

## Golf

## Spieth in elite company because of majors, not style points

By DOUG FERGUSON  
AP Golf Writer

SOUTHPORT, England — Jordan Spieth was happy enough to see his name on the claret jug without wondering where he fit in among the rest of the British Open champions whose names are engraved on the oldest trophy in golf.

In that respect, nothing has changed.

Spieth wasn't keen on comparisons when he became the youngest Masters champion since Tiger Woods, the youngest U.S. Open champion since Bobby Jones or the youngest to win two majors since Gene Sarazen. And now that Jack Nicklaus is part of the conversation, he shies away from them even more.

Spieth and Nicklaus are the only players to capture the third leg of the Grand Slam at age 23.

"I'll be careful with my answer," Spieth said Sunday when asked about his place among the greats. "It's amazing. I feel blessed to be able to play the game I love, but I don't think comparisons ... I don't compare myself. And I don't think that they're appropriate or necessary. So to be in that company no doubt is absolutely incredible, and I certainly appreciate it."

To hear his name listed in such elite company is merely a reward from the work he put in to get there.



Jordan Spieth of the United States holds the trophy after winning the British Open Golf Championships at Royal Birkdale, Southport, England, Sunday July 23, 2017.

AP Photo/Dave Thompson

"But I'm very careful as to what that means going forward," he added, "Because what those guys have done has transcended the sport. And in no way, shape or form do I think I'm anywhere near that whatsoever. So it's a good start, but there is a long way to go."

Maybe. But if he were to win the PGA Championship in three weeks, he will be only the sixth — and youngest — to have all four majors.

The prospect is exciting, though recent history illustrates why

success can be so fleeting in golf.

Rory McIlroy looked unstoppable when he won the British Open and PGA Championship at the end of 2014, and then headed to Augusta National for a shot at the Grand Slam. Who could possibly beat that blend of power and scoring? Spieth won the Masters in a runaway. McIlroy has finished six shots behind at Augusta in each of the three chances he has had to complete the Grand Slam.

Phil Mickelson won the British Open in 2013 and was a U.S. Open

away from a career Grand Slam — the major where he was runner-up six times. In three chances since, Mickelson has finished 15 and 18 shots out of the lead and missed the cut last year.

More than winning at Royal Birkdale was the manner in which Spieth did it.

That evokes more comparisons. Even though Spieth already has 11 victories on the PGA Tour, including his three majors, he does not bring intimidation to the first tee. Geoff Ogilvy spoke to that two years ago at St. Andrews when Spieth was trying to win the calendar Grand Slam.

"He beats you with better golf. He doesn't beat you because he hits it further," Ogilvy said that day. "Tiger's intimidation was that he always did something amazing. Jordan doesn't beat you with a crazy par, or a crazy chip-in. He just beats you because he's better."

But there were Tiger-like qualities that emerged from a six-hole stretch of golf at Royal Birkdale that became part of major championship lore.

Spieth salvaged a 5 on the 13th hole while playing his third shot with a 3-iron from the driving range, so far away that he wasn't even sure of the yardage and couldn't see any part of the hole. He faced a delicate pitch over a pot bunker and then a must-make putt.

What followed was a 6-iron that

nearly went in for an ace, a 50-foot eagle that found the center of the cup and a 30-foot birdie across the 16th green.

Was this really happening?

The feelings must have been similar watching Nicklaus make his charge on the back nine to win the 1986 Masters. The drama was similar to Woods running off three straight birdies at Valhalla when he won his third straight major in a playoff at the 2000 PGA Championship.

The payoff for Spieth was more than the third leg of the Grand Slam. It might have been a big step in creating a mystique, a trait shared by precious few over history.

"These are the intangibles, the things I just don't understand," Zach Johnson said. "I'm not suggesting I can't do it. He just does it all the time."

Ernie Els even raised the prospect of Spieth reaching the 14 majors won by Woods.

"When you get on a roll like that, guys kind of starting knowing that you know how to win," Els said. "And almost like Tiger, where people can maybe feel like they can't do it against Jordan. Because he's been up there a few times now."

