



*SEE THE FUTURE STARS OF THE LPGA FOR FREE*

## **GUARDIAN CHAMPIONSHIP INCREASES PURSE; BRINGING PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S GOLFERS FROM 26 COUNTRIES TO RIVER REGION IN TWO WEEKS**

**Prattville, Alabama, September 6, 2018** - In two weeks 120 professional women's golfers from 26 countries will compete in the River Region in the The Symetra Tour's Guardian Championship. This will be the second year for the locally sponsored event at the Capitol Hill location on the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail. The 54-hole tournament will take place Friday, September 21 through Sunday, September 23. Guardian Credit Union, based in Montgomery, is sponsoring the Guardian Championship and offering free admission to the event. This will be the 11th year for professional women golf competing at RTJ Capitol Hill and the 21st year on the RTJ Golf Trail.

This year the Guardian Championship purse has increased to \$160,000 (up from \$100,000 last year) with the winner taking home \$24,000 (up from \$15,000). The top 10 players on the Symetra Tour's Volvik Race for the Card money list at the end of the season earn LPGA Tour membership for 2019. All of the Top 15 players on the Symetra Money List are currently in the field. Last year's winner, Lindsey Weaver, has gone on to the LPGA along with Alabama's Emma Talley and several other golfers.

### **Players to Watch**

This year's field of 120 golfers will feature golfers who played collegiately in the State of Alabama including Carlie Carr and Marta Sanz Barrio from Auburn University; Fatima

Fernandez Cano from Troy University and Janie Jackson, Cheyenne Knight and Stephanie Meadow from the University of Alabama. Meadow is currently third on the money list, has competed in LPGA events at RTJ Capitol Hill and represented North Ireland in the Rio Olympic Games. Born in Mobile, Avery George is in the field but now lives in Georgia. Most of the SEC schools have representation in the Guardian Championship, as well.

Golf is a family affair for most of these professional golfers. Twins Jenny and Kristin Coleman from California are in the field and competed for the University of Colorado. Madison Pressel, the younger sister of Morgan Pressel, is in the Guardian Championship field. Morgan has played in several LPGA tournaments in Prattville.

The top 10 golfers in the field based on the Symetra Tour money list are: Dottie Ardina (Philippines), Linnea Strom (USA), Stephanie Meadow (Northern Ireland and University of Alabama), Charlotte Thomas (England), Isi Gabsa (Germany), Jenny Haglund (Sweden), Elizabeth Szokol (USA), Eun Jeong Seong (South Korea), Ruixin Liu (China) and Stephanie Kono (USA). The entire preliminary field is attached but could have changes in the next two weeks.

### **Free Family Events**

To make the event more fan friendly this year, several community events involving the players have been planned during tournament week. Symetra Tour golfers will oversee a putting competition in one of Prattville's Guardian branches, inspire children in the Alabama Power Junior Clinic and conduct the coin toss at two local high school football games that week.

“Guardian is excited for another great tournament at Capitol Hill,” said Guardian Credit Union CEO Heath Harrell. “We are pleased with the outcome from the 2017 Guardian Championship and are looking forward to growing the event this year. Guardian has been invested in the community for 60 years now and we are proud to continue the tradition of women’s golf in Alabama.”

Here are a list of the activities that will happen tournament week.

- **Tuesday, Sept. 18** - Putting competition for Guardian Credit Union members from 2 to 4 p.m. in the branch at 1794 E. Main Street in Prattville. Symetra Tour golfers attending.
- **Wednesday, Sept. 19** - Alabama Power Junior Clinic at 10 a.m. at RTJ Capitol Hill with Symetra Tour golfers. Pro-Am that afternoon.
- **Thursday, Sept. 20** - Guardian Championship Pro-Am.
- **Friday, Sept. 21** - First day of competition at the Guardian Championship begins at 7 a.m. Free admission. Players doing coin toss at Prattville vs. Enterprise game in Prattville and Sidney Lanier vs. Carver game at Crampton Bowl. Both games start at 7 p.m.
- **Saturday, Sept. 22** - Second day of competition. begins at 7 a.m. Cut to top 60 and ties.
- **Sunday, Sept. 23** - Final day of competition begins at 8 a.m. with completion approximately at 3 p.m., depending on weather. Awards ceremony immediately following play.

