



GARY GALYEAN'S GOLF LETTER®

THE INSIDE REPORT ON WORLD GOLF

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Dear Subscriber:

84TH MASTERS TOURNAMENT Augusta National

IT WAS ALWAYS going to be odd, predictably disorienting. Muted autumn colors, less daylight, and more moisture foretold a tournament unlike the one that is always played the second week in April. In the spring, the Masters heralds a new golf season and expectations for our game made hopeful by watching the best players in the world play Augusta National. This autumn's Masters was about resilience—the tenacity to carry on despite the Wuhan.

Damp, windless conditions softened the playing surfaces making it possible for the scoring record to be broken. Even so, the champion had to first reach the record before he could surpass it.

There were operating conditions never seen on this stage before. Two-tee starts on all four days; a three-hour storm delay Thursday morning, coupled with less daylight in November, forced the suspension of play each evening before that day's round was completed; and a ten-minute delayed start on Sunday morning due to fog.

The lowest cut line in Masters history—even par—was set on Saturday morning when Bryson DeChambeau made bogey at the 18th.

Dustin Johnson equaled the 54-hole scoring record, and the following day broke the tournament scoring record by two strokes. The new record, however, was not a runaway. It was extruded from the competitive tension of Sunday's round.

When Mr. Johnson dumped his 31-yard pitch shot into the right front, greenside bunker at the 2nd, it was not unreasonable to suspect we were in for a collapse, as is sometimes the case on Sundays at the Masters. In 1979, Ed Sneed led by five and lost; in 1990 Raymond Floyd by four and lost; and the record is held by Greg Norman who collapsed in 1996 with a six-stroke lead.

On four previous occasions, Mr. Johnson led going into the final round of a major championship only to have his hopes dashed:

- In the 2010 U.S. Open at Pebble Beach, he held the 54-hole lead by three strokes then tripled the 2nd and doubled the 3rd to lose to Graeme McDowell.

- In the 2015 U.S. Open at Chambers Bay, he was tied for the 54-lead and then bogeyed three out of four holes on the final back nine

to lose to Jordan Spieth.

- In the 2018 U.S. Open at Shinnecock Hills, he was again tied for the 54-hole lead but three-putted four times for bogeys to lose to Brooks Koepka; and

- In the 2020 P.G.A. Championship at Harding Park, he was simply outplayed by Colin Morikawa who shot a final round 64.

Because he had been there four times before and was familiar with how it felt to fail, Mr. Johnson, the number one ranked player in the world for a total of 103 weeks (fourth-most all time), summoned concentration and control and rose to the moment methodically and impressively.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

REFLECTIONS ON THE MASTERS



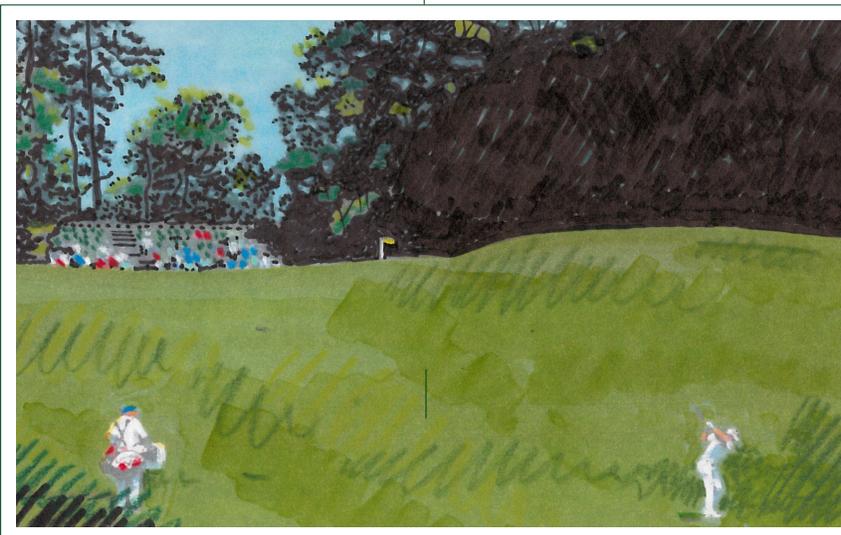
Thursday Morning LADBROKE Odds

DeChambeau	15/2
D. Johnson	8/1
Rahm	9/1
J. Thomas	11/1
McIlroy	11/1
Schauffele	14/1

After Mr. DeChambeau and Matthew Wolff's performances at Winged Foot during September's U.S. Open, speculation was widespread that Augusta would be reduced to child's play by the boom-and-gouge methods that won the day in New York.

Early in Round 1, however, Augusta proved the theory suggested on these pages after the U.S. Open: The only obstacles to professional golfers using modern equipment are trees and contours—both green and fairway. Augusta is blessed with plenty of both.

It also became obvious that the tour awarded their Player of the Year title two months and two major champions too early. By Nov. 15, Mr. Johnson proved [see the chart on page 4] that no other player came close to him in 2020. He won four times, came second three times (including the P.G.A. Championship), and finished sixth at the U.S. Open after winning the Tour Championship and before winning the Masters.



