jack Nicklaus, Ben Crenshaw, Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson and Hideki Matsuyama. Garcia has missed the cut in four of his last five trips to Augusta. Occasionally, he contends in a LIV Golf event like he did in the season opener at Mayakoba where he was the runner-up losing in a playoff to Joaquin Niemann. He is still one of the better pure drivers of the golf ball in the world, but at age 44, his best days are likely behind him even though he still competes hard.

## Lucas Glover 100/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 1/1

**Best Career Finish:** T-20th (2007)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 1

Lucas Glover, the 2009 U.S. Open winner at Bethpage Black, is making his 10th Masters appearance and his first since 2022 courtesy of a bit of a career resurgence late last summer with three Top 6 finishes (Rocket Mortgage Classic, John Deere Classic, Barbasol Championship) before posting consecutive wins at the Wyndham Championship (his first win since 2021) and FedEx St. Jude Championship. Glover got back into the OWGR Top 50 at age 44. He is still excellent with his approach shots but has failed to reach the Top 10 in any of his eight starts in 2024.

## Emiliano Grillo 200/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 3/3

**Best Career Finish:** T-17th (2016)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 1

Argentina's Emiliano Grillo is making his fourth Masters appearance, his first since 2019. He earned this return appearance by defeating Adam Schenk in a playoff at Colonial last May to earn his second career PGA TOUR win and his first since 2015. He celebrated winning on the same golf course as Argentine legend and 1967 Open champion Roberto De Vicenzo who won at Colonial Country Club in 1957. In 2024, Grillo has posted a couple of Top 10s including T-7 in Honolulu in January and T-8 in the Arnold Palmer Invitational in Orlando in March. Historically, Grillo has been a shaky putter, but it has been his ball striking that has been a little below standard to start 2024.

## Adam Hadwin 150/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 3/2

**Best Career Finish:** T-24th (2018)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Adam Hadwin is making his fourth Masters appearance and his first since 2020. The Canadian earned this return trip to Augusta National courtesy of three runner-up finishes last year in New Orleans, Detroit, and Las Vegas. These finishes pushed him into the OWGR Top 50 and got him the invitation. Thus far in 2024, he finished T-6 at The American Express in January, T-4 at the Genesis Invitational in February, and T-5 at the Valspar Championship in March. The one-time PGA TOUR winner (2017 Valspar Championship) is a good, solid player and has four Top 6 finishes in his last 10 starts but has just one Top 10 finish (2022 U.S. Open) in 22 career major championship starts.

## Stewart Hagestad (A) 1000/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 2/1

**Best Career Finish:** T-36th (2017)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Stewart Hagestad is making his third Masters appearance and his first since 2022. In his debut at Augusta National in 2017, he finished T-36 and became the first reigning U.S. Mid-Amateur champion to earn Low Amateur honors since Jay Sigel in 1988. Last year, he won the U.S. Mid-Amateur for the third time with a 3&2 victory over Evan Beck at Sleepy Hollow Country Club in New York. Hagestad, whose day job is as a financial analyst, has also been part of four consecutive Walker Cup (think Ryder Cup but for amateur players) winning teams.

## Brian Harman 55/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 5/2

**Best Career Finish:** T-12th (2021)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 1

Brian Harman is making his sixth Masters appearance, but his first one as a major champion having won The Open Championship at Royal Liverpool last summer by six strokes. That was Harman's first win since the Wells Fargo Championship in May 2017. Harman has yet to follow up on last summer's career triumph but did finish runner-up a few weeks ago at THE PLAYERS Championship. The left-hander is not a long hitter off the tee but is one of the more accurate ones in the game. As we saw last summer in Liverpool, Harman has an outstanding short game, and he is going to have to lean on the flat stick as he will be one of the shorter hitters in the field.

## Tyrrell Hatton 65/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 7/5

**Best Career Finish:** T-18th (2021)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 1

Tyrrell Hatton is making his eighth Masters appearance courtesy of qualifying for the Tour Championship at East Lake for the second time. In 2023, he finished runner-up at both THE PLAYERS Championship and BMW PGA Championship, flagship events on both the PGA TOUR and DP World Tour respectively. Nevertheless, he is no longer playing on either tour as he joined LIV Golf this past January. Hatton has played solidly in four LIV starts, but only one Top 10 finish thus far. He went 3-0-1 last fall for the victorious European Ryder Cup team and has seven worldwide victories including at the PGA TOUR's Arnold Palmer Invitational (2020) and six DP World Tour wins (most recently in 2021). He is certainly the type of player that can get it rolling at any time, but it can get rolling the other way as his temper can oftentimes get the best of him.

## Russell Henley 100/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 7/6

**Best Career Finish:** T-4th (2023)

**Top 5s:** 1

**Top 10s:** 1

**Top 20s:** 3

Russell Henley is making his eighth Masters appearance. Last year at Augusta National, he closed with three under-par rounds to finish T-4 and record his best finish in a major championship and earn this return appearance by finishing Top 12 or better. To begin 2024, Henley finished T-4 both in Honolulu in January and at the Arnold Palmer Invitational in Orlando in March. The four-time PGA TOUR winner last won back in November 2022 at Mayakoba. He is a consistent all-around player with a good short game, but mainly on Bermudagrass and Augusta National is pure Bentgrass. Henley is a player that should win a little bit more than he does. He should also have some confidence coming in from last year's career best finish at Augusta.

## Ryo Hisatsune 200/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

21-year-old Japanese budding star Ryo Hisatsune is making his first Masters appearance and his major championship debut. Last November, he became the first Japanese player to be named the DP World Tour's Sir Henry Cotton Rookie of the Year, joining a list of recipients that includes Nick Faldo, Sandy Lyle, José María Olazábal, Sergio Garcia, Brooks Koepka, and Jon Rahm. In 2023, he won the French Open and recorded additional Top 10 finishes in events in Oman, India, Kenya, Belgium, Denmark, California, Japan, South Africa, and Australia. He was one of 10 players to earn 2024 PGA TOUR membership through his performance on the DP World Tour last year.

## Lee Hodges 300/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Lee Hodges is making his first Masters appearance courtesy of his win last July at the 3M Open in Minnesota where he led wire-to-wire and won by seven strokes to earn his first career PGA TOUR victory. Hodges does not have a Top 10 finish anywhere (best T-12 at the Arnold Palmer Invitational) since that win in the Twin Cities. He made major championship debuts last year at the PGA Championship (T-55) and at the Open Championship (MC). Hodges began 2024 missing four of his first five cuts and has played better since but has not contended anywhere.

## Nicolai Højgaard 130/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Nicolai Højgaard is making his first Masters appearance courtesy of his ranking within the OWGR Top 50. The Dane was runner-up in San Diego and T-7 at Dubai in January. He earned his career milestone to date by winning the DP World Tour Championship in Dubai last November. Earlier in 2023, he recorded top-six finishes in Thailand, the Dominican Republic, Italy, Scotland, the Czech Republic, and Switzerland and was a member of the winning European Ryder Cup team. Both he and his twin brother Rasmus have multiple wins on the DP World Tour and in 2021, they won in consecutive weeks with Rasmus winning in Switzerland and Nicolai winning in Italy. At just 23 years of age, he has three DP World Tour victories.

## Max Homa 40/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 4/2

**Best Career Finish:** T-43rd (2023)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Max Homa is making his fifth Masters appearance courtesy of reaching the Tour Championship last fall. Thus far in 2024, he has four Top 20 finishes worldwide in 2024, including T-8 at the Arnold Palmer Invitational in Orlando in March. Homa started his 2023 by winning in San Diego and recording Top 3 finishes in Maui and Los Angeles and went on to close his PGA TOUR season with five consecutive Top 12 finishes, including T-10 in The Open, T-5 in Chicago and T-9 in the Tour Championship at East Lake. He ended 2023 winning the Nedbank Golf Challenge in South Africa on the DP World Tour. Homa has arguably been Team USA's best player over the last couple of years going 4-0-0 in the 2022 Presidents Cup in North Carolina and 3-1-1 in the 2023 Ryder Cup in Italy. He has six career PGA TOUR victories and currently ranks in the OWGR Top 10, but he just posted his first Top 10 in a major championship (17 career majors) with a T-10 at The Open last summer. Homa is not playing poorly but not nearly in as good of form as he was leading into last year's Masters.