### **Media Credentials**

The media center for the Guardian Championship will be in the instructional building next to the putting green. Media parking will be in the clubhouse parking lot. Media dining will be in the clubhouse. For media credentials just send us the name of the media outlet and the names of those who will be covering the event a RTJ Capitol Hill. Knowing media names and dates attending would be very helpful. Please email this information to [bill.lang@pchresorts.com](mailto:bill.lang@pchresorts.com).

### **More Details**

For more information about the Guardian Championship, playing in the pro-am and to volunteer, visit [www.guardianchampionship.com](http://www.guardianchampionship.com). The Guardian Championship requires approximately 150 local volunteers to help run all facets of the tournament including scoring, leaderboards, operations and more.

## **About Guardian**

As the local credit union, Guardian's main goal is to serve the community. Service comes from being rooted in the community through events, volunteer projects, serving on boards of local organizations, and investing in the local people by lending money that will be put back into the local economy. The array of financial products and services offered, benefit those that are just starting out, planning for retirement, or enjoying their life savings. For more information visit [MyGuardianCU.com](http://MyGuardianCU.com) or call (334) 244-9999.

## **About the Symetra Tour**

Symetra Tour is the official qualifying tour of the LPGA Tour and enters its 38th competitive season in 2018. With the support of its umbrella partner Symetra, the Tour's mission is to prepare the world's best young women professional golfers for a successful career on the LPGA Tour. Since Symetra's inaugural sponsorship year in 2012, the Symetra Tour has grown from 16 tournaments and \$1.7M in prize money to \$3M in prize money awarded over the course of 22 tournaments. With more than 600 alumnae moving on to the LPGA, former Symetra Tour players have won a total of 427 LPGA titles. Follow the Symetra Tour on the web at [www.SymetraTour.com](http://www.SymetraTour.com), [Facebook.com/RoadtotheLPGA](https://www.facebook.com/RoadtotheLPGA), [Twitter.com/Road2LPGA](https://twitter.com/Road2LPGA), and [YouTube.com/Road2LPGA](https://www.youtube.com/Road2LPGA).

Symetra Life Insurance Company is a subsidiary of Symetra Financial Corporation, a diversified financial services company based in Bellevue, Washington. In business since 1957, Symetra provides employee benefits, annuities and life insurance through a national network of benefit consultants, financial institutions and independent agents and advisors.

Symetra began its partnership with the Road to the LPGA in 2010 as the title sponsor of the Symetra Classic. It secured naming rights for the Symetra Tour in November 2011. In addition to its title sponsorship of the Tour, which runs through 2021, Symetra sponsors two events on the

tournament schedule—the Symetra Classic and the season-ending Symetra Tour Championship. For more information about Symetra, visit [www.symetra.com](http://www.symetra.com).

### **About Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail and Foundation**

Capitol Hill is one of 11 facilities of the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail that now includes 26 golf courses throughout Alabama. The Trail opened in 1992 with eight facilities, the realization of a grand plan by Dr. David Bronner, CEO of the Retirement Systems of Alabama, to diversify the assets of the state’s pension fund and help the state’s economy. Bronner selected Robert Trent Jones Sr., the famed golf course architect, and his company to design the series of courses.

Capitol Hill has three championship courses - Senator, Judge and Legislator. [www.rtjgolf.com](http://www.rtjgolf.com). The Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail Foundation, located in Birmingham, Ala., was established in 1998 as a non-profit organization with the purpose of sponsoring professional golf tournaments and related activities to benefit charitable programs and initiatives. In addition to this professional competition, various events for amateurs are also held along the Golf Trail.

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