

The 2008 Open Factsheet

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Everything you need to know about the 2008 Open at Royal Birkdale

Card of the Course			The Open @ Birkdale	Last Time
Hole	Yards	Par	2008 is the ninth staging of The Open at Royal Birkdale:	2007 Open, Carnoustie
1	450	4		
2	421	4		
3	451	4	1954 Champion: Peter Thomson	Player
4	201	3	1961 Champion: Arnold Palmer	Total
5	346	4	1965 Champion: Peter Thomson	Harrington 277
6	499	4	1971 Champion: Lee Trevino	Garcia 277
7	178	3	1976 Champion: Johnny Miller	Romero 278
8	457	4	1983 Champion: Tom Watson	Green 279
9	414	4	1991 Champion: Ian Baker-Finch	Els 279
Out	3417	34	1998 Champion: Mark O'Meara	Harrington defeated Garcia in a four hole play off.
10	408	4	Did you know?	1998 Open, Royal Birkdale
11	436	4	Peter Thomson, Arnold Palmer and Lee Trevino all retained the title the year after their wins at Royal Birkdale.	Player
12	184	3		Total
13	499	4	<i>Peter Thomson and Tom Watson both won The Open five times (a record beaten only by Harry Vardon). They both recorded their final triumphs at Royal Birkdale. JH Taylor, who like Watson and Thomson won The Open five times, was responsible for an extensive redesign of Birkdale in 1922.</i>	O'Meara 280
14	201	3		Watts 280
15	544	5		Woods 281
16	439	4		Rose 282
17	572	5		Parnevik 282
18	473	4		Furyk 282
In	3756	36	Lee Trevino was reigning US Open Champion when he won at Royal Birkdale.	Russell 282
Total	7173	70	Mark O'Meara was reigning Masters Champion when he won.	Mark O'Meara defeated Brian Watts by two strokes in a four hole play off. O'Meara carded a birdie and three pars on the extra holes.
Changes			<i>Only American and Australian golfers have won the Open at Royal Birkdale.</i>	
Another major, another changed course. Refreshingly Royal Birkdale hasn't gone for length (it is only 155 yards longer than 1998) but they have changed 16 of the holes. New bunkers, new mounds and new playing lines change the nature of Birkdale's challenge.				

Who's That Boy?

Now more famous as a commentator, the 1976 Open at Birkdale was Johnny Miller's first Open and his second, and final, major. But for the British galleries 1976 was all about a 19 year old Spaniard. Seve Ballesteros was tied for the lead on day one after a 69. The same score in the second round - including 33 on the inward nine - gave him a two shot lead going into the business end of the tournament. On the third day the weather changed. In strong winds Ballesteros and Miller both shot 73. The teenager's two shot lead had survived the weather.

With anticipation high, the crowd waited for Ballesteros to perform. They weren't disappointed and he extended his lead to three shots at the 1st hole. Then disaster struck. Double, even triple, bogeys marred his round. By the 13th hole Johnny Miller enjoyed an eight stroke lead. Somehow regaining his composure Seve eagled 17 and managed to finish with a birdie to tie Jack Nicklaus in second place. Despite the disappointing finish, the young Spaniard had posted a warning: Seve was coming!

Birkdale Numbers

6 - Johnny Miller's winning margin in 1976. Only Tiger Woods has won by more shots in the last 100 years.

28 - Denius Durnian's front nine score at Birkdale in 1983. An Open record.

29 - Ian Baker-Finch comes close to Durnian's record in 1991.

63 - Jodie Mudd's final round score in 1991 has never been bettered.

64 - Craig Stadler's opening round in 1983 - a joint Open record.

66 - Justin Rose's second round in 1998 shares the amateur low score record.

282 - Justin Rose's total in 1998 is the second lowest total ever posted by an amateur in The Open.

Birkdale Timeline

1889 - The course is first established.

1922 - Fred Hawtree and JH Taylor redesign the course and the links that we know today is born.

1935 - The famous clubhouse is built.

1940 - The Open is set to make its Birkdale debut. The Second World War intervenes.

1946 - The Amateur Championship is Birkdale's first big event.

1948 - Birkdale hosts the Curtis Cup - the US win.

1951 - Birkdale hosts the Walker Cup - the US win again. And the club becomes Royal Birkdale after the King grants the club the use of the title.

1954 - 14 years late The Open arrives. Peter Thomson wins and Royal Birkdale, along with Royal Lytham, becomes the most regular English course on the championship rota.

1965 and 1969 - Royal Birkdale hosts the Ryder Cup.

1971 - Royal Birkdale is chosen to host the 100th Open. Lee Trevino wins. In the space of four weeks Trevino wins the US Open, the Canadian Open and The Open. "I believe in miracles," he says.

1982 - Royal Birkdale hosts the British Ladies Open for the first time. Marta Figueras-Dotti wins. As an amateur she can't claim the £6000 prize money.

1983 - Tom Watson wins his last Open - his fifth in eight years. Victory at Royal Birkdale is his only win outside Scotland.

England's Golf Coast

Royal Birkdale is one part of a golfing triumvirate that challenges the east of Scotland for golfing dominance.

Royal Birkdale, Royal Lytham & St Anne's and Royal Liverpool (Hoylake) are all fixtures on The Open rota and world famous for the quality of their links.

All are nestled close together on England's north-west coast. The area has become a place of pilgrimage for many golfers.

A Century On....

The 1908 Open was played at Prestwick, original home of the championship.

James Braid won the fourth of his five Claret Jugs with his second six stroke win. This time the unlucky loser was England's Tom Ball who couldn't match Braid's record breaking 291.

Braid retired four years and one more Open win later. As a course designer he is regarded as the inventor of the dogleg!

Not Just For Opens!

Royal Birkdale has a long history of hosting prestigious tournaments. The story began with the the 1946 Amateur Championship and has carried on through the Walker Cup and the Curtis Cup.

Most famously Birkdale twice hosted the Ryder Cup in the 1960's. In 1965 Arnold Palmer won the Cup for America after beating P J Butler. But in 1969 Jack Nicklaus graciously conceded a putt on the final hole to give Tony Jacklin - and his team - a share of the spoils.

Another great Birkdale, and Nicklaus, legend was born!

The Last 10 Champions

Year	Winner	Score
2007	P Harrington	277
2006	Tiger Woods	270
2005	Tiger Woods	274
2004	Todd Hamilton	274
2003	Ben Curtis	283
2002	Ernie Els	278
2001	David Duval	274
2000	Tiger Woods	269
1999	Paul Lawrie	290
1998	Mark O'Meara	280

Mark's Annus Mirabilis

Mark O'Meara was, by 1998, well known as a consistent and confident tour golfer. But, at the age of 41, his tilt at the game's major honours seemed to be over. How wrong we were! As others of his generation fell away in the face of Tiger Woods and his astonishing onslaught of youth and muscle, O'Meara knew differently. He had developed a close friendship with Woods: instead of being scared the Tiger actually inspired him. And how inspirational it was. First came his triumph in the Masters and then, after a play off win against fellow American Brian Watts, came his famous Claret Jug victory. At the age of 41 O'Meara had suddenly fulfilled his potential!