

US Open set to be full of surprises

[Neil Johnston](#) looks at the contenders for golf's US Open, with the action starting at the Olympic Club tomorrow

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Last year's winner Rory McIlroy, Image: Ed (supergolfdude) via flickr Creative Commons

Tomorrow the world's top golfers will tee it up at the Olympic Club for the second major of the year. With the course being described as "ridiculous" by Butch Harman and considered one of the toughest layouts on the planet it is set to be an interesting tournament. While this year's Masters provided a winning score of ten under it is more likely the victor on Sunday night will be closer to par.

Again it will be a tournament where there are so many top players that have realistic chances of winning. Tiger Woods has recently showed signs of his former self by picking up his second tour victory of the year two weeks ago. That win at the Memorial tournament tied him with Jack Nicklaus on second for all time PGA victories. The brilliance previously seen by Woods returned when he birdied three out of the last four holes to win by two shots.

This week he will be sure to keep the driver in the bag for most of the tournament. The US Open is not the place to spray the ball 80 yards right as the punishment will be far worse than just landing on another fairway. When the driver does appear it will most likely be at the short par 4 seventh where players might go for the green.

On the back of his win at the European Tour's flagship BMW PGA Championship Luke Donald is also a favourite. The world number one is suited to this course. Although it is huge in length, with the longest ever golf hole at the 670 yard 16th, the narrow fairways and need for precision means Donald could take advantage. He has been consistent yet again this season but is still looking for that elusive major victory. Perhaps it could be his week.

Last year's winner Rory McIlroy can of course not be ruled out. He won convincingly at Congressional but has been on patchy form recently and lost the number one spot to Donald. However he recorded a top ten finish last week so maybe that and memories of last year could help him make it three years of

Northern Irish dominance at the tournament. Not only would he be the first player to win back to back US Opens in 24 years but he would also have achieved his second major quicker than Woods managed to do so.

Other top players like Lee Westwood and Phil Mickelson are also expected to perform well. However don't be surprised if none of the world's top 20 win the tournament. This is a course that will be full of surprises so it could be an outsider that tasted major glory at the end of the week.



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