## Viktor Hovland 20/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 4/4

**Best Career Finish:** T-7th (2023)

**Top 5s:** 1

**Top 10s:** 1

**Top 20s:** 1

Viktor Hovland is making his fifth Masters appearance. He earned Low Amateur honors in 2019 as Norway's first Masters participant and has yet to miss a cut at Augusta National. The Norwegian posted his best career finish at Augusta last year with a T-7. He won three times in 2023, with victories in the Memorial Tournament and consecutive FedEx playoff events in Chicago and Atlanta en route to winning the FedEx Cup. Also last year, he finished runner-up in the PGA Championship at Oak Hill, and recorded Top 20s in both the U.S. Open and The Open and went 3-1-1 for the winning European team in the Ryder Cup. Hovland has not been able to carry over his hot 2023 to the current year largely due to some recent swing changes plus his poor game around the green, which has always been his weakness. He only has one Top 20 finish in five starts to date in 2024. However, he has the game to win multiple major championships as his ball striking game (particularly off the tee) is still one of the world's best. If the price drifts upward a bit, he could be a buy-low player.

## Sungjae Im 65/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 4/3

**Best Career Finish:** T-2nd (2020)

**Top 5s:** 1

**Top 10s:** 2

**Top 20s:** 3

This time last year, South Korea's Sungjae Im was ranked in the OWGR Top 20. Now he is close to falling out of the Top 40. Im makes his fifth Masters appearance this year due to qualifying for the Tour Championship having been in the Top 30 in the FedEx Cup standings prior to the playoffs. He was runner-up in his Tournament debut in 2020 and has finished inside the Top 16 in three of his four starts at Augusta National. He has had some good showings, including a win in a rare appearance on the Korean Tour last spring and last October in the Asian Games in China, he won a team gold medal and an individual silver medal for South Korea, which exempted him from the mandatory military service required in South Korea. However, the two-time PGA TOUR winner has not won stateside since October 2021 largely due to poor approach shots.

## Stephan Jaeger 150/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Stephan Jaeger makes his debut appearance at the Masters this year. The German-born player earned the invitation by winning the Texas Children's Houston Open and holding off a chasing pack which included OWGR No. 1 Scottie Scheffler. Jaeger had been knocking at the door for his first PGA TOUR win for a little while now. He finished T-3 earlier this year both at the Farmers Insurance Open and at the Mexico Open. The 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour Player of the Year just reached the OWGR Top 50 for the first time in his career courtesy of his victory in Houston.

## Dustin Johnson 35/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 13/11

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2020)

**Top 5s:** 3

**Top 10s:** 5

**Top 20s:** 7

Dustin Johnson is making his 14th Masters appearance. Has Top 12 finishes in six of his past eight starts at Augusta National. In 2020, he set a new Masters Tournament record with his 20-under-par score of 268 to win by five strokes over Sungjae Im and Cameron Smith. The performance secured him his second major title to go with his victory in the 2016 U.S. Open at Oakmont Country Club. He was the pre-tournament favorite at the 2017 Masters before having to withdraw from the event due to a mysterious back injury. DJ was a Top 10 ranked player in the OWGR before he left for LIV Golf in 2022. He now ranks No. 316 since LIV is not officially recognized by the OWGR. While he has not been consistently at his peak, DJ has won at least once in each of the three seasons that LIV has been in existence including earlier this year in Las Vegas. He has been in the Top 10 in 13 of his 25 career LIV events, but it is still tough to get a gauge on DJ. The talent is still there, but the motivation is arguably not. Nonetheless, he must be considered a potential contender.

## Zach Johnson 1000/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 19/11

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2007)

**Top 5s:** 1

**Top 10s:** 2

**Top 20s:** 3

Zach Johnson is making his 20th Masters appearance. In 2007, he won in challenging weather at Augusta National with a score of one-over-par 289 that tied the Tournament record for highest winning total set by Sam Snead in 1954 and matched by Jack Burke Jr. in 1956. He played the par-five holes in 11 under and never attempted to reach the greens at hole Nos. 2, 8, 13 and 15 in two strokes that week. The 2015 Open champion is one of six to win majors at Augusta National and St Andrews, with Snead, Jack Nicklaus, Seve Ballesteros, Nick Faldo, and Tiger Woods. He was the losing Ryder Cup captain in Italy last fall. At 48 years of age, he still makes more cuts than he misses, but he has not won anywhere since hoisting the Claret Jug at St. Andrews in 2015 and has not been in contention to win any event since 2017 at the Bridgestone Invitational.

## Si-Woo Kim 130/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 7/6

**Best Career Finish:** T-12th (2021)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 1

Si Woo Kim is making his eighth Masters appearance. Has made the cut in each of the past six years at Augusta National, including Top 25s in 2018, 2019 and 2021. The four-time PGA TOUR winner earned his return appearance to Augusta by finishing Top 30 in the FedEx Cup points and reaching the Tour Championship. His highlight in 2024 is finishing T-6 at THE PLAYERS Championship in March plus recording Top 15 finishes in Pebble Beach and Phoenix in February. Last October in the Asian Games in China, he won a team gold medal for South Korea and earned an exemption for mandatory military service like his fellow compatriot Sungjae Im. Si Woo has been good tee-to-green thus far in the 2024 season but has ranked near the bottom of the putting stats and has lost strokes on the greens in 11 of his last 14 measured starts. The T-12 at the 2021 Masters is his best major championship finish.

## Tom Kim 80/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 1/1

**Best Career Finish:** T-16th (2023)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 1

Tom Kim is making his second Masters appearance. The 21-year-old South Korean was T-16 in 2023 in his debut at Augusta National. The good play continued in 2023 finishing T-8 in the U.S. Open at The Los Angeles Country Club, T-6 in the Scottish Open and runner-up in The Open at Royal Liverpool. In October, he earned his third career PGA TOUR win with a successful title defense in Las Vegas at the Shriners Children's Open. Tom Kim has also earned additional victories in India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Korea, and Singapore, plus was the star of the International Presidents Cup team in 2022. But 2024 has gotten off to a slow start with caddie changes and various injuries and ailments, one of which forced him to withdraw from THE PLAYERS Championship after playing just eight holes. He has been a bit of a mess off the tee and with the flat stick thus far this season. The talent is certainly prevalent, but he looks to be in a bit of a rut now.

## Chris Kirk 150/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 4/3

**Best Career Finish:** T-20th (2014)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 1

Chris Kirk is making his fifth Masters appearance. He finished T-23 last year in his first start at Augusta National since 2016. Kirk began 2024 by winning the PGA TOUR's season-opening event at The Sentry held in Maui back in January. After starting 2023 with consecutive third place finishes in Honolulu and La Quinta, he won the Honda Classic for his first PGA TOUR win in nearly eight years. Last November, the six-time PGA TOUR winner received the PGA TOUR Courage Award for overcoming alcoholism and mental health issues to first return to competition and then win again. Kirk has cooled a bit with just one Top 20 finish since his season-opening victory, losing strokes on approach in four of his last six starts and with the putter in five of his last six starts.

## Kurt Kitayama 100/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 1/0

**Best Career Finish:** MC (2023)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Kurt Kitayama is making his second Masters appearance. In last year's PGA Championship at Oak Hill, he shot a final-round 65 to finish T-4 and earn a return invitation to Augusta National. Thus far in 2024, he finished T-8 in Phoenix in February and T-19 at THE PLAYERS Championship in March. In 2023, he earned his first career PGA TOUR win at the Arnold Palmer Invitational in Orlando by holding off a who's who group of players including Rory McIlroy, Harris English, Scottie Scheffler, Patrick Cantlay, Jordan Spieth, and Tyrrell Hatton. In 2019, he made history when he earned his first two DP World Tour victories in a record 11 starts, winning in Mauritius in 2018 and Oman in 2019. Kitayama has struck the ball well thus far in 2024 but struggles with the short game have kept him from contending. He has missed the cut seven times in his 12 career major championship appearances.

