



LINCOLN LAND  
CHARITY CHAMPIONSHIP

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**June 23, 2017**

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### **Second-Round Leaderboard**

<b>Pos.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Scores</b>
1	Tom Whitney	65-65—130 (-12)
2	Kyle Thompson	68-64—132 (-10)
3	11 players tied at	133 (-9)

## **Tom Whitney grabs 36-hole lead at Lincoln Land Charity Championship**

**Springfield, Ill.** – Tom Whitney carded a 6-under 65 and jumped into the lead halfway through the Lincoln Land Charity Championship. Whitney, who graduated from the United States Air Force Academy in 2010, sits 12-under-par 130 in his first two trips around Panther Creek Country Club, two clear of Kyle Thompson, who chipped in on the par-3 17<sup>th</sup> for birdie to breakout of a 12-way tie for second.

Eleven players are 9-under-par 133 after 36 holes.

After six straight pars to start the round, Whitney birdied holes 16 through 18 and separated himself from the field. The 28-year-old from South Lake Tahoe, Calif. added four more birdies on his second nine, including a bounce-back on his final hole of the day after dropping a shot at the par-4 eighth.

“I had 145 yards and hit a smooth 8-iron,” said Whitney, who has hit 31 of 36 greens in regulation over the past two days. “It was one of those shots that never left the flag and I was lucky to be under the hole for an easy putt.”

A few weeks ago, the father-of-two was sailing shots over the green more frequently than pin high, which led to a missed cut in Wichita. Whitney spent time on the range dialing in his iron game with the help of Trackman, a radar device used to precisely measure distance, earlier this week.

“It’s a huge difference,” said Whitney, who went through the bag getting averages for every club. “Now that I know those numbers and I have proof, it’s been working”

Whitney is finally in his comfort zone. Starting the season with conditional status, the seven-year pro went three months between his start at The Bahama Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club and the United Leasing & Finance Championship. Thanks to a tie for 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Rust-Oleum Championship a few weeks ago, Whitney earned enough to move up in the reorder that took place on Monday after the Air Capital Classic supporting Wichita’s Youth.

“I can just kind of have fun out there,” said Whitney, who is No. 133 on the money list. “The way I see it is, it’s just a birdie game. I will probably go home, take a nap and expect to not be the leader anymore because there are so many good golfers out there, that have yet to tee off and their chasing me.”

Whitney will play with the 36-hole lead for the first time in his career on Tour. He feels like he’s finally gotten his swing back after being rusty from the inconsistent schedule. Whitney played PGA TOUR Latinoamérica last year and thrived. The Fort Collins, Colo. resident posted 10 top-25s in 17 starts to end the season No. 11 on the Order of Merit.

“This is pretty similar to how I was playing in Latin America last year,” said Whitney, who recorded four top-10s that year. “I’m getting comfortable and I’m just hitting golf shots the way I know how.”

Thompson made a critical par-save at the last to closeout his lowest round on Tour this year. From the middle of the fairway, the four-time Tour winner hit his approach into the bunker. Thompson then blasted it to six feet and drained the putt for four.

"I didn't want to be T2, I wanted to be second," said Thompson, who walked in the par-putt on 18. "I was pretty happy with how I played today and I would've hated to make a mistake on the last hole of the day when I played so well. It felt good to finish the way I did. I've been playing well all year, maybe this will be the week I can make another run."

Thompson's game has been trending up since a solo fifth in Evansville back in April. The two-time Tour graduate is close securing his PGA TOUR yet again, but remembers it wasn't too long ago he was thinking about walking away from the game he loved.

"In 2015, I was in my last event as a pro," said Thompson, who wasn't having any fun on the golf course during that time. "If I didn't make the cut I was quitting golf. It was my last start in Raleigh, N.C. and I went out and won the golf tournament. It was my third win at that tournament and at that course. It just totally rejuvenated my golf career. Instead of being in an office, I'm out here playing golf. I feel like I'm playing some of the best golf of my career. My consistency has been really good and I'm been putting better than before."

