

## GOOD DAY, MATE!

Contributed by Bob Phillips  
Sunday, 24 June 2012

{mosimage images/stories/201206/mark leishman - bh380.jpg} Aussie Marc Leishman picks right day to catch fire, wins first PGA title at Travelers

Bill Harper

CROMWELL — Marc Leishman shot a bogey-free fourth round that included eight birdies for a 8-under 62—the tournament's best round—to capture the 2012 Travelers Championship played this weekend at TPC River Highlands in Cromwell, Conn. It was the first win on the PGA Tour for the 28-year-old Leishman, who successfully held off challenges from defending 2010 champion Bubba Watson, who won the Travelers in 2010, and Charley Hoffman. Both Watson and Hoffman have multiple PGA Tour titles on their resumes.

This was just the second appearance at the Travelers by Leishman, who hails from Warrnambool, Australia—a suburb of Melbourne—and currently resides in Virginia Beach, Va. In 2009, he finished in a tie for 70th place. He became the eighth first-time winner of the tournament in the past 10 years, joining Fredrik Jacobson, who won last year and led after the second round this year, Watson, Kenny Perry (2007), Hunter Mahan (2007), Fairfield native J.J. Henry (2006), Brad Faxon (2005), and Woody Austin (2004).

For Leishman, who entered the day six strokes off the pace set by third-round co-leaders Brian Davis of Great Britain and American Roland Thatcher, it was an amazingly consistent final round compared to his performance on Saturday. That included three birdies and an eagle (on par-5 hole 13), but also three bogeys and a double bogey (on par-4 hole 17). After shooting a 30 on the front nine propelling him to the top of the leader board, Leishman felt this just might be his time to shine.

"Well, what an awesome week really," said the 28-year-old Leishman. "I played pretty good all week. It's probably not the way I would have expected to get my first win, but you take them when you get them, any way you can."

With the million-dollar payday—\$1,080,000 to be exact—Leishman has now earned \$1,732,982 this year, nearly double his earnings for all of 2011 (\$916,330). His career earnings on the PGA Tour now stand at \$5,880,391.

"It definitely hasn't sunk in yet," said Leishman. "It's going to take a while. It's amazing." Charley Hoffman and Bubba Watson tied for second with a 72-hole total of 267—13 strokes under par). Four players, including third-round leaders Brian Davis and Roland Thatcher, finished at 268—2 strokes off the pace. For Watson, it was the second round (1-over 71) that did him in.

"It's been great," said the 6-3, 180-lb. Watson. "[The fans have] treated me like I'm from here. They've treated me like family. You know, the tournament's been really good to all of us players, but for the fans that stick with me on bad rounds and my good rounds—it's always fun and it's nice to see."

Second round leader Frederik Jacobson of Sweden, who hoped to become the first repeat champion in the tournament since Phil Mickelson did it in 2001-2002—when the tournament was still known as the Greater Hartford Open—faded in the last two rounds shooting even par on Saturday and -2 on Sunday to finish in a tie for three-way tie for eighth place at 269 (8 under).

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