

5 New Celebrities Added To Annexus Pro-Am at 2023 WM Phoenix Open

Written by Bennett Silvyn

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The best hands in the NFL, "The Bus," "The Milk Man," A-Rod and a country music star have been added to the list of celebrities who will be competing in one of the greatest golf spectacles of the year.



Still haven't figured out who it is? Valley residents will be very familiar with all five, including: the man with more career tackles than drops, Arizona Cardinals receiver Larry Fitzgerald Jr.; one of the best running backs of all time, Jerome Bettis; newly retired J.J. Watt; New York Yankees legend Alex Rodriguez; and five-time Grammy nominee Jason Aldean will take on a different type of green grass along with other celebrities in the Annexus Pro-Am at the 2023 WM Phoenix Open presented by Taylor Morrison on Wednesday, Feb. 8 at TPC Scottsdale's Stadium Course.

A familiar name competing in the Pro-Am, Fitzgerald played wide receiver in the NFL for 17 seasons—all with the Cardinals. During that time, his accolades were off the charts with 11 Pro Bowls, 2008 All-Pro first team, as well as leading the NFL in receptions twice over a decade (2005 and 2016), leading the NFL in receiving touchdowns two years in a row (2008 and 2009), and was named to the NFL 2010s All-Decade team as well as the NFL 100th Anniversary All-Time team. In addition, Fitzgerald won one of the most prestigious awards in the NFL, the Walter Payton Man of the Year award, in 2016. He is second in all-time receiving yards in the NFL, clocking in at 17,942.

Bettis hung up his cleats in 2006 following the Pittsburgh Steelers Super Bowl XL win. Playing 13 seasons, his career was nothing short of greatness. The running back won offensive rookie of the year in 1993, was named to six Pro Bowls, was listed in the NFL first-team All-Pro in 1993 and 1996, won the NFL rushing title in 1997 and was awarded the Walter Payton Man of the Year award in 2001. Bettis finished his career with 13,662 rushing yards putting him 8th all-time, and was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2015. This is the second time "The Bus" will stop at the Annexus Pro-Am.



Now enjoying retirement, former Houston Texans and Arizona Cardinals defensive lineman J.J. Watt has decided to follow the footsteps of many other retired athletes into golf. Regarded as one of the best pass rushers in football history, Watt, a.k.a. "The Milk Man," won NFL defensive player of the year three times (2012, 2014 and 2015), was a five-time Pro Bowler, five-time NFL All-Pro first-team, two-time sack leader (2012 and 2015), was named the Walter Payton Man of the Year in 2017, and is also a member of the NFL 2010s All-Decade team. Watt retired following the end of the 2022–23 NFL season with the Cardinals and will be making his Annexus Pro-Am debut.

Rodriguez played 22 seasons in the MLB for the Seattle Mariners, Texas Rangers and New York Yankees. Wildly considered one of the greatest baseball players to grace the field, he finished an illustrious career with a .295 batting average, 696 home runs (5th all-time), a 2,086 RBI, 329 stolen bases, 14 all-star appearances, two golden gloves, and is a three-time AL MVP, 2009 World Series Champion and much more. Currently, he is the CEO of A-Rod Corp, a multi-faceted private equity and real estate firm, and is a part owner of the NBA's Minnesota Timberwolves as well as the WNBA's Minnesota Lynx.

Aldean is one of the most widely known country artists with 27 No. 1 hits, 15 billion streams and over 20 million albums sold. Seven of his albums are certified platinum with the most top 10 songs on Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart with 34—more than any other artist since he made his debut in 2005. The three-time ACM Entertainer of the Year is taking a break from preparing for his "Rock N'Roll Cowboy Tour" for his 10th studio album, "Macon, Georgia," featuring 20 new songs that showcase his southern roots and signature to hit the TPC course.

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The Phoenix WM Open will take place from Feb. 6–12 at TPC Scottsdale. Tee times for the Pro-Am will start between 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. The entire list of celebrities and PGA Tour players that will compete accompanied by exact tee times are going to be announced on Feb. 7 on www.WMPhoenixOpen.com.