

LIBERTY CORNER, N.J. (May 4, 2020) – The USGA and World Golf Tour (WGT) by Topgolf today launched the *Virtual Open: Best of Challenge* on the WGT Golf app and [www.wgt.com](http://www.wgt.com), giving fans a chance to compete for a VIP trip to the 2021 U.S. Open at Torrey Pines and a \$500 [USGA Shop](#) gift card.

Through the support of Lexus, the qualifying portion of the Virtual Open will take place from May 4-June 11 on a “Best of the U.S. Open” course that consists of memorable holes from past championships. At the conclusion of qualifying, the top 156 scorers plus ties will compete in four rounds of championship play. The championship rounds will be contested on Congressional, Merion, Chambers Bay and Pebble Beach.

Ten finalists will then compete for the grand prize in an 18-hole playoff that will be livestreamed across multiple USGA channels on June 27.

A full schedule of events is as follows:

- Qualifying: May 4-June 11
- Championship Rounds: June 12-19
  - Round 1: June 12-13 (Congressional)
  - Round 2: June 14-15 (Merion)
  - Round 3: June 16-17 (Chambers Bay)
  - Round 4: June 18-19 (Pebble Beach)
- Livestreamed Final Round: June 27

Three of the venues selected for the championship rounds have hosted multiple U.S. Opens, led by six-time site Pebble Beach (Calif.) Golf Links. Often called the greatest meeting of land and sea, Pebble Beach has produced its share of great U.S. Open champions, including Jack Nicklaus (1972), Tom Watson (1982) and Tiger Woods (2000), the latter of whom won by a record 15 strokes.

Merion, a five-time U.S. Open site located along Philadelphia’s Main Line in Ardmore, Pa., is where Ben Hogan won a memorable 1950 U.S. Open in a playoff, a mere 18 months after he suffered a near-fatal automobile accident. It’s also where Lee Trevino defeated Jack Nicklaus in an 18-hole playoff for the 1971 U.S. Open, and where Justin Rose conquered a stellar field in 2013.

Congressional, in Bethesda, Md., has hosted three U.S. Opens. In 1964, local and sectional qualifier Ken Venturi fought off heat exhaustion on a 36-hole marathon final day to win the championship. It’s also where Ernie Els won a second title in 1997 and Rory McIlroy produced a record-setting victory in 2011.

Chambers Bay, in University Place, Wash., had a memorable U.S. Open debut in 2015 when Jordan Spieth outlasted Dustin Johnson to win his first title and third USGA championship.

The venue for the finale will be determined by a vote of the players.

“Thanks to our partners at Lexus, we have the opportunity to work with WGT by Topgolf to provide golf fans with a unique and interactive experience on some of the most iconic U.S. Open courses,” said Navin Singh, chief commercial officer of the USGA. “We think the Virtual Open: Best of Challenge is a great way for users to get excited for the championship to return in September.”

Participants can play unlimited qualifying rounds for the 2020 Virtual Open through June 11. Each phase of the competition will be contested via 18-hole stroke play.

“This competition provides fans the unique opportunity to play the same courses as the pros, but from the comfort of their own homes,” said Amanda Weiner, the USGA’s senior director, digital media. “With millions of virtual balls hit each year, the Virtual Open has become a must-play event for the WGT community and a

way to engage golf fans around the world.”

The champion of the 2020 Virtual Open will win a trip to Torrey Pines for the 2021 U.S. Open with two tickets for Thursday–Sunday and a \$500 USGA Shop gift card. The second-place finisher will take home a \$250 USGA Shop gift card. All other finalists will receive a \$100 USGA Shop gift card. In addition, three lucky participants will be randomly selected to win a \$250 USGA Shop gift card.

There is no cost to enter the competition or to download. The WGT Golf app is available through [iTunes](#) and [Google Play](#) and a desktop version is available on <http://www.wgt.com>.

### **About the USGA**

The USGA is a nonprofit organization that celebrates, serves and advances the game of golf. Founded in 1894, we conduct many of golf’s premier professional and amateur championships, including the U.S. Open and U.S. Women’s Open. With The R&A, we govern the sport via a global set of playing, equipment, handicapping and amateur status rules. The USGA campus in Liberty Corner, New Jersey, is home to the Association’s Research and Test Center, where science and innovation are fueling a healthy and sustainable game for the future. The campus is also home to the USGA Golf Museum, where we honor the game by curating the world’s most comprehensive archive of golf artifacts. To learn more, visit [usga.org](https://usga.org).

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