## Jake Knapp 150/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Just two years ago, Jake Knapp was working as a nightclub bouncer for extra money to help support his professional golf career. Flash forward to now and he is a PGA TOUR winner having won the Mexico Open back in February to earn his first Masters appearance and his first ever major championship appearance. The 2024 PGA TOUR rookie also finished T-3 at San Diego in January and T-4 at Palm Beach Gardens in March, which has helped propel him into the OWGR Top 50. Last year, he earned his PGA TOUR card after finishing inside the Top 30 on the Korn Ferry Tour's season-long points list with 10 Top 10 finishes. Knapp also won three PGA TOUR Canada events in 2019-2022.



## Brooks Koepka 20/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 8/6

**Best Career Finish:** T-2nd (2019 & 2023)

**Top 5s:** 2

**Top 10s:** 3

**Top 20s:** 4

Brooks Koepka is making his ninth Masters appearance. He led for most of last year's Masters before finishing runner-up at Augusta National for the second time. Koepka has Top 12s in four of his past six Masters starts. Just one month after the runner-up finish at Augusta, he won the PGA Championship at Oak Hill by two strokes over Viktor Hovland and Scottie Scheffler for his third PGA Championship and fifth major championship victory. Koepka joined Gene Sarazen and Sam Snead as three-time PGA champions and Byron Nelson, Peter Thomson, and Seve Ballesteros as five-time major champions. He has not shown much early on in 2024 with just one Top 10 finish in four LIV events after winning the 2023 season finale in Jeddah. The 20/1 price looks a bit short with not a great deal of incoming form exactly jumping off the page, but it is Brooks Koepka in a major championship and bettors that want to back him always must pay the discount in majors — especially at Augusta National, where he has that extra motivation for perhaps letting one get away last year.

## Christo Lamprecht (A) 250/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Christo Lamprecht is making his first Masters appearance. He won The Amateur Championship last June with a 3&2 victory over Switzerland's Ronan Kleu at Hillside Golf Club in England to join a list of champions that includes Bobby Jones, Jose Maria Olazabal and Sergio Garcia. One month later, the 6-foot-8 South African shared the lead after the first round of The Open at Royal Liverpool and won the silver medal as Low Amateur. Also in 2023, the Georgia Tech senior became the top-ranked amateur in the world and competed in both the Arnold Palmer Cup and the Eisenhower Trophy.

## Min Woo Lee 50/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 2/1

**Best Career Finish:** T-14th (2022)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 1

Min Woo Lee is making his third Masters appearance. He finished T-14 in his debut at Augusta National in 2022 and his final-round 70 included a Tournament record-tying 30 on the first nine. Last month, he finished runner-up at the Cognizant Classic in Palm Beach Gardens to Austin Eckroat. Last June, he moved inside the Top 50 in the Official World Golf Ranking with a T-5 finish in the U.S. Open at The Los Angeles Country Club. He secured his place there with wins in the Macao Open and Australian PGA Championship and Top 15 finishes in England, Ireland, Japan, Dubai and the United States later in 2023. The 25-year-old Australian already has four worldwide wins. However, he is always aspiring to match his older sister, Minjee Lee, who is a two-time major champion.

## Luke List 180/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 2/1

**Best Career Finish:** T-33rd (2005)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Augusta, Georgia resident Luke List is making his third Masters appearance, his first since 2022. When he competed at Augusta National two years ago, it was his first Masters since his Tournament debut in 2005 when he made the cut as the 2004 U.S. Amateur runner-up. List's 2024 highlight is finishing runner-up at the Genesis Invitational in Los Angeles back in February. He earned his return appearance to Augusta with last October in Mississippi, he won a five-man playoff to earn his second career PGA TOUR win at the Sanderson Farms Championship, and first since his victory at the Farmers Insurance Open in San Diego back in January 2022. List is an excellent ball striker but can be a mess on the greens.

## Shane Lowry 40/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 8/5

**Best Career Finish:** T-3rd (2022)

**Top 5s:** 1

**Top 10s:** 1

**Top 20s:** 2

Shane Lowry is making his ninth Masters appearance. Has Top 25s in each of the past four years at Augusta National after missing the cut in three of his first four appearances. He had a very strong March finishing T-4 at the Cognizant Classic in Palm Beach Gardens and third at the Arnold Palmer Invitational in Orlando. Lowry also finished Top 20 at THE PLAYERS Championship and took a quick trip to Singapore where he finished T-29 but was on the first page of the leaderboard before a bad final few holes on the back nine. The 2019 Open champion at Royal Portrush has Top 4 finishes in all four majors. The Irishman ranks in the Top 10 for Strokes Gained: Approach over the last 24 rounds, but the putter can be shaky.

## Peter Malnati 250/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Peter Malnati is making his first Masters appearance and his fourth major championship start but seeking his first made cut in a major. He earned his spot in this year's Masters by winning in Tampa at the Valspar Championship back in March by two strokes over Cameron Young to earn his second career PGA TOUR win and first since his victory at the Sanderson Farms Championship in November 2015. Malnati was also T-9 in Palm Beach Gardens three weeks before winning and finished T-14 in the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am in February. He is not a very big hitter off the tee and often loses strokes to the field in that category. He won the Valspar by hitting greens and putting the lights out. Malnati is a great story but likely does not have the game off the tee to compete here.

## Hideki Matsuyama 40/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 12/11

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2021)

**Top 5s:** 2

**Top 10s:** 3

**Top 20s:** 8

Hideki Matsuyama is making his 13th Masters appearance. He has Top 20s in eight of the past nine years at Augusta National. When he won his Green Jacket in 2021, he became Japan's first male major champion and strengthened a connection to the Masters that already included two Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship victories in 2010 and 2011 and the Silver Cup as Low Amateur at Augusta National in 2011. He is one of seven Low Amateurs to go on to win the Masters with Cary Middlecoff, Jack Nicklaus, Ben Crenshaw, Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson and Sergio Garcia. Matsuyama has Top 6 finishes in all four majors, including runner-up in the 2017 U.S. Open at Erin Hills in Wisconsin. He shot a 62 for Sunday's final round in Los Angeles at the Genesis Invitational in February for his first victory in over two years and finished T-6 at THE PLAYERS Championship in March. Matsuyama is always on "team no putt" as he can really struggle with the flat stick but his approach game and especially his game around the greens has been top-notch over the last several months. He always seems to fly under the radar at Augusta, but perhaps no longer with his form and getting back in the winner's circle earlier this year.

## Denny McCarthy 100/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Denny McCarthy is making his first Masters appearance. McCarthy earned his invitation due to being a runner-up at the Memorial Tournament last year and six other Top 10 finishes which pushed him into the OWGR Top 50. He has 12 Top 10 finishes over the last two seasons, but the maiden PGA TOUR win still eludes him. McCarthy has made seven of eight cuts to begin 2024 but has yet to finish inside the Top 20. He is arguably one of the best, if not the best, putters in the game of golf regardless of the surface. However, he has been a mess off the tee and has lost strokes in nine of his last 12 measured events.

## Rory McIlroy 10/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 15/12

**Best Career Finish:** 2nd (2022)

**Top 5s:** 4

**Top 10s:** 7

**Top 20s:** 9

Since the 2015 Masters, we have been asking the same thing regarding Rory McIlroy. Is this the year that he completes the Career Grand Slam? It is hard to believe that McIlroy last won a major championship in the 2014 PGA Championship at Valhalla. It is not like his game has fallen off a cliff. Since his last major championship, McIlroy has 10 Top 5s and 20 Top 10s in majors from 2015-2023. That is finishing in the Top 10 in 20 of 26 total majors played in that span. While in that same span, McIlroy has won 20 times worldwide, but Rory knows that he will be judged by majors. As he makes his 16th Masters appearance, it certainly weighs on McIlroy that he is one Masters win away from joining Gene Sarazen, Ben Hogan, Gary Player, Jack Nicklaus, and Tiger Woods as winners of the career Grand Slam. He has top 10s in seven of the past 10 years at Augusta National, so he must be wondering when it is finally his turn. The weight of being the game of golf's conscience has certainly had to take its toll as well with the current divisions within the sport and he resigned from the PGA TOUR's policy board last November. As for on the course, McIlroy defended his title in the Dubai Desert Classic on the DP World Tour in January but has not finished near contention in any of his PGA TOUR events for 2024. Is this because of a problem with his game? Perhaps, but he is still arguably the best driver of the golf ball in the world. The approach shots certainly could be better, but it might be just a question of focus. Rory has joked about retirement if and when he finally completes the Grand Slam. Winning the elusive green jacket is his first, second, and third priority. He always has a chance, but he's also had the same chance for the last nine years.

