



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 2, 2018

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First-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Kyle Jones	63 (-8)
	Martin Trainer	63 (-8)
	Vince Covello	63 (-8)
	Bio Kim	63 (-8)

Four-way tie at the top after the first round of the KC Golf Classic

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. – The Web.com Tour Regular Season is winding down, which means players are jockeying for position heading into the Web.com Tour Finals. Kyle Jones, Martin Trainer, Vince Covello and Bio Kim posted matching 8-under 63s to take a share of the first-round lead at the KC Golf Classic.

Trainer is riding the momentum of his second Tour win this season at last week's Price Cutter Charity Championship presented by Dr Pepper. The 27-year-old from Marseille, France has secured his PGA TOUR card for next season and is three rounds away from a three-win promotion. Trainer arrived in Overland Park relaxed and his game showed it on Thursday. For the second time in three weeks, the former University of Southern California Trojan has opened a tournament with a score of 63.

"This week was much different than the last few where I've really been grinding and trying so hard to lock up my PGA TOUR card," said Trainer. "Now that I've done that I can really just be free out there and hit risky shots. I'm not as nervous under pressure. I'm spending as little time as I want reading the putt. It's definitely a different feeling out there."

Trainer showed up on Tuesday, hit a few balls, went to the putting green for an hour and left. He played in the Wednesday pro-am but didn't spend much time on the range before or after his round. The majority of his preparation this week has happened before he arrives to the course where the five-year pro concentrates on stretching and getting his body loose before the round.

"I'm not practicing nearly as much," he said. "I almost treat it as a practice round. Just tee it up and see what happens."

Trainer was aggressive in the first round, taking aim at every hole location he could. His demeanor on the course has put him in position to earn a three-win promotion at the Nicklaus Golf Club at LionsGate two years after 2016 Player of the Year Wesley Bryan accomplished the feat.

"I suppose," said Trainer, when asked about the instant promotion to the PGA TOUR. "It doesn't matter to me much how the outcome turns out. I'm just happy I played well. I'm just going to try and keep going."

For Covello, this round came at the perfect time. The last few weeks the Springfield, Pennsylvania native has been trending in the right direction. Following a T6 at the Pinnacle Bank Championship presented by Heartland Chevy Dealers, Covello recorded a T21 at last week's Price Cutter Charity Championship. He's now 35-under in his last nine rounds on Tour.

“It’s a long year, you can’t have your best stuff for all 22 Regular Season events,” said Covello, who went from No. 113 to No. 83 on the money list in two weeks. “You’re going to go through ups and downs and that’s what I learned last year a little bit. The seasons are turning out similar.

Covello ended last season No. 69 on the money list and is aware of what it will take to secure a spot in the Finals later this month. A T3 at the 2017 Ellie Mae Classic at TPC Stonebrae guaranteed him his Tour card for this year. Even with an extra event on the schedule, the former University of North Florida Osprey has a number in mind as we approach the conclusion of the Regular Season.

“You always have a number in your head,” said Covello, who made \$71,284 in 2017. “I’m shy of it and need to keep hustling right now. You just play every day as hard as you can. The money list will take care of itself.”

For the second straight week, Jones has posted 63 in the first round of a Web.com Tour event. The 25-year-old from Victorville, California continues to put himself in contention each week. Last week in Springfield, Jones was right there with two rounds to go and posted 74-76.

“I had a lot of people ask me what happened last weekend,” he said. “One day you feel good and the next day you’re searching and that’s what happened to me. It was frustrating because I was in a good position after Friday. You have to put it behind you and focus on this week.”

Each week the three-year-pro gets closer to capturing his maiden Tour victory. Jones confidence has shined all season. He’s learned a lot about himself and knows that it’s not a matter of if, but when in regard to winning.

“I think this year has been big for me,” he said. “I’ve proven to myself that I can compete out here. I haven’t come through yet, but I know that I can do it. Just continuing to put myself in that position and I think I’m a little more comfortable in that position now.”

Thursday Notes:

- * Thursday weather: Partly cloudy. High: 89, Winds: S-SW 10-20 mph.
- * The KC Golf Classic is the 21st of 23 Regular Season events on the Web.com Tour. The first 25 of 50 available PGA TOUR cards for 2018-19 will be determined when the Regular Season concludes at the WinCo Foods Portland Open presented by Kraft Heinz on Aug. 19.
- * Three first-round leaders/co-leaders have gone on to win during the 2018 season, most recently Martin Trainer at the Price Cutter Charity Championship presented by Dr Pepper.
- * The Web.com Tour has produced 17 first-time winners this year. With 54 holes to play at Nicklaus Golf Club, there are currently eight players inside the top 10 looking for their first Tour title.
- * Bio Kim has made six cuts in 17 starts this season with his best performance coming at the United Leasing & Finance Championship. Kim entered the week No. 127 on the money and opened with a 8-under 63.
- * Kyle Jones opened with a 8-under 63 to tie his season-best. Jones has carded 63 three previous times this year (Utah Championship – R2, LECOM Health Challenge – R3, R1 – Price Cutter Charity Championship). Jones has posted three top-10s this season with his best showing, a T2 coming at the LECOM Health Challenge. Jones is currently No. 32 on the money list and would need a solo fourth or better to secure his PGA TOUR card for the first time.
- * Curtis Luck entered the week No. 78 on the money list and opened with a 6-under 66. Luck has posted just one top-10 this season (T5 – Savannah Golf Championship) and is one more away from securing a berth in the Web.com Tour Finals. The top-75 on the money list after Portland qualify for the Finals.
- * Casey Wittenberg posted a first-round 7-under 64, his lowest score on Tour this season. Wittenberg has made six cuts in 12 starts with his best performance coming at the Lincoln Land Championship presented by LRS and Wichita Open Supporting Wichita’s Youth (T40). Wittenberg is currently No. 155 on the money list.
- * At No. 24 on the money list with \$151,866, Adam Long needs a solo ninth or better to secure his PGA TOUR card for the first time in his professional career. Long opened the KC Golf Classic with a 6-udner 65 and is two back heading into Friday. Long has posted four top-10s in 20 starts including a T2 at the Lincoln Land Championship presented by LRS. Long has played in Overland Park four previous times and made the cut once (2015 – T33).

* Leading money winner Sungjae Im posted a 5-under 67 in the first round. Im has led the money list the entire season and has a \$109,343 lead over Scott Langley after a runner-up performance at the Pinnacle Bank Championship. Im has played 66 rounds this season and posted just eight scores over par.

Scoring Average for Nicklaus Golf Club at LionsGate for the week:

	Front (35)	Back (36)	Total (71)
Round 1:	35.098	34.519	69.618

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