

2013 Puerto Rico Open - Recap



Scott Brown Wins the PR Open

Río Grande, PR (March 10, 2012) - Scott Brown calmly made a four-foot putt on the 18th hole at Trump International Golf Club to set a new tournament record of -20 and notch his first PGA TOUR win at the 2013 Puerto Rico Open presented by seepuertorico.com.

"It's a dream come true, something you dream about as a kid,"

said Brown. "For me, I've been playing golf since I was four or five years old and, obviously, growing up in Augusta, Georgia, I was probably 500 yards from the front gate. So it means a great deal." Brown, who co-led with Fabián Gómez of Argentina heading into championship Sunday, was -19 and one stroke off Gómez's lead to start the final hole, a par-5 that had yielded plenty of birdies and not a few eagles throughout the tournament. "I knew I'd have to, at least, make birdie, and I figured I'd have to make eagle, to be honest, the way he was playing," said Brown.

With the pressure on and the trophy on the line, however, Gómez stumbled. On his second shot, a wayward 3-iron landed in a trap short of the green. His third overshot the stick and rolled to a back bunker. Gómez lifted it out cleanly but left himself too difficult a par putt and he missed it by mere inches. The resulting bogey dropped him to -19 and a momentary first-place tie with Brown and Jordan Spieth, who had charged up the leaderboard en route to shooting a 67.

The door was opened for Brown, who left his second shot just short of the green, chipped to within four feet and stood over the putt that would make him a champion. **"I was just trying to keep my hands from shaking off the putter," he later recalled. They didn't, and he sank it to card a winning 70.**

The 29-year-old Brown wins \$630,000, full PGA TOUR status through 2015, and 300 FedEx Cup points. He also earns automatic berths in top-flight events like this year's Arnold Palmer Invitational, THE PLAYERS Championship, Crowne Plaza Invitational at Colonial, the Memorial Tournament, AT&T National, the PGA Championship, and the 2014 Hyundai Tournament of Champions.

For Gómez, who shot a final-round 71, it was his best finish ever at a PGA TOUR event. Though obviously disappointed about the victory that slipped away, he was generally pleased with his performance.

"That's golf; you just never know," said Gómez about his finish. "I felt I had to make birdie because I thought he was going to make birdie, so I tried to hit it on there with the 3-iron and just hit a bad shot."

It had been the first time the Argentinean led a PGA TOUR event, and he confessed that nerves may have gotten the best of him. "The pressure definitely played its part, as did the course, which played tougher today."

For Spieth, the 19-year-old former world #1 amateur, this t-2nd finish comes in just his third PGA TOUR start as a professional. The former Texas Longhorn had started the day four back before birdies on five of the first 10 holes, but a bogey on 16 cost him dearly.

"Just one short; didn't get up and down on 15 or 16, and it cost me," said Spieth. "But all in all, obviously I'm real excited with how the week ended, and I would have taken second at the beginning of the week if you told me. It was cool to battle on the back nine there and know that I was close in the heat and feel the pressure. First time experience for me."

Justin Bolli (66) and Brian Stuard (68) took home of a share of third place at -18. Andrés Romero, who led after the first two rounds before a disastrous 75 on Saturday, bounced back with a 66 on the final day to finish at -17, tied for sixth with former U.S. Amateur champ Peter Uihlein (67).

David Hearn (66), D.J. Trahan (66), and Boo Weekley (68) finished tied for eight to round out the top-10.

Puerto Rican pro Rafael Campos carded a 74 to finish at even par for the tournament, the best score by a local player in the event's history. He finished 76th.

"These last three days I didn't do very well, but still happy to be here, very happy to be playing in this tournament and to make it to the final day," said Campos, who received a special trophy during the award ceremony for having the best performance by a Puerto Rican player.

Jorge García, the 17-year-old Venezuelan amateur playing in his first PGA TOUR event, finished at -1, one spot above Campos.

Success On and Off the Course

With down-to-the-wire action on the fairways and greens, and packed social events throughout tournament week, the 2013 Puerto Rico Open once again proved that it's a unique and fun-filled event for both fans and players.

From the Monday qualifier to the closing ceremony, the tournament was a resounding success on and off the course. Much of that is due to

the hard work of the many organizers, volunteers, and sponsors who made it all possible.

"I would like to give our thanks to the over 80 great sponsors that have made the 2013 Puerto Rico Open a reality, specially to Mayor Eduard Rivera, the Government of Puerto Rico, the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, our founding partners, Banco Popular and Triple- S, the late Don Arturo Díaz, Jr., and his family, Fondos Unidos, and our over 900 volunteers and staff", said Tournament Chairman Sidney Wolf.

The event was also successful in its many charitable and community initiatives. Whether it be golf demonstrations for area youngsters, sports equipment collection drives, or donations to local hospitals, the Puerto Rico Open was, and will continue to be, a place to show appreciation for our community and help strengthen it through the game of golf.