And as he showed Sunday at Royal Birkdale, he has a sense of the occasion. Next up is how that translates at the PGA Championship.

## Auto Racing

## Kahne gets resume boost with Hendrick job in limbo

By MICHAEL MAROT  
AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS — Kasey Kahne proved he's still capable of winning races.

Now he must convince team owner Rick Hendrick he still belongs on one of NASCAR's strongest teams.

One day after 19-year-old William Byron won his third Xfinity Series races in less than a month, Kahne overcame dangerous heat, painful muscle cramps and a grueling, crash-marred, six-hour marathon Cup race to earn his first win in almost three years. It might take an even bigger effort to keep his job.

"Our plans are not set for the No. 5 car," Hendrick said after Sunday's Brickyard 400. "There's nothing concrete or done and that hasn't changed. We'll see how things shake out at the end of the year."

For weeks, there's been speculation about Kahne's future at Hendrick Motorsports.

With only three top-10 finishes in the first 19 races and his primary sponsor, Great Clips, already



Kasey Kahne (5) celebrates with car owner Rick Hendrick after winning the NASCAR Brickyard 400 auto race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway in Indianapolis Sunday, July 23, 2017.

AP Photo/AJ Mast

announcing it would not be back next season, many thought the 37-year-old Kahne was on his way out.

Kahne responded with maybe the gutsiest performance of his career.

He avoided all the debris and chaos around him. He and Brad Keselowski escaped a three-wide race through the third turn with Jimmie Johnson's car smoking.

Kahne then held off Keselowski on the final restart, beat him to the overtime line and appeared dazed

and confused as he slumped to the ground after climbing out of his Chevrolet with the win in hand. After kissing the bricks, one of the top trained athletes in NASCAR went to the infield medical center for intravenous fluids.

It took everything he and his team had to reach victory lane.

"All I want to do is win. All I want to do is perform," he said. "My team works really hard as well, but we haven't had the performance. We haven't ran up front. We haven't led a lot of laps.

I feel like this is a huge win for us. Being the Brickyard it means even more to me — one of the toughest and biggest races you can win in NASCAR."

The victory gives Kahne a ticket to the playoffs and more chances to impress the owner.

Byron looks like another rising star in Hendrick's garage. With three wins in five weeks, he's already showing he might ready to make the jump to the Cup series.

Hendrick isn't quite convinced. "He's definitely going to be in the Xfinity car (next year)," Hendrick said Sunday morning when asked about Byron taking over the No. 5 in 2018. "We'll come to that bridge when we cross it."

Clearly, wins help Kahne make his case to stay. And big wins, like the one at Indianapolis, are hard to ignore. Hendrick now owns a record 10 Brickyard wins — five with Jeff Gordon, four with Johnson and one with Kahne.

Will it be enough? "Puts him in the Chase, in the playoffs. We're excited about that," Hendrick said. "I hope this turns the corner. The team's had a lot of bad luck."

## BRIEFLY

## Heppner holding football camp

HEPPNER — The Heppner Mustangs football program is holding its 25th annual football camp next week.

The football camp will run

from Monday, July 31 through Thursday, August 3 at the practice field located behind Heppner High School. Campers in grades 5-8 will hit the field for instruction from 3:30-5:30 p.m. each night while grades 9-12 will follow from 5-8 p.m.

The cost for all campers is \$30, and along with instruction from Heppner's experienced coaching staff, each attendee will receive a Heppner football hat. Registration for the 5-8 graders will be July 31 from 2-3:30 p.m. in the Heppner High gymnasium, and the high

school registration will follow from 4-5 p.m.

Registration forms can be found online at the Heppner High school website.

For more information, contact Greg Grant at 541-676-9138 or grantg@morrow.k12.or.us.

## BLACK BELT: Dames set to move to Florida soon to further Jiu-Jitsu career

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that's been through a lot and it's special that he invited me up here to promote him in the town where he started," Sanchez said. "Since I've known him, Brandon's completely changed in Jiu-Jitsu. He looks at it completely different and he's gotten so much better, so much more involved and in tune. It's hard to put into words just how much he's grown."

