



**Media contacts:**

Greg Ball, 760-271-9183/ Dana Gordon, 856-397-2917/ Liz McCollum, 352-514-0550; [blackdesert@bzapr.com](mailto:blackdesert@bzapr.com)

Press kit: [Access here](#)

## **Black Desert Resort Invites Utah Fans to Rally Behind Homegrown Talent at the Inaugural Black Desert Championship presented by Greater Zion**

***Utah residents Zac Blair, Patrick Fishburn, Mike Weir, Peter Kuest, Jay Don Blake, and Kihei Akina will compete in the inaugural Black Desert Championship***

**IVINS, Utah (September 12, 2024)** – When the inaugural Black Desert Championship presented by Greater Zion tees off this October, Utah's passionate fan base can look forward to seeing several notable local players alongside some of the best golfers in the world. The tournament will feature multiple Utah-based players receiving sponsor exemptions, including Park City resident and 2024 International Presidents Cup captain Mike Weir, former BYU standout Peter Kuest, and rising star Kihei Akina, a senior at Lone Peak High School who is committed to BYU. Additionally, Utah natives and former BYU stars Patrick Fishburn and Zac Blair have also confirmed their participation, while St. George native Jay Don Blake will celebrate his 500<sup>th</sup> career PGA TOUR start in his hometown during this inaugural event.

“The Black Desert Championship is truly Utah's tournament, and we invite the entire state to come out and support their local heroes,” said Patrick Manning, Managing Partner of Black Desert Resort. “We’re excited to offer exemptions to Mike, Peter, and Kihei and are thrilled to have them join our field in October. It’s also an honor to welcome 2024 Presidents Cup International Captain Mike Weir and to highlight the incredible talent of Kihei Akina, recognized as one of the nation’s top junior golfers. Additionally, we’re pleased that former BYU star Peter Kuest, along with standout alumni Patrick Fishburn and Zac Blair, are committed to competing.”

About the Players:

**Weir** is the 2003 Masters champion and lives in Park City. Coming out of BYU, he turned pro in 1992 and has won eight times on the PGA TOUR. Weir received Canada's highest civilian honor, the Order of Canada, in 2009 and the Order of Ontario in 2004. He was also a 2009 Canadian Golf Hall of Fame inductee.

**Akina**, a resident of Alpine and a Lone Peak High School senior is committed to play golf at BYU starting next year. Golfweek’s top-ranked golfer in the Class of 2025, Akina, 18, was named the 2023 USA Today National Boys High School Golfer of the Year. Akini won medalist honors at the 6A state tournament as a freshman and sophomore at Lone Peak.

[Kuest](#) has played 24 PGA TOUR events since turning pro in 2020. Kuest played at BYU from 2016 to 2020, winning 10 individual titles, including the 2017 West Coast Conference Championship. Kuest currently resides in American Fork.

[Blair](#) was born in Salt Lake City, attended Fremont High School in Plain City and currently lives in St. George. A BYU product, he turned pro in 2014. He posted a season-best T2 finish this year at the ISCO Championship, where he lost in a five-way playoff. In the 2022-23 season, Blair recorded two top-10s and made 11 cuts in 28 starts.

[Fishburn](#) lives in Ogden and played four seasons at BYU. After turning pro in 2018, he finished No. 19 on the 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Points List, earning his first PGA TOUR card. Earlier this year, Fishburn held the 54-hole lead with partner Blair at the Zurich Classic of New Orleans and went on to finish T4, his first career top-10 on the PGA TOUR. At BYU, he won twice individually and earned 2017-18 West Coast Conference Player of the Year recognition, as well as consecutive All-WCC First Team honors in 2017 and 2018.

The Black Desert Championship represents a significant moment for golf in Utah, marking the return of PGA TOUR golf to the state for the first time in over 60 years. Set against the backdrop of the stunning new Tom Weiskopf-designed golf course at Black Desert Resort, this event is expected to attract fans from across the region. Tickets for the championship are available now, offering grounds passes and VIP daily tickets at [www.BlackDesertEvents.com](http://www.BlackDesertEvents.com).

Showcasing world-class talent against the iconic red rocks of Southern Utah, the event schedule is as follows:

- **Wednesday, October 9:** Official Pro-Am presented by Marcella, open to public
- **Thursday, October 10:** Opening Day, full field competition
- **Friday, October 11:** Second round, full field competition
- **Saturday, October 12:** Third round of competition, player field after the cut
- **Sunday, October 13:** Final championship round, trophy presentation

The 2024 Black Desert Championship inaugurates a four-year partnership between Black Desert and the PGA TOUR. As player commitments are secured, further announcements will be made.

### **About Black Desert Resort**

Amid the sprawling, centuries-old canvas of striking black lava beds and burnt-red sandstone cliffs of Greater Zion, a breathtaking experience at Black Desert Resort awaits. Spanning over 600 acres of scenic desert landscape and anchored by an 18-hole Tom Weiskopf-designed championship course, Black Desert Resort will unveil its first phase after it hosts the PGA TOUR's Black Desert Championship in October 2024. The preview phase will include 447 luxury guestrooms and suites, 45,000 square feet of indoor/outdoor meeting and event space, five diverse restaurant and beverage outlets including a 20th-hole club lounge, heated outdoor pools and hot tubs, plus easy access to 200+ acres of preserved land with 6 miles of hiking trails. Beginning Q1 2025, the resort will debut an additional 344 luxury guestrooms and suites, in addition to an expansive 15,000-square-foot world-class spa. Black Desert Resort will offer an immersive experience that captivates and welcomes a multi-generational audience of guests and residents—from near and far—to a boundless oasis of natural beauty and engaging adventure. Reef Capital Partners is developing Black Desert Resort. To learn more, visit [www.BlackDesertResort.com](http://www.BlackDesertResort.com).