



## KIA Open

Quito Tennis y Golf Club | Quito, Ecuador | May 2-5, 2024

### First-Round Notes – May 2, 2024

**PGA TOUR Americas 2024 Season:** 5th of 16 events

- Latin America Swing: 5th of 6 events

**Fortinet Cup Points:** 500 (winner)

**Purse:** \$225,000 (\$40,500 winner)

Pos.	Player	Score
T1	Joey Savoie (Canada)	64 (-8)
T1	Felipe Garcés (a) (Ecuador)	64 (-8)
3	Harry Hillier (New Zealand)	65 (-7)
T4	Samuel Anderson (United States)	66 (-6)
T4	Charles Wang (China)	66 (-6)
T4	Sandy Scott (Scotland)	66 (-6)
T4	Jonathan De Los Reyes (United States)	66 (-6)
T4	Jaime Lopez Rivarola (Argentina)	66 (-6)
T4	Thomas Longbella (United States)	66 (-6)

**QUITO, Ecuador** – Felipe Garcés and Joey Savoie carded rounds of 8-under 64 and share the first-round lead at the KIA Open. Harry Hillier is in solo third at 7-under, and six players are tied for fourth at 6-under entering Friday's second round at Quito Tennis y Golf Club.

Garcés, an Ecuador-native, gained entry into this week's field via a sponsor exemption. The 23-year-old amateur earned the invitation after becoming the first Ecuadorian player to win the South American Amateur Championship in January. In addition to his win earlier this year, Garcés' career accomplishments include the 2019 Brazilian Amateur Championship title at the Olympic Golf Course in Rio and a runner-up finish at the 2021 NCAA Division II Men's Golf Championships. Garcés played two collegiate seasons at Newberry College before transferring to the University of West Florida in 2020.

Garcés' familiarity with the KIA Open extends as far back as 2014: the tournament's inaugural year as a PGA TOUR Latinoamérica event. At 14 years old, Garcés served as a tournament volunteer and standard bearer for the KIA Open. Only three years later, Garcés competed in the tournament's Monday Qualifier

and earned himself a spot in the field. This year is Garcés' third appearance at the KIA Open after being awarded a sponsor exemption in 2021.

Savoie's 8-under par in the opening-round of the KIA Open is his lowest round in tournament play since the Quebec Open on PGA TOUR Canada in July of 2023. This season, the Quebec-native has finished inside the top 20 twice; highlighted by a T4 finish at the Bupa Championship at Tulum. Entering this week, his best finish in 47 PGA TOUR-sanctioned starts was runner-up at the 2021 Bolingbrook Golf Club Invitational on PGA TOUR Canada. Since then, he has recorded 10 top-25s, including six top 10s.

The 29-year-old's success on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica and PGA TOUR Canada last year gained him membership on PGA TOUR Americas after finishing inside the top-60 on both tours points lists. With two top-20 finishes this season, Savoie began the week 18th in the Fortinet Cup standings. With one event remaining after the KIA Open, the top 60 players in the Fortinet Cup will be exempt into the 10-event North America Swing beginning in June.

Second-round tee times begin at 7:30 a.m. ET and will run until 2:00 p.m. ET off the Nos. 1 and 10 tees on Friday.

#### **About Joey Savoie (T1/-8)**

**Age:** 29

**Birthplace:** Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Canada

**Residence:** La Prairie, Quebec

**College:** Middle Tennessee State University

**Fortinet Cup (start of week):** 18

- Won the 2018 Tennessee State Open Championship by six strokes as an amateur
- Canadian Men's Amateur Golfer of the Year (2018)
- Likes music, especially country; plays the guitar casually
- Is proud of his family of lawyers, artists and creators; admires them because he says all of them have a sense of humor
- Loves to be in nature, especially on a lake or in the forest
- Favorite golf memory is seeing The Presidents Cup in Montreal in 2007 and watching Mike Weir win his match against Tiger Woods
- Enjoys quiet time to read the news and books

#### **About Felipe Garcés (T1/-8)**

**Age:** 23

**Birthplace:** Quito, Ecuador

**Residence:** Quito, Ecuador

**College:** University of West Florida

**Fortinet Cup (start of week):** N/A

- Won the 2019 Brazilian Amateur Championship title at the Olympic Golf Course in Rio; was runner-up in the 2021 NCAA Division II Men's Golf Championships; and was named a 2023 Division II All-American (second team)
- Graduated from the University of West Florida with a degree in psychology in May of 2023

- Started his collegiate career at Newberry College and transferred to the University of West Florida in 2020
- Became the first Ecuadorian to win the South American Amateur Championship in 2024
- Began playing golf when he was 8 at the Los Arrayanes Club

### **Competition Notes**

**Course Setup:** Par 72 / 7,412 yards; R1 average: 71.340

**Weather:** Cloudy with a high of 69. Wind from the northwest at 1-6 mph with gusts up to 11 mph.

- Seven countries are represented in the top five and ties: United States (3), Canada (1), Scotland (1), China (1), Ecuador (1), Argentina (1) and New Zealand (1)
- Matthew Anderson (Canada), the No. 1 player in the Fortinet Cup, carded a 4-under par 68 and is T19. Last week's winner Stuart Macdonald (Canada) joins Anderson at T19 (-4).
- Amateur and Ecuador-native Felipe Garcés is tied for the lead (T1/-8). He would look to become the first amateur to make the cut this season
- Three Monday Qualifiers are under-par after the first-round: Austen Christiansen (T10/-5), Mauro Baez Julien (T19/-4) and Diego Vanegas (T19/-4)
- Hole 6 – the 220-yard par 3 – was the most challenging hole at Quito Tenis y Golf Club; averaging a +.370
- Hole 3 – the 564-yard par 5 – was the easiest hole through the first round; averaging a -.540. Six eagles, 75 birdies and five bogeys were carded on hole No. 3

### **Quick Links**

- English: [Tee Times](#) | [Leaderboard](#) | [Fortinet Cup](#)
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### **About PGA TOUR Americas**

PGA TOUR Americas is an international tour that provides professional golfers with competitive opportunities and prepares them to advance their careers on the Korn Ferry Tour and PGA TOUR. The 2024 schedule consists of 16 events – six in Latin America and 10 in North America – and the inaugural season culminates in September with the Fortinet Cup Championship, where the top-10 players on the season-long points list will earn Korn Ferry Tour membership the following season.

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