## Adrian Meronk 200/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 1/0  
**Best Career Finish:** MC (2023)  
**Top 5s:** 0  
**Top 10s:** 0  
**Top 20s:** 0

Adrian Meronk is making his second Masters appearance. He made his Augusta National debut last year as Poland's first participant in the Tournament. This past January, he received the 2023 Seve Ballesteros Award as the DP World Tour's Player of the Year after winning events in Italy and Spain and recording top-five finishes in the United Arab Emirates, the Netherlands and Germany. Meronk's 2023 season propelled him into the OWGR Top 50. He has since fallen slightly out of those parameters even with a runner-up to McIlroy in Dubai to begin 2024. Meronk joined LIV Golf where he has posted two Top 10 finishes in four events. His game off-the-tee is certainly world class (ranking 3rd last year on the DP World Tour for Strokes Gained: Off-The-Tee), but he can be a bit shaky on the greens at times.

## Phil Mickelson 150/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 30/27  
**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2004, 2006, 2010)  
**Top 5s:** 12  
**Top 10s:** 16  
**Top 20s:** 18

In what was his 30th career appearance last year at Augusta National, Phil Mickelson showed that he still had some Augusta magic starting the day 10 shots off the lead and then proceeding to shoot 65 on Sunday to finish T-2, which set records for both the lowest round and highest finish by a player 50 and older in Masters history. The World Golf Hall of Fame member is one of eight to win at least three Masters and one of three with Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods to finish inside the top five at least 12 times at Augusta National. In May 2021, at the age of 50, Mickelson won the PGA Championship at Kiawah Island in South Carolina to become the oldest player to win a major. While he is not too far removed from success in major championships, it seems like father time might be starting to catch up with Phil. Mickelson has just two Top 10s in 17 LIV events in 2023-24 and has finished below 40th (in mostly 48-player fields) in seven of those 17 events. As polarizing of a figure as he has become in the game, even his biggest critics must acknowledge that Phil is one of the game's all-time great players. Because it is Phil at Augusta, he will receive some action at the betting window and this may be the only place where he is potentially worth a pizza money wager, but he is two months away from turning 54. Can he turn back the clock one more time?

## Taylor Moore 180/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 1/1  
**Best Career Finish:** T-39th (2023)  
**Top 5s:** 0  
**Top 10s:** 0  
**Top 20s:** 0

Taylor Moore is making his second Masters appearance. He made his major championship debut at Augusta National last year and finished T-39. Just three weeks before said debut, he earned his first career PGA TOUR win at the Valspar Championship in Tampa. Moore's Valspar victory plus two other Top 10 finishes in his 2023 rookie season got him into the Tour Championship, which earned him a return invitation to Augusta. Moore has made all nine cuts this season and has made 14 in a row, but finally posted a Top 10 finish with a runner-up in Houston last weekend.

## Collin Morikawa 35/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 4/4  
**Best Career Finish:** 5th (2022)  
**Top 5s:** 1  
**Top 10s:** 2  
**Top 20s:** 3

Collin Morikawa is making his fifth Masters appearance. He has made the cut in each of his four appearances at Augusta National, including Top 10 finishes in 2022 and 2023. Last year, the 2020 PGA and 2021 Open champion won in Japan for his sixth career PGA TOUR victory and recorded runner-up finishes in Maui and Detroit. His win at the ZOZO Championship in Japan broke an over 27-month winless drought. After opening the season with a Top 5 in Maui, Morikawa has not done much of note in 2024 largely due to poor putting where he has lost strokes in six of his last eight measured events. He is one of the best iron players in the world and learned how to play his preferred fade shot off the tee here last year, but recent form has drifted his price upwards.

## Grayson Murray 250/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Grayson Murray is making his first Masters appearance and his fourth major championship start (best: 2017 PGA – T-22nd). Murray earned his Masters invitation in Honolulu this January winning the Sony Open in a playoff over Keegan Bradley and Byeong Hun An and making a 39-foot birdie on the first extra hole. That was Murray's first PGA TOUR victory since July 2017 at the Barbasol Championship. Last year, he earned back his PGA TOUR card after finishing inside the Top 30 on the Korn Ferry Tour's season-long points list to go along with two victories. Murray's strength of his game is off the tee where he rates Top 5 on the PGA TOUR in total driving. Outside of the victory in Hawaii, he has not done much of note in 2024 and does not have much major championship experience.

## Joaquin Niemann 22/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 4/3

**Best Career Finish:** T-16th (2023)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 1

Joaquin Niemann is making his fifth Masters appearance. He finished T-16 last year for his best finish at Augusta National and his best major-championship performance. The man from Chile made his Masters debut in 2018 as both the reigning Latin America Amateur champion and the top-ranked amateur in the world. Niemann is in the Masters via a special invitation sent by the Augusta National Golf Club as he was not eligible under any of the set criteria. He finished T-4 in Dubai on the DP World Tour in January and third in Oman in an International Series event on the Asian Tour in February. Late last year, he finished fifth in the Australian PGA Championship and then won the Australian Open. Niemann has continued his winning ways in 2024 with two victories in the first four LIV events having defeated his mentor Sergio Garcia in a playoff at Mayakoba down in Mexico and then winning one month later in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He has won three times in less than five months which has slashed his price. After winning that playoff in Mayakoba, Niemann mentioned that he was not in any of the majors and still is not, so he has a high urgency to perform.

## José María Olazábal 5000/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 34/19

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (1994, 1999)

**Top 5s:** 5

**Top 10s:** 8

**Top 20s:** 13

José María Olazábal is making his 35th Masters appearance. He is celebrating multiple Masters anniversaries this year. Forty years ago in 1984, he won The Amateur Championship at Formby in England to earn his first invitation. Thirty years ago in 1994, he won his first Green Jacket with a two-stroke victory over Tom Lehman. And 25 years ago in 1999, he defeated Davis Love III by two strokes to join his hero, friend, and fellow Spaniard Seve Ballesteros as a two-time champion. The Spanish legacy at the Masters continued last year as Olazábal was greenside to congratulate Jon Rahm on earning his first green jacket. He is the longest shot in the field and has only made the weekend once in his last eight trips to Augusta.

## Thorbjørn Olesen 150/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 3/3

**Best Career Finish:** T-6th (2013)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 1

**Top 20s:** 1

Thorbjørn Olesen is making his fourth Masters appearance, his first since 2019. The man from Denmark has made the cut in each of his previous three starts at Augusta National and finished T-6 in his debut in 2013. On that debut, Olesen shot 78 in his opening round and then finished with rounds of 70-68-68 to get into the Top 10. Olesen won the DP World Tour's Ras Al Khaimah Championship in the United Arab Emirates in February. In 2023, he won the Thailand Classic and recorded additional top-10 finishes in events in the United Arab Emirates, India, Belgium, France, Spain, Qatar, and South Africa. The Dane was one of 10 players to earn 2024 PGA TOUR membership through his performance on the DP World Tour in 2023. Like Ryo Hisatsune and Joaquin Niemann, Olesen is in the field via a special invitation extended to him by the Augusta National Golf Club.

## Matthieu Pavon 180/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Frenchman Matthieu Pavon is making his first Masters appearance. Pavon is in this field by winning in San Diego at the Farmers Insurance Open back in January to earn his first career PGA TOUR win. He also finished third in the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am the following week. Pavon has continued that hot form finishing fifth at a DP World Tour event in Singapore in March. In October and November 2023, he won the Spanish Open for his first career DP World Tour win, recorded top 15s in events in St Andrews, Spain and South Africa and birdied his last four holes in the DP World Tour Championship in Dubai to finish T-5 and earn one of 10 PGA Tour cards for the 2024 season. Two weeks before winning in San Diego, he finished T-7 in Honolulu in his first start as a PGA TOUR member. Pavon ranks Top 10 on the PGA TOUR for both Proximity to the Hole and Strokes Gained: Putting. This will be only the fifth career major championship in which Pavon has participated, but the form dating back to last fall is hard to ignore.