A big part of that was on display on championship Sunday which was also Pink Day in support of women's golf. The Puerto Rico Open and the Puerto Rico Golf Association have made it their priority to promote golf among women in Puerto Rico, and have created two new programs exclusively for women. The first, Golf and the City, organizes social events around golfing to introduce women to golf and offers free clinics by professional golfer Sasha Medina. The second is the Ladies Puerto Rico Golf Association, which helps female golfers improve their skills and techniques to a professional level.

We look forward to another great year at the 2014 Puerto Rico Open.

Gómez and Brown Lead the Field



Río Grande, PR (March 9, 2012) - Fabián Gómez replaced fellow Argentinean Andrés Romero atop the leaderboard on Saturday, a spot he now shares with American Scott Brown heading into the final round of the 2013 Puerto Rico Open presented by seepuertorico.com at Trump International Golf Club.

Gómez, who on Friday had climbed to 5th place thanks to an outstanding round of 64, followed that up with a 65 on the third day of play to take the lead at -18. Early on in the round it was an exciting back-and-forth between he and Romero, but the latter began to slide and ended up bogeying four of his last seven holes to move down the leaderboard.

Then, when handing in his card, Romero was given a two-stroke penalty because of an illegal drop on 12. That left him at +3 for the day, -11 for the tournament, and a tie for 15 th place.

"That's golf," said Romero. "It gives and it takes away, and it took away quite a bit from me today. I'm a little upset but, luckily, it was the third round, not the fourth; hopefully I can play well and make it up tomorrow."

While Romero was struggling, his playing partner, Brown, was on the charge. Brown, who tied for 5th at last year's Puerto Rico Open, began third-round play in second place and had four birdies on the back nine to shoot a 67 and join Gómez at -18.

"I played solid," said Brown. "I'm keeping the ball in the fairway and hit a lot of greens and got up-and-down, keeping the momentum going. So just playing solid golf right now

Tomorrow will be the first time that Brown has the lead on championship Sunday and, should he win, it would be his first PGA TOUR victory. Both of those things also apply to Gómez.

"It's the first time and it will be a little difficult, a little nerve-wracking," he confessed. "I'm going to try to stay as calm as possible so I can have a round like I did today."

Strong Competitors Lurk Behind

Although Gómez and Brown now share a four-stroke lead, there's a strong group of players still chasing first place who will be looking to mount a comeback tomorrow. In fact, the eventual champions of the 2010 and 2011 Puerto Rico Opens came from precisely four back to win on the final day.

Brian Stuard, Blayne Barber, PGA TOUR rookie Steve LeBrun and 19-year-old Jordan Spieth share third place at -14. Spieth shot -5, including a hole-in-one on the 11th. Seventh place belongs to another youngster: rookie Morgan Hoffman (-13).



Seven players have a share of 8th place, including some familiar faces

from last year's tournament. George McNeill (defending champ), Ryo Ishikawa (2nd place), Boo Weekley (3rd), and Matt Jones (5th) are all -12, as are Brendon de Jonge, Peter Uihlein and Justin Bolli. Ishikawa also had an ace, but on 8, while Jones' 64 was the best round of the day.

Local pro Rafael Campos, who had earlier become the first Puerto Rican player to make the cut at this event since 2008, struggled on Saturday. He bogeyed three of the last four and carded a 71, dropping to -2 and a tie for 74th place.

"I'm really not satisfied; I'm pretty upset right now, and a little frustrated," said Campos. "Today was the day to play well, take advantage and move up the leaderboard, and I really didn't like the way I played and I went down instead of up."

The championship round of the 2013 Puerto Rico Open begins tomorrow at 7:10 a.m. The closing ceremony will follow immediately after play ends.

Campos Makes the Cut at PR Open



Río Grande, PR (March 8, 2012) - Puerto Rican Rafael Campos also surprised some and delighted many on Friday by becoming the first local player since 2008 to make the cut at the Puerto Rico Open. Campos, a member of the PGA TOUR Latinoamérica, shot an opening-round 67 and, at one point, stood at -7 before some struggles left him on the verge of making the cut. At -2 on the 18th, he hit his second shot into the rough but chipped to within a few feet of the cup and birdied to improve to -3. Players at -3 or better made the cut. Campos is tied for 65th, but hopes he can make a move up the leaderboard.

"Definitely, I want to be in that top 10. I want to be in next week's PGA event," he said. I know I'm a little bit far behind right now... but six or seven strokes over 36 holes, you know, that's nothing. You can lose two strokes with one bad shot. You can gain a couple strokes with one good shot."

The other three Puerto Rican players failed to make the cut. Though he shot a solid 71 on Friday, Max Alverio finished at +3. Amateur Edward Figueroa finished +5, while Miguel Suárez ended at +11.

Andrés Romero improved to -14 with a second consecutive round of 65 to take sole possession of first place midway through the tournament, but Scott Brown (-13) is nipping at his heels after an outstanding 63 on cut day at Trump International Golf Club.

Former world #1 amateur and U.S. Amateur champ Peter Uihlein and PGA TOUR rookie Steve LeBrun share third place at -12 after strong rounds of 65.

