



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Nick Park
(904) 806-4582

First-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores	Current \$ list position
1	Conrad Shindler	63 (-8)	20
	Drew Weaver	63 (-8)	129
3	Aaron Wise	64 (-7)	18
	Sebastian Cappelen	64 (-7)	83
5	John Merrick	65 (-6)	163
	Martin Piller	65 (-6)	27

SHINDLER AND WEAVER TIED AFTER FIRST ROUND OF WINCO FOODS PORTLAND OPEN

NORTH PLAINS, Ore. – Drew Weaver and Conrad Shindler opened with 8-under 63s at the WinCo Foods Portland Open presented by Kraft Heinz to grab a share of the lead after the first round at the Witch Hollow Course at Pumpkin Ridge. Aaron Wise and Sebastian Cappelen trail by one after a pair of 7-under 64s in the regular season finale where 25 PGA TOUR cards will be handed out on Sunday.

Shindler, No. 20 on the Web.com Tour money list, has already locked up his TOUR card and is in search of his second win of the season. Weaver enters the week at No. 129 on the money list and needs at least a top-four finish to have a shot at breaking into the top 75 to secure fully-exempt status on the Web.com Tour in 2018 and a berth in the Web.com Tour Finals.

“It’s a stressful week for a lot of guys, but I’m in a pretty free place,” Weaver said. “There is no worst case for me this week. I’ve got no bubble to jump out of. I can just jump up that money list, and I’m pleased with my start.”

That carefree attitude showed from the opening tee as Weaver was 6-under through his first eight holes after holing a wedge from 100 yards on the par-4 eighth for eagle. With two birdies on the back nine, Weaver secured a share of the 18-hole lead for the first time in his career.

“It’s been an odd summer – and I’ve had a rough stretch – but I came out with a fresh mindset this week and I have nothing to lose,” Weaver said. “I felt good with my preparation and got off to a decent start. It was just solid.”

The former British Amateur champion arrived in Portland on the heels of three consecutive missed cuts and beyond frustrated with a putter that had been holding him back from better results. Despite ranking No. 2 on the Web.com Tour in greens in regulation (75.93%), Weaver ranks 144th in putts per round (30.40) and 120th in putting average (1.798). It’s the second consecutive season that Weaver has been in the top two in greens in regulation percentage after leading the Tour a year ago, and it’s the second consecutive season that he feels like the putter has let him down.

That wasn’t the case Thursday in a round in which he only needed 23 putts and successfully scrambled each of the five times he missed the green.

“I’ve been working really hard on my game and my putting in particular. It was nice to see some of that come to fruition today,” Weaver said. “Putting has been holding me back. Every cut I’ve missed I’ve been under par, so that’s a little frustrating when you know you’re playing well enough to contend but yet you have the weekend off.”

As it turns out, last week’s missed cut at the News Sentinel Open presented by Pilot may have been a blessing in disguise for Weaver. After failing to advance to the weekend, he drove to Atlanta to spend a couple days with his wife before flying out to Portland. Although she isn’t a golfer, she saw something in his setup when they were at the course Sunday evening and the minor tweak – combined with a new putter in the bag – seem to be working for him so far.

“She found something that no one else could really pick up on. She doesn’t play golf, but that little key she told me just by observing has worked so far,” Weaver said. “I feel really good about the way I’m rolling it. My hips were just open. I’ve been really unstable with my lower body and my putting. I square my hips up and everything seems to work a little better. So it’s pretty funny that she picked up on that.”

After beginning his round on the back nine, Shindler opened with a birdie at the difficult par-3 10th and rolled in four consecutive birdies from Nos. 15-18 to turn in 5-under 30. The 29-year-old sandwiched birdies at Nos. 2 and 4 around his lone bogey of the day at the third and poured in back-to-back 15-footers at Nos. 8 and 9 for a share of the lead.

“I’ll definitely take it coming into this golf course – a phenomenal track, where you just have to do everything right,” Shindler said. “I was fortunate to get some putts to go today. Obviously, we were hitting the proper shots to give ourselves the opportunities but to have them go and then have two or three go that were bonus putts. It’s just nice. It’s a special day again, so you take it for what it is and you put your nose back to the grindstone again tomorrow.”