## J.T. Poston 150/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 2/1

**Best Career Finish:** T-34th (2023)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

J.T. Poston is making his third Masters appearance. Poston had eight Top 12 finishes on the PGA TOUR last year, including runner-up in Minnesota, T-3 in Las Vegas, T-6 in Illinois and Scotland in consecutive weeks and T-7 in Greensboro in the second half of 2023. He also made the cut in three of the four major championships last year, which helped lock him into the OWGR Top 50 for the return invitation. Poston has recorded Top 12 finishes in Maui, Honolulu, La Quinta, and Los Angeles to start 2024. He is a two-time PGA TOUR winner (2022 John Deere Classic, 2019 Wyndham Championship). "The Postman" is a solid ball striker and steady putter, but his T-34 here last year is his best career major championship finish.

## Jon Rahm 12/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 7/7

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2023)

**Top 5s:** 3

**Top 10s:** 5

**Top 20s:** 5

Jon Rahm is making his eighth Masters appearance. He is the defending champion winning the 2023 Masters by four strokes over Brooks Koepka and Phil Mickelson for his second major championship victory (2021 U.S. Open). "Rahmbo" joined Seve Ballesteros, Jose Maria Olazabal and Sergio Garcia as Spaniards to win the Green Jacket. The win carried even more special significance for Rahm as he won 40 years after Ballesteros won his second Masters on what would have been Seve's 66th birthday. Rahm was also the first champion since Sam Snead in 1952 to start his first round with a double bogey and then go on to win. In December, Rahm joined LIV Golf where he reportedly received \$500 million to leave the PGA TOUR. As the still OWGR No. 3 player in the world, Rahm is the clear best player in LIV Golf, and he is the betting favorite on that tour at every single event. However, he is 0-for-4 thus far this season for victories. On the other hand, he is not playing poorly and has finished 8th or better in each of those four events. At just 29 years old, he is still well into his playing prime and is a justified shorter price to defend his Masters title.

## Patrick Reed 80/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 10/8

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2018)

**Top 5s:** 2

**Top 10s:** 4

**Top 20s:** 4

Patrick Reed is making his 11th Masters appearance. He finished T-4 last year for his fourth top 10 in the past six years at Augusta National. Reed won the 2018 Masters by one stroke over Rickie Fowler and by two over Jordan Spieth. That year, he led after the second and third rounds and won with a score of 15-under-par 273. Reed joined LIV Golf back in 2022. While he has seven Top 5 finishes (none for 2024), he has yet to win on that circuit. In fact, Reed's last win came in January 2021 at the Farmers Insurance Open. He frequently plays the Asian Tour International Series events to earn OWGR points and was 4th in Macao earlier this year. The short game is still Reed's strength in his overall golf game.

## Justin Rose 80/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 18/16

**Best Career Finish:** 2nd (2017), T-2nd (2015)

**Top 5s:** 3

**Top 10s:** 6

**Top 20s:** 11

Justin Rose is making his 19th Masters appearance. He is twice the runner-up here and has Top 25 finishes in 14 of his 18 starts at Augusta National, including 11 of the past 13 years. His best finish of 2024 is a T-11 at the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am in February in defense of his 2023 victory there. Rose ended a four-year winless drought last season and his strong comeback in 2023 got him into the OWGR Top 50 to earn a return to Augusta this year. The 2013 U.S. Open champion and 2016 Olympic gold medalist no longer has the luxury of those feats giving him exemptions into major championships, so he must maintain that world ranking or win again. The 43-year-old has not come close in 2024 due to abysmal ball striking both off the tee and on approach.

## Xander Schauffele 22/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 5/4

**Best Career Finish:** T-2nd (2019)

**Top 5s:** 2

**Top 10s:** 2

**Top 20s:** 3

Xander Schauffele is making his seventh Masters appearance. He has Top 10s in three of the past five years at Augusta National, including runner-up and one back of Tiger Woods in 2019 and T-3 and three back of Hideki Matsuyama in 2021. Schauffele already has five Top 10 finishes worldwide in 2024, including runner-up in The PLAYERS Championship, where he was the 54-hole leader, in March, and T-4 at the Genesis Invitational in February. The 2021 Olympic gold medalist is still seeking his first major championship victory. In 26 career major championship starts, he has six Top 5s, 11 Top 10s and 19 Top 20 finishes, including runner-up performances in the 2018 Open and 2019 Masters. However, for a player of his caliber and talent, it does not seem like he challenges on the big stage enough. His ball-striking, especially off the tee, is exceptional and he does not really have any weaknesses in his game. While he has seven career PGA TOUR wins by the age of 30, Schauffele really should have more. In fact, he has not won since July 2022 at the Scottish Open. It is fair to consider Schauffele an elite talent, but not yet an elite player until he can finally get it done and close one out on the major championship stage.

## Scottie Scheffler 4/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 3/3

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2022)

**Top 5s:** 1

**Top 10s:** 2

**Top 20s:** 4

World No. 1 Scottie Scheffler is making his fifth Masters appearance. Sometimes the OWGR can be deceiving, but it tells no lies with Scheffler as he is the clear-cut top player in the game today. He won the 2022 Masters by three strokes over Rory McIlroy and, like fellow Texas Longhorn Jordan Spieth in 2015, turned a 36-hole, five-stroke lead into victory. Scheffler has finished inside the Top 20 in each of his four starts at Augusta National. He already has consecutive wins in 2024 at the Arnold Palmer Invitational and THE PLAYERS Championship where he became the first player in history to win THE PLAYERS in back-to-back years. In addition, Scheffler has six Top 10 finishes worldwide in 2024, and his worst finish this season was a T-17 at The American Express. He has made 33 consecutive cuts dating back to August 2022. Scheffler has won the PGA TOUR Player of the Year Award in back-to-back years. His current form line tells most of the story, but not the full story. Here are the statistical categories where Scheffler leads the PGA TOUR:

- # 1 Strokes Gained: Total
- # 1 Strokes Gained: Tee-To-Green
- # 1 Strokes Gained: Off-The-Tee
- # 1 Strokes Gained: Approach
- # 1 Greens In Regulation Percentage
- #1 Approach Shots 50-125 Yards
- # 1 Approach Shots 100-125 Yards
- # 1 Approach Shots 150-175 Yards
- # 1 Scoring Average
- #1 Birdie Average
- #1 Birdie Or Better Percentage
- # 1 Bogey Avoidance
- # 1 Round 2 Scoring Average
- # 1 Round 4 Scoring Average
- # 1 Par 4 Scoring Average
- # 1 Par 5 Scoring Average
- # 1 Official Money List
- # 1 FedEx Cup Point Standings

We must stop here because there are more, but you get the idea. It is tough to take these short prices to win major championships, but it is just as tough or even tougher to bet against this guy right now. Either someone must play the tournament of his life, or Scheffler must play mediocre and perhaps his lone weakness, putting (ranked 101st on the PGA TOUR) must be poor. The flatstick has cost him in several events over the last couple of years, most recently at the Houston Open where he missed just over a 5-footer on the 72nd hole to reach a playoff. Nevertheless, Scheffler is the clear favorite to win a second green jacket.

## Adam Schenk 250/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Adam Schenk is making his first Masters appearance. He has three Top 25 finishes worldwide in 2024, including T-17 in Phoenix in February and T-19 in THE PLAYERS Championship in March. Schenk earned his first Masters invitation by qualifying for his first Tour Championship at East Lake in 2023 on the strength of six Top 10s on the PGA Tour last season. Last season included two runner-up finishes at the Valspar Championship in Tampa and at the Charles Schwab Challenge in Fort Worth. In addition, Schenk posted other high finishes including a T-4 at the John Deere Classic, T-6 at the FedEx St. Jude in Memphis, seventh at the Rocket Mortgage Classic in Detroit and T-7 in the Memorial Tournament. Schenk missed the cut in the three majors in which he played last season. He has not been able to duplicate his great form of 2023 due to poor play with the irons as he has lost strokes on approach in six of his last eight events.

