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## LUDVIG ABERG, SAM BENNETT, BEN JAMES, MICHAEL THORBJORNSEN RECEIVE SPONSOR EXEMPTIONS TO 2023 TRAVELERS CHAMPIONSHIP

**HARTFORD, Conn., June 9, 2023** – The Travelers Championship today announced that Ludvig Aberg, Sam Bennett, Ben James and Michael Thorbjornsen have accepted sponsor exemptions into the 2023 tournament. James and Thorbjornsen received exemptions into last year's Travelers Championship, while Aberg and Bennett will be making their first appearance.

Aberg completed his collegiate career finishing first in both the PGA TOUR University ranking and World Amateur Golf Ranking. By securing the top spot in the season's final PGA TOUR U ranking, the fifth-year senior from Texas Tech earned his PGA TOUR card, immediately making his professional debut this week at the RBC Canadian Open. Aberg posted a 3-under-par 69 in his first professional round, good for 14th place. The current World Amateur Golf Ranking also includes Thorbjornsen at No. 3, James at No. 5 and Bennett at No. 6. Aberg, James and Thorbjornsen were named first-team collegiate All-Americans by PING this season, while Bennett is the reigning U.S. Amateur champion

"These are always some of my favorite phone calls to make, because every year we look for opportunities to invite the world's top amateurs, college players and young professionals to our tournament, and they always come from a deep pool with dozens of strong candidates," said Travelers Championship Tournament Director Nathan Grube. "Ludvig, Sam, Ben and Michael are among the best young players in the game, and we're thrilled to have all four of them joining us this year."

Andy Bessette, Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer at Travelers said, "This continues the tournament's long history of inviting up-and-coming standouts ready to test themselves against the best players in the world. Each of these outstanding young players were thrilled when we made the calls to offer them a spot in our field and I'm looking forward to continuing our relationship with Ben and Michael and getting to know Ludvig and Sam even better. I'm sure it's going to be exciting for these collegiate stars to compete against the best PGA TOUR players at TPC River Highlands."

**Ludvig Aberg** was a three-time, first team All-American at Texas Tech and won eight tournaments. Aberg joined Jon Rahm as the only players to win the Ben Hogan Award, given to the outstanding male amateur and collegiate golfer of the year, in consecutive years. He swept the college player of the year awards this season, also earning the Fred Haskins Award and the Jack Nicklaus Award. A 23-year-old from Sweden, Aberg has made the cut in both TOUR events he's played in this year, finishing in a tie for 24th at the Arnold Palmer Invitational and a tie for 61st at the Valspar Championship.

**Sam Bennett** became the most recent U.S. Amateur champion when he triumphed last summer at Ridgewood Country Club, a victory which earned him spots in this year's Masters, U.S. Open and Open Championship. Bennett tied for 16th at the Masters, the best finish by an amateur since 2005. While at Texas A&M, Bennett was a two-time, first-team All-American and was named player of the year by the Southeastern Conference in 2022. He won five college tournaments with the Aggies, and set the school record with a 69.97 stroke average in 2022-23. Bennett made his professional debut at the Memorial, where he finished in 63rd place.

**Ben James** led the University of Virginia to the quarterfinals of the NCAA Championship as a freshman this season and had a school-record scoring average of 69.00 for the Cavaliers. James was named the Atlantic Coast Conference freshman of the year and was co-medalist at the NCAA Las Vegas Regional, one of five tournaments he either won or tied for first. A 20-year-old from Milford, Connecticut, James is No. 7 in the latest national college rankings by Golfstat and is the top-ranked freshman. James received a sponsor's exemption into the Travelers Championship a year ago and shot 69 in the second round.

**Michael Thorbjornsen** made a splash at the 2022 Travelers Championship, finishing in fourth place, the best finish by an amateur in a PGA TOUR event since 2016. Thorbjornsen just completed his junior season at Stanford, where he again led the Cardinal in scoring average (69.26), the second lowest in Stanford history. He helped the Cardinal reach the NCAA Championship and was named player of the year by the Pac-12 Conference. Thorbjornsen won the 2018 U.S. Junior Amateur, which earned him a spot in the 2019 U.S. Open, where he made the cut at Pebble Beach as a 17-year-old. He also participated in the 2022 U.S. Open, and recently qualified for this year's U.S. Open, as well.

As a PGA TOUR designated event this year, the Travelers Championship will feature the best player field in tournament history, including the top seven players in the current Official World Golf Ranking: THE PLAYERS Championship winner Scottie Scheffler, Masters champion Jon Rahm, Rory McIlroy, Patrick Cantlay, defending champion Xander Schauffele, Max Homa and Viktor Hovland.

The 2023 Travelers Championship will be held June 19-25 at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell, Connecticut, and fans are welcome on-site beginning Wednesday, June 21. For tickets and tournament updates, please visit [TravelersChampionship.com](https://TravelersChampionship.com). Fans can also follow the tournament's social media channels on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [TikTok](#) for news and information.

#### **About the Travelers Championship**

The Travelers Championship, held in Cromwell, Connecticut, is the only PGA TOUR event in New England for 2023 and is part of the FedExCup series. The tournament has been selected by the PGA TOUR as a designated event with an elevated purse in 2023 and appearances from many of the TOUR's most popular players. The Travelers Championship has a rich history of supporting the community and donates 100% of its net proceeds to charities. More than \$25 million has been generated by the tournament for nearly 900 local charities since 2007, when Travelers became title sponsor. Travelers, a leading provider of property and casualty insurance for [auto](#), [home](#) and [business](#), is the Official Property Casualty Insurance Provider of the PGA TOUR. The company has been a corporate sponsor of this event each year since its inception in 1952 and has been doing business in the Hartford community for more than 160 years. Tournament details are available at [TravelersChampionship.com](https://TravelersChampionship.com).

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