

President's Cup Preview

Mark Ackerman

The [Presidents Cup](#) is a golf tournament happening every odd year between the United States versus the rest of the world minus Europe. Europe gets their very own chance in a much older tournament called the [Ryder Cup](#), which happens every even year. The Presidents Cup was invented in 1994, and has had twelve events since its inauguration. The United States has won an astounding ten events, losing one, and tying the other.

The 2019 Presidents Cup is unique, because arguably the greatest player to ever play the sport is the captain of the American team, Captain Tiger Woods. If that wasn't crazy enough, Woods is also playing in the tournament, as he selected himself as one of his four captain picks.

The other three captain picks included: Tony Finau, Patrick Reed (2018 Masters winner), and Gary Woodland (2019 US Open winner). Others who just missed the cut were players like Rickie Fowler and Kevin Na. I believe the decision came down to the World Rankings more than anything else. Tiger (7th), Woodland (15th), Reed (16th), Finau (17th), Fowler (21st), and Kevin Na (26th). Based off of those numbers alone, I believe that was the exact model Tiger followed when using his picks. I don't necessarily fault him, as the rankings should definitely hold some merit in the decision process, and I'm sure he didn't pick just solely off the list, but it definitely played the biggest role in my opinion.

Tiger selecting himself was met with different thoughts around the golfing community since he is a Captain this year. While I had no issue with his choice, John Feinstein at Golf Digest had some great reasons as to why he shouldn't have, [here](#). Despite John's great points, I had no issue with Tiger's choice, for the same reason NBC had no problem with his decision. NBC will be airing the Presidents Cup, and since Tiger Woods is the most popular and polarizing golfer on the planet, they were happy to hear that he would be competing, guaranteeing them a better rating, as opposed to him just sitting on the sidelines. I was also excited he picked himself, because as a fan of golf, Tiger Woods playing and competing in an event, is going to give the event more meaning and attention as opposed to him just being the Captain of the US team. Him calling the shots as Captain wouldn't be enough to get the masses to watch the event, especially during the NFL season. However, with Tiger playing in the event too, more people will be inclined to tune in.

Besides making the event bigger by playing in it, Tiger has also earned the opportunity with his recent play. You could have made the case for Rickie Fowler (more on him later), or Kevin Na who were both listed as possible candidates, but Tiger just recently won the ZoZo Championship in China, which by the way, was his 81st career win on the PGA Tour. So despite the fact that he not only is the most popular and decorated golfer of his time, but his current form is still worthy of being one of the top 12 U.S. players. The world rankings say this, and so does the eye test.

Brooks Koepka, who was one of the eight qualifiers on the U.S. side and the number 1 ranked player in the world, has withdrawn from the tournament due to a knee injury. Rickie Fowler has taken his place, one of the players whom Tiger passed on to pick himself as one of his captain picks. Barring any more late changes due to injury, the twelve man teams are finally set.

UNITED STATES TEAM	HOW PLAYERS QUALIFY >	INTERNATIONAL TEAM	HOW PLAYERS QUALIFY >																								
CAPTAIN: TIGER WOODS CAPTAIN'S ASSISTANTS: FRED COUPLES, ZACH JOHNSON, STEVE STRICKER 2019 PLAYER ROSTER <table border="1" data-bbox="274 988 812 1474"> <tbody> <tr> <td> Dustin Johnson </td> <td> Justin Thomas </td> </tr> <tr> <td> Matt Kuchar </td> <td> Xander Schauffele </td> </tr> <tr> <td> Webb Simpson </td> <td> Bryson DeChambeau </td> </tr> <tr> <td> Patrick Cantlay </td> <td> Tony Finau </td> </tr> <tr> <td> Gary Woodland </td> <td> Patrick Reed </td> </tr> <tr> <td> Tiger Woods </td> <td> Rickie Fowler </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	 Dustin Johnson 	 Justin Thomas 	 Matt Kuchar 	 Xander Schauffele 	 Webb Simpson 	 Bryson DeChambeau 	 Patrick Cantlay 	 Tony Finau 	 Gary Woodland 	 Patrick Reed 	 Tiger Woods 	 Rickie Fowler 		CAPTAIN: ERNIE ELS CAPTAIN'S ASSISTANTS: K.J. CHOI, TREVOR IMMELMAN, GEOFF OGILVY, MIKE WEIR 2019 PLAYER ROSTER <table border="1" data-bbox="845 988 1383 1474"> <tbody> <tr> <td> Hideki Matsuyama </td> <td> Adam Scott </td> </tr> <tr> <td> Louis Oosthuizen </td> <td> Marc Leishman </td> </tr> <tr> <td> Abraham Ancer </td> <td> Haotong Li </td> </tr> <tr> <td> Cameron Smith </td> <td> C.T. Pan </td> </tr> <tr> <td> Sungjae Im </td> <td> Jason Day </td> </tr> <tr> <td> Joaquin Niemann </td> <td> Adam Hadwin </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	 Hideki Matsuyama 	 Adam Scott 	 Louis Oosthuizen 	 Marc Leishman 	 Abraham Ancer 	 Haotong Li 	 Cameron Smith 	 C.T. Pan 	 Sungjae Im 	 Jason Day 	 Joaquin Niemann 	 Adam Hadwin 	
 Dustin Johnson 	 Justin Thomas 																										
 Matt Kuchar 	 Xander Schauffele 																										
 Webb Simpson 	 Bryson DeChambeau 																										
 Patrick Cantlay 	 Tony Finau 																										
 Gary Woodland 	 Patrick Reed 																										
 Tiger Woods 	 Rickie Fowler 																										
 Hideki Matsuyama 	 Adam Scott 																										
 Louis Oosthuizen 	 Marc Leishman 																										
 Abraham Ancer 	 Haotong Li 																										
 Cameron Smith 	 C.T. Pan 																										
 Sungjae Im 	 Jason Day 																										
 Joaquin Niemann 	 Adam Hadwin 																										
Team Finalized		Team Finalized																									

The twelve man rosters for each team
 Courtesy: Presidents Cup

When it comes down to who I think is going to win the event, I'm not going out on a big limb by saying the United States, who has won 10 of 12 President Cups. When looking at the rankings, they're 11 Americans who are ranked higher than the highest ranking golfer (Adam Scott 18th) on the International Roster. In fact, the International side only has two players in the Top 20 in the entire world. However, the beauty of sports is that you still have to go out there and perform, and crazier things have happened. As an

American, I'll definitely be pulling for the United States team, but my general interest is in the sport of golf itself, and its celebration during this great week, and I'm looking forward to a great event.