## Charl Schwartzel 250/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 14/10

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2011)

**Top 5s:** 2

**Top 10s:** 3

**Top 20s:** 3

Charl Schwartzel is making his 15th Masters appearance. In 2011 at Augusta National, he was four strokes off the lead entering the final round and closed with second-nine birdies at hole Nos. 15, 16, 17 and 18 to win by two over Jason Day and Adam Scott. He won the 75th Masters Tournament 50 years after fellow South African Gary Player became the first international champion in 1961. He is one of three South Africans to win the Green Jacket, with three-time champion Player and 2008 champion Trevor Immelman. Schwartzel's last victory was in June 2022 at the first LIV Golf event held in London. He finished co-runner up in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia earlier this year, but typically Schwartzel finishes about middle of the pack most weeks on LIV.

## Adam Scott 80/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 22/20

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2013)

**Top 5s:** 2

**Top 10s:** 5

**Top 20s:** 8

Adam Scott is making his 23rd Masters appearance. In 2013, he made birdie on the second playoff hole at No. 10 in the late-afternoon rain at Augusta National to defeat Angel Cabrera and earn Australia's first Green Jacket. Scott has made the cut in 20 of his 22 Masters starts, including each of the past 14 years. In the last four months of 2023, he recorded top-seven finishes in Bermuda, both the Australian PGA Championship and Australian Open and the DP World Tour's flagship event, the BMW Championship, in England. To start 2024, he finished T-7 at Dubai in January and T-8 at Phoenix in February. At age 43, Scott is still playing good, solid golf, but he has not won in over four years (2020 Genesis Invitational). His putting was once his weakness and it is arguably his strength now, plus he still has one of the best golf swings in the game. Because of those factors, it seems like he still has a win or two left in him somewhere even on the back nine of his career.

## Neal Shipley (A) 1000/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Neal Shipley is making his first Masters appearance. He received this invitation by reaching the final of the 2023 U.S. Amateur at Cherry Hills Country Club in Colorado before finishing runner-up to Nick Dunlap. The graduate student at Ohio State University started 2024 by winning the Southwestern Invitational in California for his first collegiate victory and last summer, he finished second in the Dogwood Invitational, Sunnehanna Amateur and Trans-Mississippi Amateur. Shipley played three seasons at James Madison University in Virginia, completing in just three years a quantitative finance degree as well as minors in math and economics. He seemed destined for a career on Wall Street but entered the transfer portal (it's not just for football and basketball) and is finishing his college career in Columbus.

## Vijay Singh 2500/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 30/19

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2000)

**Top 5s:** 2

**Top 10s:** 6

**Top 20s:** 10

Vijay Singh is making his 31st Masters appearance. He won the 2000 Masters by three strokes over Ernie Els for the first of his six top-eight finishes in a seven-year stretch at Augusta National. The World Golf Hall of Fame member won 34 times in his career on the PGA TOUR, including the 1998 PGA Championship at Sahalee Country Club near Seattle, Washington, and the 2004 PGA Championship at Whistling Straits in Wisconsin. Late last summer, at age 60, Singh won his fifth career PGA TOUR Champions event, his first in five years, at the Ally Challenge, which was held at Warwick Hills Golf & Country Club in Grand Blanc, Michigan, where he won the Buick Open three times as a member of the PGA TOUR. He still plays a decent amount on PGA TOUR Champions but has not made a cut at the Masters since 2018.

## Cameron Smith 28/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 7/7

**Best Career Finish:** T-2nd (2020)

**Top 5s:** 3

**Top 10s:** 4

**Top 20s:** 4

Australian Cameron Smith is making his eighth Masters appearance. He has Top 10s in four of the past six years at Augusta National, including a runner-up finish in 2020 when he became the first in Masters history to record four rounds in the 60s in a single Tournament. In 2022, he played with Scottie Scheffler in the final pairing on Sunday before finishing T-3. Last year, he finished T-9 in the PGA Championship at Oak Hill and fourth in the U.S. Open at The Los Angeles Country Club. In 2022, he won both The 150th Open at St Andrews and THE PLAYERS Championship at TPC Sawgrass. After the win at St. Andrews, he elected to move to LIV Golf, where he has won three times in the last two seasons. Smith was the runner-up in early March at LIV Hong Kong. He is a wizard with his short game and currently leads LIV Golf in putting. That short game can often overcome the fact that he can hit it all over the place off the tee.

## Jordan Spieth 20/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 10/9

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2015)

**Top 5s:** 6

**Top 10s:** 6

**Top 20s:** 7

Jordan Spieth is making his 11th Masters appearance. He has top-four finishes in six of his 10 starts at Augusta National. In 2015, he won the Masters by four strokes over Phil Mickelson and Justin Rose in wire-to-wire fashion with a then-record-tying score of 18-under-par 270. Spieth joined Tiger Woods as the only champions to win their Green Jacket at 21. He would go on to win the U.S. Open at Chambers Bay in 2015 and The Open at Royal Birkdale in 2017. It has been almost two years since Spieth last tallied a victory (2022 RBC Heritage). Spieth, like many of his rounds, has a lot of ups and downs and high variance. For instance, just look at the early part of the 2024 season. He finished third at Maui in January and T-6 at Phoenix in February to start the season. He also signed an incorrect scorecard at the Genesis Invitational that got him DQ'd. Then, he missed the cut at both THE PLAYERS and at the Valspar. Spieth is still solid with the putter but has been bad with his approach shots thus far this season. Nevertheless, his record at Augusta speaks for itself and it would be foolish to dismiss his chances.

## Sepp Straka 150/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 2/2

**Best Career Finish:** T-30th (2022)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Austrian Sepp Straka is making his third Masters appearance. He qualified for the return invitation by winning the John Deere Classic last summer for his second career PGA TOUR victory and finished runner-up in The Open at Royal Liverpool. Those performances also earned him a spot on the winning European Ryder Cup side. He finished T-12 at Maui in January and T-16 at THE PLAYERS in March but has missed four of eight cuts in 2024. Straka is not near his form of the late summer and that he carried into the fall finishing off 2023 with a runner-up to Scottie Scheffler at the Hero World Challenge. Nothing in his game is firing right now and his performance around the greens has been the real lowlight thus far in 2024.



## Jasper Stubbs (A) 1000/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 0/0

**Best Career Finish:** Debutant

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Jasper Stubbs is making his first Masters appearance. The Australian won the Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship at The Royal Melbourne Golf Club in his native Australia last October in a playoff over 2022 U.S. Junior Amateur champion Wenyi Ding and 2023 U.S. Amateur Four-Ball co-champion Sampson Zheng. That victory earned himself invitations to the Masters and The Open in 2024 and became the fourth Australian winner of that championship, joining Antonio Murdaca, Curtis Luck and Harrison Crowe. Also last year, the 2022 New Zealand Amateur champion reached the Round of 32 in The Amateur Championship in England and earned low amateur honors in the Australian Open with a T-21 finish.

## Nick Taylor 130/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 1/1

**Best Career Finish:** T-29th (2020)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Nick Taylor is making his second Masters appearance, and his first since 2020. Taylor won the Waste Management Phoenix Open in a playoff back in February and has also recorded Top 12 finishes in Honolulu and at the Arnold Palmer Invitational in Orlando earlier this year. He already had his invitation locked up from last June when he holed a 72-foot eagle putt to win the Canadian Open in a playoff over Tommy Fleetwood and become the first Canadian to win his national open since Pat Fletcher in 1954. Taylor is now a four-time winner on the PGA TOUR, but it took him a while to start reaching his potential. He was once the recipient of the Mark H. McCormack Medal as the top-ranked amateur in the world. Taylor is obviously a terrific putter as shown by his clutch performances in playoffs for his last two victories. He has also been very good with the irons as of late which has helped propel him to a Top 25 ranking in the OWGR.

