



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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First-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Julian Etulain	62-70-66—198 (-15)
2	Ben Kohles	68-68-67—203 (-10)
	Max Homa	65-68-70—203 (-10)
4	Curtis Luck	68-65-70—204 (-9)
	Taylor Moore	65-67-72—204 (-9)

Julian Etulain cards 66, leads by five at Chitimacha Louisiana Open

BROUSSARD, Louisiana – There is a fine line between playing good golf and winning a tournament. In professional golf, players are always in search of an advantage to get them over the hump.

Argentina's Julian Etulain certainly has the upper hand heading into the final round of the Chitimacha Louisiana Open presented by NACHER after a 5-under 66 places him 15-under-par 198 after 54 holes. The 29-year-old from Buenos Aires takes a commanding lead into Sunday as Ben Kohles and Max Homa find themselves five strokes behind Etulain with 18 holes to play.

Etulain has the hottest putter in Broussard at the moment but can't pinpoint the reason he's making them from everywhere.

"I don't know, but it's amazing," he said. "I'm feeling really good with it these last three days."

So, what has changed and why is it so effective this week? The 10-year-pro was more than willing to share what has worked for him at Le Triomphe Golf and Country Club through 54 holes.

"This week I started to use a line," said Etulain, who has 87 putts through three rounds. "I've never used it and I started to use it this week. Maybe that's the difference."

In 72 starts on the Web.com Tour, Etulain has never held the outright 54-hole lead. That doesn't mean he lacks experience. The PGA TOUR Latinoamérica alum has four victories on the PGA TOUR-sanctioned circuit and another five international victories to add to his resume. With a wealth of experience to draw upon, Etulain has the tools to earn his maiden Web.com Tour win on Sunday afternoon.

"I'll just try to focus on myself," said Etulain, who could move up to No. 5 on the money list with a win. "My swing feels great, so I will just try and focus on myself."

Homa, who has won twice on the Web.com Tour, will try and chase down Etulain in the final round. The 27-year-old from Burbank, California has a flair for the dramatic as both of his Tour victories have been in comeback fashion. In his maiden Tour triumph, the University of California alum started the final round of the BMW Charity Pro-Am presented by SYNEX Corporation two shots off the pace and carded a bogey-free, 8-under 63 to overtake a host of leaders. Two years later, at the Rust-Oleum Championship, Homa carded a 5-under 67 to overcome a seven-stroke deficit and win by one.

“I think I can play hard golf courses really well,” said Homa. “Usually Sunday is the hardest day as far as pins go. I think I do a good job of playing one shot at a time. Obviously, he’s (Etulain) going to have to play not great, but I think if I post a number and get moving it can change things. I think that’s always been my approach. We’ll see tomorrow. He’s playing well so it’s going to be hard to catch him, but I’ll give it a run.”

Kohles hit all 18 greens in regulation on Saturday but the catalyst for the great ball-striking round might have come on the first hole of the day. Stuck behind a tree after an errant tee shot, the 28-year-old from Dallas, Texas was forced to chip out. From 248 yards away, Kohles hit a 3-wood to within eight feet of the hole and drained the putt for an opening birdie.

It’s been a while since Kohles has tasted victory on the Web.com Tour. The University of Virginia alum won the first two tournaments he played in. With triumphs at the 2012 Nationwide Children’s Hospital Championship and Cox Classic, the recent graduate earned his PGA TOUR card, ending the season No. 8 on the money list.

Since then, Kohles has struggled to make an impact in professional golf. Before 2017, Kohles played three straight seasons on the Web.com Tour and failed to crack the top 100 on the money list. Last year, he recorded two top-10s and ended the season No. 68. Battling back from the depths required the six-year pro to evaluate his game and make changes to ensure future success.

“I feel like having that experience in the back of my mind, being here before, it was a while ago, but I feel like my game’s in such a better spot,” said Kohles, currently No. 66 on the money list. “The last few years I’ve been struggling a little bit, so just going to go out there tomorrow and have some fun and have a good attitude and see where it puts me at the end.”

“My attitude’s definitely way better,” he continued. “I’m not going to get ahead of myself, not going to look at any leaderboards probably until the end. Just try to battle it out with whoever’s in front of me and hopefully I can come out on top.”

Saturday Notes:

* Saturday weather: Partly cloudy, High: 77, Winds: S/SW 15-20 mph with gusts of 25-30.

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

* Scoring Averages for the week:

	Front (36)	Back (35)	Total (71)
R1	35.097	35.326	70.424
R2	35.167	36.333	71.500
R3	34.614	35.729	70.343

* **NEXT WEEK:** The Web.com Tour will head east to Georgia for the inaugural Savannah Golf Championship contested at Deer Creek Course at The Landings Club.

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