



Scottie Scheffler
UNITED STATES
Age: 29
World ranking: 1
Worldwide wins: 23
Majors: Masters (2022, 2024), PGA Championship (2025), British Open (2025).
US Open appearances: 8.
US Open moment: Finishing one shot behind Matt Fitzpatrick in 2022 at The Country Club.
Backspin: Scheffler is winless since The American Express in his first start of the year. A U.S. Open title would make him the seventh player to complete the career Grand Slam.



Xander Schauffele
UNITED STATES
Age: 32
World ranking: 12
Worldwide wins: 12
Majors: PGA Championship (2024), British Open (2024).
US Open appearances: 9.
US Open moment: Shooting a 62 in the first round in 2023 at Los Angeles Country Club.
Backspin: Schauffele has never finished worse than a tie for 14th in the U.S. Open.



Jon Rahm
SPAIN
Age: 31
World ranking: 8
Worldwide wins: 24
Majors: Masters (2023), U.S. Open (2021)
US Open appearances: 9
US Open moment: Winning his first major at Torrey Pines in the 2021 U.S. Open.
Backspin: Rahm comes into the U.S. Open off a runner-up finish in the PGA Championship. He is 0-for-12 in the majors since joining LIV, but has a history of competing on a big stage.



Rory McIlroy
NORTHERN IRELAND
Age: 37
World ranking: 2
Worldwide wins: 42
Majors: Masters (2025, 2026), PGA Championship (2012, 2014), U.S. Open (2011), British Open (2014).
US Open appearances: 17
US Open moment: Setting the 72-hole record when he won at Congressional in 2011.
Backspin: McIlroy won the Masters for the second straight year and contended on the back nine of the PGA Championship, making him one of only three players with top 10s in both majors this year.



The 18th green in front of the clubhouse at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club in Southampton, N.Y.

SHINNECOCK HILLS MAY BE THE MOST FORMIDABLE FOE

The U.S. Open

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP GOLF WRITER

So much history is at stake when the U.S. Open returns to Shinnecock Hills. Scottie Scheffler will try to take his place in history when the No. 1 player in the world goes after the final leg of the career Grand Slam. Should he win the U.S. Open, he would be the seventh player to win all four majors and join Tiger Woods as the only players since 1960 – the modern era of the slam – to get it done on his first try.

That ordinarily would be the sole focus of the 126th U.S. Open on June 18-21, except for recent history at Shinnecock Hills. It has not been smooth sailing off the Great Peconic Bay on Long Island.

The 2004 U.S. Open already was brutally tough when the USGA failed to account for the strength of the warm wind. The par-3 seventh green became so impossible to hold that officials had to douse it with water between groups.

When it returned in 2018, the greens got so glassy from sun and wind the last 45 players on the tee sheet failed to break par in the third round. Phil Mickelson staged a bizarre protest by hitting a moving ball on the 13th green. Brooks Koepka saved the week by becoming the first repeat champion in 29 years.

What could go wrong this time? “Hopefully, they get the balance right of all the different challenges and it’s not contrived,” said golfer Adam Scott from Australia. “These great tracks, they’ve gotten into trouble when they’ve been manipulated.”

John Bodenhamer, the USGA’s chief competitions officer in charge of setting up the course, said the average fairway width would be 48 yards, the widest ever for Shinnecock Hills. The greens won’t be quite as fast as they were for the last two Open.

The blueprint is simple. “The way we’re thinking about this year is let Shinnecock Hills be Shinnecock Hills,” Bodenhamer said.

That should be enough. In the five previous U.S. Opens at Shinnecock, only three players have finished the tournament under par.

SCOTTIE’S QUEST

It was only 13 months ago when Scheffler only had one leg of the career Grand Slam, having won the Masters twice. Then he steamrolled the competition at the PGA Championship and the British Open. “Fixed that,” he said with a laugh. Now he is on the cusp of joining the most elite club in golf. Rory McIlroy had to wait 11 years to get the last leg at the Masters last year. Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player each waited three years for their final pieces. Scheffler goes to Shinnecock without having won a tournament in five months.

CENTURY MARK FOR SCOTT

Adam Scott was 21 when he played the 2001 British Open, and he hasn’t missed a major since. This U.S. Open will be the 100th in a row for the Australian, making him only the second player to compete in at least 100 straight. Jack Nicklaus holds the record at 146. Scott had to go through a 36-hole qualifier for the U.S. Open in 2018. The next longest active streak belongs to Jordan Spieth at 52.