## Sahith Theegala 55/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 1/1

**Best Career Finish:** 9th (2023)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 1

**Top 20s:** 1

Sahith Theegala is making his second Masters appearance. Last April at Augusta National, he made seven birdies in his final-round 67 to finish ninth in his Masters debut. He has four Top 10 finishes worldwide in 2024, including runner-up at The Sentry in Maui back in January and T-6 in the Arnold Palmer Invitational and T-9 in THE PLAYERS Championship in consecutive weeks in March. Last September, he earned an emotional first career PGA TOUR win at the Fortinet Championship held in Napa, California. Theegala can spray it off the tee a little, but he is one of the best scorers (4th on the PGA TOUR for Strokes Gained: Total) and putters (7th on the PGA TOUR for Strokes Gained: Putting) in the game right now. He seemed to really take to Augusta on debut last year and should be a consistent contender here for years to come.

## Justin Thomas 25/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 8/7

**Best Career Finish:** 4th (2020)

**Top 5s:** 1

**Top 10s:** 2

**Top 20s:** 4

Justin Thomas is making his ninth Masters appearance. He has Top 25s in six of the past seven years at Augusta National, finishing fourth in 2020 and T-8 in 2022. Thomas is a two-time PGA champion, winning in 2017 at Quail Hollow in North Carolina and in 2022 at Southern Hills in Oklahoma, which is his last victory anywhere. Last year was JT's first missed cut at Augusta. He missed the cut in three of four major championships in 2023 and finished just T-65 in his PGA Championship defense. Last season was miserable for Thomas, but he has started to show signs of life as he has four Top 12 finishes worldwide in La Quinta, Pebble Beach, Phoenix, and Orlando this year. He ended 2023 and began 2024 with four finishes of 6th or better. His game looks about halfway there as his approach game, which is typically world class, is back to that standard, and he has been tidy as usual with his scrambling. The driver and the putter are still works in progress, but Thomas looks better than he did most of last season.

## Erik van Rooyen 200/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 2/0

**Best Career Finish:** MC (2022)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 0

Erik van Rooyen is making his third Masters appearance, his first since 2022. The South African earned a return appearance to Augusta National having won the World Wide Technology Championship last November in Mexico. He dedicated his victory in Mexico to his close friend and University of Minnesota teammate Jon Trasamar who was battling stage 4 cancer. Trasamar passed away on November 11 just six days after van Rooyen's win. He shot 28 on the back nine in Sunday's final round to claim his second PGA TOUR title to go along with career victories on the DP World Tour, Sunshine Tour, and European Challenge Tour. This year, he finished runner-up at the Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beach Gardens in March and T-8 in the Mexico Open in February. EVR ranks Top 25 on the PGA TOUR for Putting Average, Total Strokes Gained, and Greens In Regulation Percentage. However, he has not made the cut in any major championship since the 2020 U.S. Open.

## Camilo Villegas 200/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 6/3

**Best Career Finish:** T-13th (2009)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 1

Camilo Villegas is making his seventh Masters appearance, and his first since 2015. It is also his first start in a major championship since 2015. In consecutive weeks back in November, he finished runner-up to Erik van Rooyen in Mexico (his best finish on the PGA TOUR in seven years) and then won in Bermuda for his fifth career PGA TOUR win and first since 2014. In between those victories, he and his wife Maria mourned the loss of their 22-month-old daughter Mia to cancer in July 2020. The Colombian had a resurgence late in 2023 but has struggled in 2024 by missing four of seven cuts and withdrawing from his last start at the Valspar Championship.

## Bubba Watson 180/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 15/13

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2012, 2014)

**Top 5s:** 3

**Top 10s:** 3

**Top 20s:** 5

Bubba Watson is making his 16th Masters appearance. He is one of just 17 to have won the Masters more than once. In 2012, he defeated Louis Oosthuizen with the help of a spectacular 52-degree wedge shot from the trees on the second playoff hole on No. 10. Two years later in 2014, he won his second Masters by three strokes over Tournament rookies Jonas Blixt and Jordan Spieth. He also finished T-5 in 2018 and has made the cut in 13 of his 15 starts at Augusta National. He is one of five left-handed major champions, with Bob Charles, Mike Weir, Phil Mickelson, and Brian Harman. Watson joined LIV Golf in the summer of 2022 while he was recovering from a torn meniscus. He returned to playing competition in February 2023. However, in 17 starts, Watson only has one Top 10 finish.

## Mike Weir 2500/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 24/12

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2003)

**Top 5s:** 2

**Top 10s:** 2

**Top 20s:** 5

Mike Weir is making his 25th Masters appearance. In 2003, he defeated Len Mattiace in a playoff to become Canada's first male major champion. He also became the second left-handed major champion and first since New Zealand's Bob Charles won The Open in 1963. He led the field in scrambling that week, successfully getting up and down from off Augusta National's greens 26 of 34 times. Counting his Masters victory, Weir won eight times on the PGA TOUR and has a win on PGA TOUR Champions, where he still plays a semi-regular schedule. Later this year, he will captain the International Presidents Cup team at Royal Montreal Golf Club in Canada.

## Danny Willett 250/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 9/4

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (2016)

**Top 5s:** 1

**Top 10s:** 1

**Top 20s:** 2

Danny Willett is making his 10th Masters appearance. In 2016, he shot a final-round 67 at Augusta National to turn a three-stroke deficit into a three-stroke victory over defending champion Jordan Spieth and Lee Westwood. He became England's first Masters champion since Nick Faldo won his third Green Jacket in 1996. The former top-ranked amateur in the world has won eight times on the DP World Tour including the BMW Championship, the DP World Tour's flagship event in England and its season-ending Tour Championship in Dubai. Willett had shoulder surgery in September, and this is the first time he has teed it up in over seven months.

## Gary Woodland 250/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 11/6

**Best Career Finish:** T-14th (2023)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 0

**Top 20s:** 1

Gary Woodland is making his 12th Masters appearance. In 2023, he opened with 68 for his lowest round at Augusta National and went on to finish T-14 to record his best performance in the Masters. He recorded additional top 25s in Los Angeles, Charlotte, Scotland, and the Memorial Tournament last year. Woodland won the 2019 U.S. Open at Pebble Beach by three strokes over two-time defending champion Brooks Koepka. In September, he underwent surgery to remove a brain lesion and returned to competitive golf four months later. Woodland has missed five of eight cuts in 2024. His T-21 last week in Houston was his best finish anywhere in nearly a calendar year.

## Tiger Woods 130/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 25/24

**Best Career Finish:** 1st (1997, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2019)

**Top 5s:** 12

**Top 10s:** 14

**Top 20s:** 17

Tiger Woods is making his 26th Masters appearance. In 2023, the five-time champion and 1995 Low Amateur made more history at Augusta National when he tied Gary Player and Fred Couples for most consecutive Tournament cuts made with 23. He is one of three with at least four Masters wins with Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer. Since rewriting the history books with his 12-stroke victory in the 1997 Masters, the World Golf Hall of Fame member has gone on to earn 15 major championship titles and 82 PGA Tour wins. Last year, Tiger had to withdraw after making the cut on the number. He also withdrew from the Genesis Invitational, which he and his Tiger Woods Foundation hosted, back in February. Tiger has only completed four rounds in an event twice in the last two years. Tiger's contributions to the game have been more off the course of late as one of the six players on the PGA TOUR Board of Directors and has been at the forefront of its business endeavors as they pertain to discussions with investors both here and abroad. It is almost impossible to determine how Tiger is going to play this year at Augusta National, but he will always see some casual betting action.

## Cameron Young 40/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 2/1

**Best Career Finish:** T-7th (2023)

**Top 5s:** 0

**Top 10s:** 1

**Top 20s:** 1

Cameron Young is making his third Masters appearance. Two weeks after finishing runner-up to Sam Burns in the Match Play in Austin, he finished T-7 at Augusta National to record his third Top 10 in a major championship to go with his T-3 in the PGA Championship at Southern Hills and runner-up in The 150th Open at St Andrews in 2022. Young has three Top 10 finishes worldwide in 2024, including a runner-up at the Valspar Championship in March, third in Dubai in January and T-4 at the Cognizant Classic in March. Last July, he finished T-8 in The Open at Royal Liverpool for his fourth top 10 in a major. Young was named the 2022 PGA TOUR Rookie of the Year after finishing inside the top three seven times that season. The form sheet shows a world-class player, but something is missing, and that's a win. Young has already finished runner-up seven times on the PGA TOUR and is still seeking his maiden victory. He is one of the best ball strikers in the game and it is only a matter of time before he can put it all together and finish one off. Young is ranked Top 15 in the OWGR, but it is time to start winning like a Top 15 player should.