What a difference a few years make. This season, Thompson won straight out of the gates at The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic at Sandals Emerald Bay, currently sits No. 11 on the money list and competed in the U.S. Open contested at Erin Hills Golf Club, where he missed the cut by one shot, last week.

"After playing last week, this place feels so much easier," said Thompson, about the setup at Panther Creek CC. "I'm so comfortable around this golf course. These greens are exactly what I grew up playing on, so I feel pretty good about it."

### **Friday Notes:**

\* Friday weather: Mostly sunny. High: 89, Low: 73, Winds: N-NW 10-15 mph.

\* This week's purse is \$550,000, with \$99,000 going to the champion.

\* The cut came at 3-under-par 139 with 85 players advancing to the weekend.

\* Monday qualifier Matt Davidson followed up his opening 65 with a 68 on Friday morning and is three back. Davidson is playing in just his third event of the season and missed the cut in his previous starts this season. This is Davidson's second appearance in Springfield, Ill., where he carded 70-71 and missed the cut.

\* Sepp Straka started the second round T38 and posted a bogey-free 65 to move into a tie for second. Two weeks ago, Straka posted a top-10 in his native country of Austria on the European Tour. The T7 at the LYONESS OPEN powered by ORGANIC+ earned the former University of Georgia standout a spot in this week's tournament. Straka, who is currently No. 53 on the money list, turned down the opportunity to focus on the Web.com Tour.

\* Conrad Schindler is looking for his second win of the season after starting the tournament 67-66. Schindler won the Rex Hospital Open earlier this month and trailed by four after the second round. Schindler posted 65-67 on the weekend and defeated Chesson Hadley in a playoff for the title.

\* In 12 starts this season, Michael Johnson has made three cuts and recorded one top-25 (T25 – United Leasing & Finance Championship). He is currently No. 137 on the money list. Thursday's 65 is his lowest round this season.

\* Phillip Mollica, from Mount Pleasant, S.C., carded a 67 Gateway National, one of two qualifying sites, on Monday to earn a spot in the field. Mollica stands 9-under-par after the second round. This is his second start of the season (Panama Claro Championship – CUT).

\* Web.com Tour money leader Stephan Jaeger is 3-under through 36 holes in a tie for 58<sup>th</sup>. Jaeger (\$247,860) leads Andrew Putnam (\$242,245) by a little less than \$6,000. Putnam is also 3-under heading into the weekend.

### **Bogey Free Rounds:**

R1 – Carlos Ortiz (64), Vince India (64), Jin Park (64), Billy Kennerly (65), Brice Garnett (65), Abraham Ancer (66), Ben Kohles (66), Robert Allenby (67), Michael Gellerman (67), Brad Elder (67), Derek Ernst (68), Tyler Duncan (68), Jordan Niebrugge (68), Chris Worrell (68), Chris Naegel (69).

R2 – Kyle Thompson (64), Adam Svensson (64), Jonathan Byrd (64), Sepp Straka (65), Dawie van der Walt (65), Steve Allan (66), Corey Connors (66), Anders Albertson (66), Jim Knous (67), Cameron Meyers (67), Andrew Putnam (67), Sam Ryder (68), Josh Teater (68), Jacques Blaauw (68), Sam Ryder (68).

**Scoring Average Panther Creek Country Club for the week:**

	Front (36)	Back (35)	Total (70)
Round 1:	34.885	34.449	69.333
Round 2:	34.987	34.833	69.821

\* **NEXT WEEK:** The Web.com Tour heads east to Nashville for the Nashville Golf Open Benefitting the Snedeker Foundation where James Driscoll edged out Brian Campbell by three shots for the win, his second career Web.com Tour victory.

**HIGHLIGHTS AND INTERVIEWS from today's play are available via the following FTP site:**

**website:** <https://moveit.pgatourhq.com> <<https://moveit.pgatourhq.com/>>

Username: webcom\_Highlights

Password: pgatour13

\* First click on "FOLDER" on the top left of the main page. From there, navigate to the following folders: /Home/Highlights and then locate the event folder of your choice.

\* All footage is HD and use is free.

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