Romero, who co-led with Cameron Percy (now tied for 6th place, at -19) after the first day of play, had another outstanding day on the course and now holds the tournament record for best 36-hole start (130). The young Argentinean totaled nine birdies, with a double-bogey on the par-3 8th as the only blemish on his scorecard. Romero had never held the lead at a PGA TOUR event before yesterday and had missed the cut in four of his five tournaments this year before making what's turned out to be a key equipment change.



"What's helped me is going back to my old putter, the Spider with center shaft," said Romero. "It's really been great for me; I had used that putter for a long time and then after a while I changed it. And then last week I started using it again," he said, adding that he now feels like he can make any putt.

According to Romero, he also benefited from being grouped with good friends and fellow Latin American stars Camilo Villegas and Ángel Cabrera. "I had a great group with Camilo and 'Pato' Cabrera," he said. They're actually great company and I think that also helped me play well. It helped me stay calm and very relaxed, and I think having good company has a lot to do with that."

Indeed, the 2013 Puerto Rico Open is shaping up to have a distinct Latin American flavor. Fellow Argentinean Fabián Gómez shot a bogey-free 64, improving to -11 and rising to 5th place, while Cabrera is one of nine golfers tied for 6th at -9, making it the first time three Argentineans have graced the top-10 of the PGA TOUR event. Jorge García, a 17-year-old amateur from Venezuela, surprised many by making the cut at -4.

Brown's 63, which matched the tournament record, featured eight birdies, one eagle, and some incredible shots.

"I holed a shot out on 7 from the fairway with a 7-iron... I think I had roughly 170 to the hole," said Brown, who placed 5th in last year's Puerto Rico Open. "The next par-3, I made like a 50-footer for birdie and then hit it to an inch on 9 and kind of just jump-started my round."

Defending champion George McNeill's round of -8 allowed him to leap up the leaderboard; from 64th to that pack of players tied for 6th. McNeill's round featured, at one point, six birdies and an eagle in the span of eight holes, success that he attributed to his work on the greens. "I was making putts. I hit it fairly close on some holes and, all in all, I made putts."

McNeill was grouped with last year's 2nd and 3rd place finishers Ryo Ishikawa and Henrik Stenson, who also improved to -6 and -7, respectively. Some other notable names with solid scores through two rounds include: Patrick Cantlay and Luke Guthrie (-7); Rory Sabbatini (-6); K.J. Choi and Michael Bradley (-5); John Daly and Villegas (-4).

The cut was set at -3, with 77 players making it to the weekend. Some veteran TOUR pros like Stephen Ames, David Duval, and Lee Janzen missed the cut. Kevin Na (back), Eric Axley (hand), and Jeff Overton (back) withdrew mid-round citing injuries.

The third round kicks off on Saturday at 7:10 a.m., with the featured pairing of Romero and Brown last from the 1st tee at 12:50 p.m. Rafael Campos' group will start at 7:44 a.m.

Historic First Round for Campos



Río Grande, PR (March 7, 2012) - ***Rafael Campos birdied five of his last six holes on his way to shooting a five-under 67 on Thursday, the best round ever put together by a local golfer at the Puerto Rico Open.***

Campos, who started on the 10th tee with the last group of the day at Trump International Golf Club, began the day auspiciously with a birdie and remained -1 after playing the back nine. The front nine, however, were another story: Campos shot birdie, birdie, bogey, birdie, birdie, birdie to finish up. The last one was a perfect 15-footer in front of an excited group of local fans on the ninth tee.

"I really needed a good start today, a good first round, which is what I haven't been able to have the last few years," said Campos. "I knew if I focused and took it one shot a time the result would be good."

In the morning, Argentinean Andrés Romero got off to a scorching start and Australian Cameron Percy had an almost perfect finish with his putter, which led both to share the first-round lead.

Romero And Percy carded outstanding rounds of 65 (-7) under favorable conditions. Each player took a decidedly different road to that score: after seven birdies and an eagle, Romero was at -9 before a pair of consecutive bogeys on two of the final three holes, while Percy stood at -3 before birdies on four of his last seven.

Percy needed only 10 putts to close out the back nine. "Well, they were all pretty short, except for on 12," he said. "I holed about a 25-footer on 12, just a little left-to-righter that was a nice one. The rest of them were all five and six feet."



For Romero, his work on the greens was also key. "I felt like I couldn't miss and, thank God, I'm putting well again," said Romero, the highest-ranked Latin American player in the world.

Blayne Barber, the talented American 23-year-old making just his second PGA TOUR start, shares third place at -6 with Monday qualifier Jon Curran.

Ángel Cabrera, who played with his countryman Romero and Colombian Camilo Villegas in a historic grouping of Latin American stars, is tied for 4th after a round of 67 (-5). He shares that spot on the leaderboard with nine other players, including Campos.

Two-time champion Michael Bradley scored -3. Last year's runner up, Ryo Ishikawa, shot -2, as did 17-year-old Venezuelan amateur Jorge García. Defending champion George McNeill is at -1.

Kim Si-Woo, the 17-year-old South Korean phenom making his second PGA TOUR start, shot 79 and withdrew, citing back problems.

The second round begins 7:00 a.m. Friday at Trump International. Campos begins at 8:40 from the first tee.