## Will Zalatoris 28/1

**Total Appearances/Cuts Made:** 2/2

**Best Career Finish:** 2nd (2021)

**Top 5s:** 1

**Top 10s:** 2

**Top 20s:** 2

Will Zalatoris is making his third Masters appearance. In his first two starts at Augusta National, he finished runner-up and one stroke behind Hideki Matsuyama in 2021 and T-6 in 2022. He has six Top 8 finishes in major championships, including runner-up in both the PGA Championship and U.S. Open in 2022. After withdrawing prior to starting last year's Masters, he underwent back surgery and missed the rest of the PGA TOUR season. Following his return to competition, he finished runner-up at the Genesis Invitational in Los Angeles back in February and T-4 at the Arnold Palmer Invitational in Orlando back in March. Zalatoris looked like he was peaking to earn his second PGA TOUR victory but then missed the cut at THE PLAYERS and finished T-74 in Houston. He adapted to a broomstick-style putter in the offseason and if you examine the form, it has mixed results as he has been a horror show on the greens in his last two events. He looks like he is back health wise and his ball striking has returned to its high standard, and he has proven to already have the game to contend here in just two starts, but the putting has to be better on these slick, Augusta greens.

# MASTERS 2024

## STOCK UP, STOCK DOWN

By Matt Brown

The Masters is on the horizon and as we approach the year's first major, we want to highlight some players who are coming into April in great form...and some that maybe aren't. This doesn't necessarily mean that these players are an automatic bet, or an automatic fade. But we can take what we've seen so far and perhaps use that information to help form our player pool.

### STOCK UP

#### Scottie Scheffler

I'm not breaking any news here by saying Scottie Scheffler is really good at golf. He's finished outside of the top 20 just three times since September of 2022, while finishing inside the top 10 in seven of eight tournaments in 2024. But you might be wondering if you can honestly justify pulling the trigger on any golfer at +400 odds. While I probably won't (and I'll probably regret it), there is a case to be made for trying to find some kind of exposure to Scheffler. On the season, he's #1 on tour in Scoring Average, Birdie Average, Strokes Gained (SG): Total, SG: Tee-to-Green, SG: Approach, Bogey Avoidance, and Greens in Regulation. He's 4th in SG: Around-the-Green and 10th in Scrambling. Oh yeah, and it seems he learned how to putt. We don't always have to play outright, so whether it's H2Hs, placement markets, or even DFS lineups, it would be wise to have Scottie as part of your portfolio.

#### Joaquin Niemann

Since getting cut at last year's Open Championship, Niemann has been on quite the heater. He's won twice on the LIV Tour, captured another win on the Euro Tour, and has a 3rd, a 5th, and a couple of T-4s just since November. The youngster was T-16 at last year's Masters despite losing nearly three strokes to the field on approach. It's always a bit of a leap of faith betting on the LIV players. We don't have near as much data as we have with the PGA Tour. The fields are definitely weaker than the good PGA events. And with the difficulty in watching the events, we haven't seen much of these guys play the last couple of years. But the results speak for themselves with Niemann, who was on the cusp of breaking out on the PGA Tour before he bolted for LIV.

#### Hideki Matsuyama

The former Masters champion has heated up at the right time. After a 'meh' start to 2024, 'Deki started to put things together in February at the WM Phoenix Open where he cobbled together a T-22 finish despite losing off-the-tee and on approach. Then he hopped over to California and won the Genesis Invitational over a stacked field. He took a couple weeks off and then grabbed a T-12 at the Arnold Palmer, gaining three strokes on the field with his patented approach game. The very next week, Matsuyama finished T-6 at The Players, where he shot four rounds in the 60s. 'Deki's putter can always be an issue (he lost two strokes to the field at The Players), but he does everything else so well, he just needs to be level to the field with the flat stick to be in contention.

**Others to consider: Will Zalatoris, Ludvig Aberg, Jon Rahm**

### STOCK DOWN

#### Viktor Hovland

After closing out 2023 by winning the Tour Championship, the start to 2024 has been less-than-inspiring. Something just seems a little off with Hovland. He's making cuts, but not really contending. His last five tournaments have produced a T-22, T-58, T-19, T-36, and a T-62 in The Players Championship. What's more troublesome, it seems his struggles around-the-green have reemerged. He's lost SG:ARG in all five 2024 tournaments, including an astoundingly terrible 6.8 strokes at The Players in mid-March. More than anything, his betting odds (20/1 at the time of this writing), just don't match the results on the course this season. He's obviously one of the most talented golfers on the planet, but will most likely be a fade for me.

#### Patrick Cantlay

Cantlay makes the list due to a massive amount of inconsistency in 2024. He did T-4 at The Genesis and was T-11 at the weather-shortened AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am. But those nice performances are crammed in the middle of a T-52, T-56, T-36, and T-68. And, unlike Hovland, we can't point at a single glaring weakness. Cantlay has kind of been all over the place. He lost SG:OTT in two of those tournaments. He's lost SG: Approach in six of his last seven tournaments. He lost SG: ARG in four of his last six. The putting has been erratic, having split gaining and losing SG: Putting in his last six tournaments played. Cantlay has been one of the most consistent performers on Tour for the last several seasons, so a rapid correction is not out of the realm of possibilities. I just doubt it happens at Augusta.

#### Rory McIlroy

Did you know McIlroy hasn't won a full-field event in North America on the PGA Tour since 2022 (RBC Canadian)? He hasn't won a full-field PGA Tour event on American soil since the Wells Fargo in May of 2021. There's a lot of nice finishes for Rory along the way, but the wins have been sparse. Fast forward to 2024, where he's teed it up on the PGA Tour five times. Those starts have resulted in T-66, T-24, T-21, T-21, and T-19. He's made every cut, but has not been in real contention for four rounds of golf. Digging in, he's really struggled in at least four key metrics that we look at. For the season, he's 119th in SG: Approach, 134th in SG: Around-the-Green, 94th in SG: Putting, and 133rd in Scrambling. Rory still mashes off the tee, and his length is going to be a big weapon at The Masters. But Augusta National requires every single shot in the bag, and several of those aren't working right now for Rory.

**Others with form questions: Collin Morikawa, Jason Day, Rickie Fowler**



Hideki is one of the guys I added a Masters outright on a few weeks back at a better price and while this 25-1 is a little short to me, he's still a guy I'm extremely interested in this year. I also have made bets on Justin Thomas and Will Zalatoris, but considering the odds and the lack of great recent results, I'd probably stay away from them for now.

Matsuyama does already have a win this season and four other top 25 finishes in his nine PGA Tour starts. He's a guy who has won at Augusta before and has finished inside the top 20 in four straight years.

## Hideki Matsuyama 25-1

KELLEY BYDLON

**BEST BET**



While OWGR No. 1 Scottie Scheffler rates at the top of most statistical categories this season, Xander Schauffele is right behind him. Schauffele ended up finishing right behind Scheffler as runner-up at THE PLAYERS Championship. The primary knock against Schauffele is that he cannot win the big one. He has six Top 5 finishes in major championships including two at Augusta National. Over the last 24 rounds leading into the Masters, Schauffele ranks 2nd for Strokes Gained: Total, 2nd for Par 4 Scoring, 2nd for Bogey Avoidance, 3rd for Greens In Regulation, 4th for Strokes Gained: Off The Tee, and 5th for Strokes Gained: Around The Green. He could not close it out as the 54-hole leader at THE PLAYERS last month, but it gave him a bit of a taste of being back in the hunt at a big event and that could give him just the little extra that he needs to finally get the monkey off his back and win a major championship.

## Xander Schauffele 20-1

WES REYNOLDS

**BEST BET**