After graduating from Pilot Rock high school in 1995, Dames' journey took him many places and into many hard times. He confessed some of his story to the attendees of the seminar on Saturday, from living in a garage with no plumbing in Boise, to countless days spent on the road away from his wife, Ashley, and his family whether it was for Jiu-Jitsu or bodybuilding, which was his passion before finding the martial art.

And though his life has taken him away from Eastern Oregon, he still gives back when he can. Dames is the professor for Solid Base instructors Johnny Picard and Logan Skinner, the latter of which also received a promotion

to brown belt on Saturday. That connection as well as coming home to see his parents made Pendleton a logical place for Dames to receive his promotion.

However, soon Jiu-Jitsu is taking Dames further away from home once again. In two weeks, Dames and his wife are packing up and moving to Melbourne, Florida where Dames will continue to train. And then after the first of 2018, Dames and Sanchez will be looking at places to open up a gym together and continue a partnership that has helped Dames reach new heights.

"When I think of (Sanchez), I think of meeting someone you're connected with that will help you reach your goals because he's already reached them," Dames said. "He's been there and knows how to get me where I want to be. I have the work ethic, the hunger, the education, I just needed that mentor to help me conquer those goals and he did it."

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TOP: Jiu-jitsu black belt Brandon Dames instructs a couple of less experienced martial artists Saturday during a jiu-jitsu training camp at Pendleton High School. Dames, a Pilot Rock High School graduate, now lives in Vancouver, Washington, but returned home to receive his black belt during a ceremony at the beginning of the half-day camp.



BOTTOM: Jiu-jitsu instructor Brandon Dames shows a less experienced martial artist how to perform a move Saturday during a jiu-jitsu training camp at Pendleton High School.

Staff photos by Kathy Aney

## YOUTH:

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across three more runs for a 4-1 Arizona lead.

Oregon added another run in the fourth inning off an RBI groundout by Broadfoot to bring home Samford to make it a 4-2 game.

But again, just as Oregon gained a bit of momentum, Arizona took it right back. In the fifth, two singles and back-to-back errors pushed across three more Arizona runs to make it a 7-2 game.

Oregon finishes its pool play slate with a 1-1 record and now moves on to single elimination bracket play today at 5 p.m. against Hawaii.

## BASEBALL

**SPRAGUE 8, PENDLETON 6** — At Portland, the Pendleton 9/10-year-old all-stars lost for the second time at the state tournament, losing a back-and-forth affair to Sprague 8-6 on Monday.

Evan Lehnert and Tugg McQuinn each had three hits in the game, with Lehnert adding one run scored and an RBI and McQuinn scoring a pair of runs. Connor Cook also had a solid day going 2-for-3 with two runs, a double.

Pendleton scored three runs in the top of the third to take a 3-2 lead when Neistadt hit an RBI single to score Cook and then a pair of Sprague errors brought home McQuinn and Lehnert. Sprague then re-took a 4-3 lead in the fourth before Pendleton tied it up at 4-4 in the fifth on a RBI single by Lehnert.

But Sprague scored four times in the bottom of the fifth to take an 8-4 lead and it never relinquished it.

## SEATTLE:

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land, hitting .300 with 18 homers and 56 RBIs in 77 games. He played just nine games at Portland, hitting .400 with two homers. RHP Kyle Martin was optioned to Pawtucket.

## MARINERS MOVES

Seattle signed veteran INF Danny Espinosa, who was released last week by the Los Angeles Angels. Espinosa hit .209 with a career-high 24 homers in 2016 with Washington, but hit just .162 in 77 games with the Angels. RHP Hisashi Iwakuma (right shoulder inflammation) was transferred to the 60-day DL. ... INF Taylor Motter was optioned to Triple-A Tacoma following Sunday's game.

## UP NEXT:

Red Sox: LHP Drew Pomeranz (10-4, 3.51) has won four consecutive decisions over his last five starts, Mariners: RHP Felix Hernandez (5-4, 3.88) is 3-2 with a 3.25 ERA in six starts since coming off the DL.