APPROACHING AT YELLOW JASMINE BY TAG GALYEAN

Thursday

Mr. DeChambeau's practice round results gave some credence to his ability to overwhelm Augusta with strength and distance e.g. he hit a 3 wood drive over the 350 yard 3rd hole.

His first hole of Round 1 was the 10th because of the two-tee start. His drive traveled 327 yards to the center of the fairway. His 154-yard wedge finished six feet from the hole, and he two putted making it a lost birdie chance but all-in-all pretty easy going.

However, at the par-5 13th he was unable to bend his 313-yard drive to the left and the ball found the pine straw off the fairway to the right. A 194-yard iron shot flew over the left corner of the green and disappeared into

Friday Morning LADBROKE Odds

J. Thomas	5/1
D. Johnson	6/1
Schauffele	10/1
Rahm	12/1
DeChambeau	14/1
Casey	16/1

the bushes on the bank. There was apparently thought that the ball might be lost so a provisional was played. It finished in Rae's Creek at the front of the green.

The original ball was found, declared unplayable, and dropped. Mr. DeChambeau then chunked a 10-foot chip, and then played his fifth stroke onto the putting green. Two putts resulted in a double bogey seven and much dampened speculation about his overpowering the golf course.

Later in the day, Paul Casey, Dylan Frittelli, and Mr. Johnson posted 65s. Justin Thomas and Sungjae Im were impressive with 66s. Cameron Smith went out in 31 and

parred in for 67. Tiger Woods was not to be ignored at 68. It was a low scoring day with little breeze and soft greens ... a theme that continued for the remainder of the tournament.

Friday

Rory McIlroy answered his first round 75 with a

second round 66. Jon Rahm posted 66 to go with his previ-

ous 69, Mr. Smith was steady at 68, and Mr. Thomas' 69 echoed Mr. Rahm in inverse order. Messrs. Johnson and Im ballooned with 70s. From among the Round 1 leaders, Mr. Casey and Mr. Frittelli fell away with 74 and 73 respectfully.

Mr. DeChambeau found the spotlight again at the 3rd during the second round when his 319-yard drive finished about 10 yards into the left rough and could not be found. He returned to the tee, drove his third shot into the left rough again, found it, and pitched his fourth over the green. The return chip ran just over the green, and two putts made a total of seven on the par-4. Once again, so much for overpowering Augusta National.

Darkness suspended play with nearly half the field still on the course and a cut line estimated at 1-under.

Saturday Morning LADBROKE Odds

Rahm	3/1
D. Johnson	9/2
J. Thomas	6/1
Matsuyama	14/1
Cantlay	14/1
C. Smith	20/1

Saturday

The day began with the finish of Round 2 and the looming cut line that would determine who would play through the weekend.

Prior to 2020, the Masters cut allowed for the top 50 players and ties, *plus any player within 10 strokes of the lead*. On Monday of Masters week it was announced that the 10-stroke rule would be eliminated in determining the cut. Augusta National Chairman Fred Ridley explained:

We looked back at the statistics, and the last few years, or the last several years, and I think we've only had two players who have been in contention who made the cut only because of the 10-shot rule. While certainly it can happen, it just doesn't. It's not relevant that often, and we thought this was a way to sort of tighten things up and have a more predictable field size for the weekend.

The record for the lowest Masters cut was 1-over par (145), which was reached six times since 1957 when the cut was first put in place. Because of the softer scoring conditions this year, the possibility was in place Saturday morning for a new record. Due to Friday evening's suspension of play for darkness, nearly half the field finished Round 2 on Saturday morning. As players finished, the cut hovered at 1-under. Then Mr. DeChambeau, the 50th player in the cut count, came to the 18th tee 1-under. His 307-yard drive found the right, center of the fairway; his 150-yard approach flew the green; the 35-yard chip back was too strong and ran 48 feet past the hole; 2 putts later, his bogey raised the cut to even par—still a new record. The raise allowed Mr. Spieth, Tony Finau, Mr. Morikawa, and Matthew Fitzpatrick in for the weekend.

Round 3 began with ten players tied for the

lead (-9) or within one (-8). "Moving Day", as it is called, proved to be just that. Mr. Johnson bounced back with another 65, Mr. McIlroy and Mr. Frittelli both posted 67s, and Mr. Im—whose goal for the week was to make the cut—posted 68.

Mr. Thomas' hopes faded with a 71 that included a relatively poor putting day when compared to those at the top of the scoreboard. John Rahm's 72 was reflective of the same shortcoming.

Mr. Johnson's three-round total of 200 strokes equaled the 54-hole record (-16), set in 2015 by Mr. Spieth.