Since his win at the Rex Hospital Open in May, Shindler has grabbed the 18-hole lead/co-lead at both the Nashville Golf Open Benefitting the Snedeker Foundation in July and the Price Cutter Charity Championship presented by Dr Pepper in his last start.

Although Shindler took the 36-hole lead into the weekend at both events, he finished T25 and T16 after poor weekend efforts. He’s hoping if he continues to focus on the process, he’ll reverse that trend over the next three days.

“I’ve done this twice already after my win where I’ve had the lead after the first round and didn’t finish the tournament off the way we wanted. We still got 54 holes left, and just looking forward to getting back out there and getting back after it for another day,” Shindler said. “Seventy-two holes is a long tournament, and it doesn’t take much for your mind to wander off track and put yourself in a position you don’t want to be. I just have to take it one shot at a time and add them up at the end.”

Wise, the 2016 NCAA Individual Champion at Oregon, found the Duck faithful out early to watch him, and he rewarded their effort with a 64 that included eight birdies and an eagle at the par-4 13th, where he holed out from 104 yards.

“It’s a good start. This is a big week for me obviously. I had a crowd out there on a Thursday at a Web.com Tour event, which doesn’t happen for me very often,” Wise said. “I have a lot of people out here wanting me to do well, and I want to do well for them. It’s a great start and we have three more days left, but I’m in a great spot.”

Like Weaver, Cappelen arrived outside of the top 75 on the money list at No. 83 and needing to make a move to earn a berth in the Finals. He got started in that endeavor Thursday with a 64 that included birdies on seven of his first 12 holes.

“This is a game. I’m trying to play a game. That’s all it is. I’m doing it because I love doing it, and whether I do it here or somewhere else, I’m still going to enjoy it. You’re still hitting the white ball and you still have to try to get it in the hole no matter where you are,” Cappelen said. “I know it’s a situation I’m in right now where it would be nice with a nice result to get back into it, but I feel like I’m just trying to really focus on what’s going on in the moment. Not live in the past and don’t live in the future because all I can really control is what’s happening right this second.”

In the race for 25 TOUR cards, Beau Hossler at No. 25 on the money list opened with a 2-under 69 and is on the right side of the projected outline. Rob Oppenheim, who entered the week at No. 26, posted an even-par 71 and will need to play his way into the weekend Friday to have a shot at securing his TOUR card Sunday.

FRIDAY NOTES:

* This week's event is the final event of 22 regular season events on the 2017 schedule. The top-25 money winners following this week's finale will earn PGA TOUR cards for the 2017-18 wraparound season. A second set of 25 cards will be on the line during the four-event Web.com Tour Finals, which follow in September and early October.

* This week's purse is \$800,000 with \$144,000 going to the champion.

* Players just inside the top 25 (21-25) and where they stand:

Rank this Week	Player	Score	Position
21	Brandon Harkins	72 (+1)	T88
22	Lanto Griffin	66 (-5)	T7
23	Ethan Tracy	71 (E)	T66
24	Roberto Diaz	71 (E)	T66
25	Beau Hossler	69 (-2)	T32

* Players just outside the top 25 (26-30) and where they stand:

Rank this Week	Player	Score	Position
26	Rob Oppenheim	71 (E)	T66
27	Martin Piller	65 (-6)	T7
28	D.H. Lee	68 (-3)	T22
29	Tyler Duncan	72 (+1)	T88
30	Tom Lovelady	72 (+1)	T88

* Players just inside the top 75 (71-75) and where they stand:

Rank this Week	Player	Score	Position
71	Rhein Gibson	72 (+1)	T88
72	Jacques Blaauw	75 (+4)	T133
73	Scott Langley	71 (E)	T66
74	Samuel Del Val	71 (E)	T66
75	Brady Schnell	72 (+1)	T88

* Players just outside the top 75 (76-80) and where they stand:

Rank this Week	Player	Score	Position
76	Ben Taylor	76 (+5)	T138
77	William Kropp	76 (+5)	T138
78	Armando Favela	73 (+2)	T110
79	Ken Looper	71 (E)	T66
80	Andrew Svoboda	70 (-1)	T51

* Scoring averages for the week:

	Front (36)	Back (35)	Total (71)
R1	36.374	34.710	71.084

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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