LINGERING LIV EFFECT

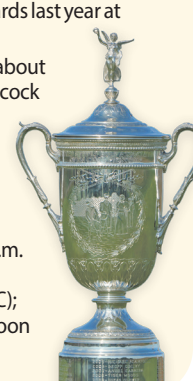
LIV Golf will have 13 players in the U.S. Open, and it comes at a crucial time. The rival league already is losing funding from the Saudi Arabia sovereign wealth fund at the end of the year. Speculation is mounting whether LIV will even finish the season, all while executives are scrambling to find outside investors to keep it going. Jon Rahm missed a good opportunity at the PGA Championship when he was runner-up. Bryson DeChambeau has missed the cut in the first two majors of the year.

INTERNATIONAL WINS

For only the fourth time in history, international players have won the first two majors with Rory McIlroy of Northern

Facts & Figures

Event: 126th U.S. Open golf championship:
Dates: June 18-21.
Site: Shinnecock Hills Country Club, near Tuckahoe, New York
Length: 7,440 yards; Par: 70.
Cut: Top 60 and ties.
Playoff (if necessary): Two-hole aggregate immediately after 72 holes are completed.
Field: 156 players.
Purse: TBA. Last year: \$21.5 million (\$4.3 million for winner).
Last year: U.S. golfer J.J. Spaun emerged from the pack on a soggy Oakmont Country Club course with two shots that define his career. He drove the green on the par-4 17th for a two-putt birdie and holed a 65-foot birdie putt on the 18th for a 2-over 72 and a two-shot victory over Robert MacIntyre. Spaun finished at 1-under 279, the only player to break par. It was his first major title.
Last time at Shinnecock Hills: Brooks Koepka became the first back-to-back U.S. Open champion in 29 years. He shot 2-under 68 for a one-shot victory over Tommy Fleetwood. The course was so severe that Saturday none of the last 45 players to tee off broke par. The USGA conceded the mistake and put water on the course. Fleetwood shot 63.
U.S. Open champions at Shinnecock Hills: Brooks Koepka (2018), Retief Goosen (2004), Corey Pavin (1995), Raymond Floyd (1986), James Foulis (1896).
Betting odds: Scottie Scheffler (+550), Rory McIlroy (+1000), Jon Rahm (+1200), Cameron Young (+1800).
Noteworthy: The average fairway width at Shinnecock Hill will be 48 yards, compared with 32 yards last year at Oakmont.
Quoteworthy: “The way we’re thinking about this year is let Shinnecock Hills be Shinnecock Hills.” – John Bodenhamer, chief championships officer for the USGA.
Television (all times EDT): Thursday, 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (USA Network), 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. (Peacock); Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Peacock), 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. (NBC), 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. (Peacock); Saturday, 10 a.m. to noon (USA Network), noon to 8 p.m. (NBC); Sunday, 9 a.m. to noon (USA Network), noon to 7 p.m. (NBC).



Ireland repeating at the Masters and Aaron Rai of England winning the PGA Championship. That last happened in 2013.

Americans have not been shut out of the first three majors since 2011.

The only international sweep was in 1994 with Jose Maria Olazabal (Spain) at the Masters, Ernie Els (South Africa) at the U.S. Open and Nick Price (Zimbabwe) winning the British Open and PGA Championship.

Scottie Scheffler



Justin Rose
ENGLAND
Age: 45
World ranking: 6
Worldwide wins: 25
Majors: U.S. Open (2013)
US Open appearances: 20
US Open moment: Capturing his only major at Merion in the 2013 U.S. Open.
Backspin: Right when it looks as though Rose is slowing down, he wins (Torrey Pines) and contends in the majors. He challenged at the Masters and tied for 10th in the PGA Championship.



Cameron Young
UNITED STATES
Age: 29
World ranking: 3
Worldwide wins: 3
Majors: None
US Open appearances: 6
US Open moment: Contending early Sunday at Oakmont and tying for fourth, his best finish in a U.S. Open.
Backspin: Winless in his PGA Tour career at this point a year ago, winning a major is the next step. His improved putting will be key on the greens of Shinnecock Hills.



Brooks Koepka
UNITED STATES
Age: 36
World ranking: 109
Worldwide wins: 17
Majors: PGA Championship (2018, 2019, 2023), U.S. Open (2017, 2018)
US Open appearances: 12
US Open moment: Winning at Shinnecock Hills in 2018 to become the first back-to-back champion in 29 years.
Backspin: Koepka has yet to do anything special in his return from LIV Golf, so the U.S. Open will be a good gauge. He has five finishes in the top 4 at the U.S. Open, including his back-to-back wins.



Tommy Fleetwood
ENGLAND
Age: 35.
World ranking: 7
Worldwide wins: 9
Majors: None
US Open appearances: 10
US Open moment: Becoming the only player to twice shoot 63 in the final round, at Shinnecock Hills in 2018 and at Los Angeles Country Club in 2023.
Backspin: Fleetwood is coming off good finishes in signature events at Quail Hollow and Muirfield Village. In between was a missed cut in the PGA Championship. He set the course record on a soft Sunday at Shinnecock Hills in 2018.