For the last 30 years, no one finishing Round 3 outside the top five has gone on to win. Round 3's first five included:

1st	D. Johnson	65 + 70 + 65 = 200 (-16)
T2	S. Im	66 + 70 + 68 = 204 (-12)
T2	A. Ancer	68 + 67 + 69 = 204 (-12)
T2	C. Smith	67 + 68 + 69 = 204 (-12)
5th	D. Frittelli	65 + 73 + 67 = 205 (-11)

Sunday

There is a danger, or at least a smugness—which is among the greatest of dangers—that comes from using hindsight to pretend that you know why something happened. It is a shortcoming within this medium to use statistics to do just that. There is also a good deal of pure speculation: "you know what it might have been". At this level of play nerve and artistry ebb and flow unpredictably during the performance.

With that preface, here is what appears from the statistics to have determined Mr. Johnson's victory as this year's Masters champion.

The case has been made by Jim McCabe that Mr. Johnson's 180-yard,

Par 3s

ALL ROUNDS

Holes	4 th	6 th	12 th	16 th	TOTAL
D. Johnson	E	-1	-2	-1	-4
C. Smith	-2	E	E	-1	-3
S. Im	+1	E	-1	-1	-1

Par 5s

ALL ROUNDS

Holes	2 nd	8 th	13 th	15 th	TOTAL
D. Johnson	-4	-2	-3	-2	-11
C. Smith	-3	-1	-3	-4	-11
S. Im	-4	-2	-3	-2	-11

2020 Masters Top Finishers' Statistics

72 HOLES

	EAGLES	BIRDIES	BOGEYS	DOUBLE BOGEYS	FAIRWAYS HIT	GREENS IN REG.	SAND SAVES	PUTTS
D. Johnson	2	20	4	0	79%	83%	75% [3/4]	1.62
C. Smith	1	20	7	0	64%	65%	75% [6/8]	1.50
S. Im	0	24	9	0	82%	63%	50% [3/6]	1.42

downhill 8-iron at the 6th hole was the stroke that turned the tide resulting in his victory. We will argue that was one important piece of a championship performance that stretched from the 6th through the 14th holes.

Mr. Johnson began Round 4 with a four stroke lead. At the par-5 2nd, he dumped his 31-yard pitch into the greenside bunker that he intended to play over. This was a critical moment—on a birdie hole that he had already eagled twice in earlier rounds—when Mr. Johnson could have begun folding his tent. We have seen it before from Mr. Johnson and other great players [see page 1]. But he did not. He made par from the bunker and then birdied the 3rd. A second blip rose with consecutive bogeys at the 4th and 5th.

Playing in the final group with Mr. Johnson and Mr. Smith, Mr. Im birdied the 2nd and 3rd. This reduced Mr. Johnson's lead from the four strokes with which he began to just one after playing only five holes.

Playing from the 6th tee, Mr. Im's drive was long and left. Mr. Johnson's ball finished seven feet from the hole. Mr. Johnson made his putt; Mr. Im chipped and then two-putted for bogey. A two stroke swing.

At the 7th, Mr. Johnson played a running shot toward the green from an obstructed position in the right rough and in so doing found the front, center greenside bunker. Mr. Im was too strong with his approach from the fairway. His ball finished in the back bunker. Mr. Im's only option resulted in his bunker shot running through the green and just off the front fringe. He chipped close and holed his putt for bogey. Mr. Johnson played his bunker shot to about a foot from the hole and made par. Mr. Johnson walked onto the 8th tee with his four shot lead

**Sunday Morning
LADBROKE Odds**

D. Johnson	1/3
S. Im	12/1
C. Smith	14/1
Ancer	16/1
J. Thomas	20/1

over Mr. Im restored, as well as a two shot lead over Mr. Smith.

Smooth play ensued with Messrs. Im and Smith holding tight knowing birdie holes were ahead on the back nine. Mr. Johnson rose to that occasion too when he birdied the 13th, 14th, and 15th. Mr. Im played them two under and Mr. Smith one under.

Birdies at the 13th and 15th are expected at this level. However, Mr. Johnson's play at the 14th was extraordinary. He drove 324 yards to the center of the fairway. Approached from 126 yards to 6 feet—left and below the hole—and holed the putt. It was done. With a five stroke lead over both Mr. Im and Mr. Smith and four holes to play, the finish was, as P. G. Mathieson says it, a *pièce de gateau*.

2020 Major Championship Contenders' Finishes

	P.G.A.	U.S. OPEN	MASTERS
Morikawa	1st	MC	T44
Casey	T2	T17	T38
D. Johnson	T2	T6	1st
Day	T4	T38	MC
Wolff	T4	2nd	MC
DeChambeau	T4	1st	T34
Schauffele	T10	5th	T17
English	T19	4th	DNP
Oosthuizen	T33	3rd	T23
McIlroy	T33	T8	T5
Frittelli	T33	DNP	T5
J. Thomas	T37	T8	T4
C. Smith	T43	T38	T2
Im	MC	22nd	T2



For T.L.F.:

*"The secret of life is honesty and fair dealing.
If you can fake that, you've got it made."*

Groucho Marx

Yours vy truly,



Gary A. Galyean
Editor & Publisher

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