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Third-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Sepp Straka	65-65-64-195 (-18)
2	Curtis Luck	67-65-64-196 (-17)
	Lucas Glover	64-64-68-196 (-17)
	Denny McCarthy	64-65-67-196 (-17)
5	Cameron Tringale	63-67-67-197 (-16)

Sepp Straka claims 54-hole lead heading into final round of Web.com Tour Championship

ATLANTIC BEACH, Florida – It’s been quite the year for Austria native Sepp Straka. The 25-year-old fell into a sophomore slump early in his second season on the Web.com Tour, having missed eight of 19 cuts heading into the KC Golf Classic. With just one top-40 finish on the year, Straka resorted to registering for the First Stage of the Web.com Tour Qualifying Tournament, thinking he would have to go through all four stages to regain Web.com Tour status for the 2019 season.

The tables turned for the University of Georgia alum that week in Kansas City, where he posted rounds of 64-65-64-69-262 to best Kyle Jones for his maiden Web.com Tour title. The victory moved Straka well within the top 75 on the Regular Season money list, earning him a Web.com Tour Finals berth and exempt status on Tour for the 2019 season.

Now, just a month later, the tables appear to be turning again for Straka, who posted a third-round 7-under 64 to claim the solo 54-hole lead heading into Sunday at the Web.com Tour Championship, the fourth and final event in the Web.com Tour Finals series. Straka enters the final round one stroke clear of three-time PGA TOUR winner Lucas Glover, Denny McCarthy and Curtis Luck.

Straka, who entered Moving Day T4, ran into trouble quickly, picking up a bogey at the par-4 opening hole at Atlantic Beach Country Club. The former Bulldog remained calm, however, picking up a birdie at the second to move back to even on the day.

“[My] ball striking is really good,” Straka commented after the round, “it’s been good all week, it’s been really solid. I really haven’t gotten in a whole lot of trouble and [have] been able to capitalize on a good number of chances with the putter. Hit a couple of bad putts today but some really good ones to make up for it. So ball striking’s really solid.”

From there it was smooth sailing for Straka, who birdied Nos. 4, 7 and 9 to make the turn at 3-under 32. Back-to-back birdies on the par-4 16th and 17th moved Straka into a share of the lead heading into the final hole before a closing birdie on No. 18 allowed him to break away from the pack and claim the outright lead.

“It’s nice,” he said of holding the lead. “It’s always good to get an extra birdie in late. I got three of them to finish, which was nice. Yeah, it’s very bunched up there, so you can’t really take off, you’ve got to keep the pedal down and see where you end up at the end.”

The Mackenzie Tour – PGA TOUR Canada alum will be playing in the final Sunday pairing for just the second time in his career as he chases a spot in The Finals 25 and the first PGA TOUR card of his career.

“It’s fun to be in the final groups on the weekend and feel nervous,” Straka said of balancing the excitement with the nerves, “that’s the fun part. So yeah, I mean, the balance is, you know, just try to tell yourself that everybody’s feeling the nerves and just roll with it.”

Playing alongside Straka in the final grouping is Australian Curtis Luck, who is also chasing a spot in The 50 and his first PGA TOUR card.

Luck wasted no time going low at Atlantic Beach Country Club, opening with back-to-back birdies on his first two holes. He would par the par-3 third before going on a streak of five straight birdies, tying his previous career-best streak set earlier this year at the Price Cutter Charity Championship presented by Dr Pepper.

“Obviously it just comes down to keeping that momentum going,” he remarked of the streak, “and trying not to change anything. That’s the really important thing and I felt like I did that really well. I played really aggressive on the back nine, still went after a lot of shots and I hit it close a lot out there.”

Luck would ultimately make the turn at 7-under 28, marking just the fifth nine-hole score of 28 or better this season. The 22-year-old picked up two additional birdies on the back nine (Nos. 11 and 14) before running into trouble at the par-4 16th, a hole he’s bogeyed in each of the first three rounds. Luck picked up another bogey at No. 17 before bouncing back with a par at the par-5 closing hole.

“Unfortunately [I] just had a lapse in concentration on the last few holes,” Luck reflected, “and hit a few uncharacteristic shots and they cost me, but really happy with the round.”

SATURDAY NOTES:

* Saturday’s weather: Mostly sunny with a high of 87; Winds E/NE at 5-15 mph.

* This week’s purse is \$1,000,000, with \$180,000 going to the champion.

* This week marks the last event of the Web.com Tour Finals, a four-event series that concludes at the Web.com Tour Championship in Atlantic Beach, Florida, Sept. 20-23. Twenty-five PGA TOUR cards were awarded following the WinCo Foods Portland Open presented by Kraft-Heinz. An additional 25 cards will be handed out following the conclusion of play Sunday, and positioning for all 50 cards will be set.

* Straka sitting alone atop the 54-hole leaderboard continues a unique Web.com Tour Championship trend. The last time there were multiple players tied for the lead after a round in this event was the third round of the 2012 tournament, when James Hahn and Justin Hicks were locked at 12-under par through 54 holes.

* First-round leader Chris Paisley jumped back into contention with a third-round 8-under 63. Paisley’s three rounds have varied, going 61-74-63 over 54 holes to sit T6 at 15-under 198.

* Adam Schenk and Roberto Diaz, each T9 at 14-under, lead PGA TOUR Latinoamérica alumni in the field. The two have combined to play 39 events on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica with five top-five finishes.



* The third-round leader/co-leader has won 10 out of 25 times this year in 72-hole events. The trend has been especially true of late with the last five champions converting a 54-hole lead.

* Money earned by the No. 25 player on the Finals-only money list in each of the past four years (excluding 2016, when the Web.com Tour Championship was cancelled): 2013 (Bobby Gates, \$33,650), 2014 (Eric Axley, \$36,311.66), 2015 (Rob Oppenheim, \$32,206) and 2017 (Seamus Power, \$40,625).

* Players ranked Nos. 23-30 on the Finals-only money list and where they stand:

Player	Finals \$	Score	Standing	Proj. Money List
23. Wes Roach	\$33,600	67-67-68—202	T21	23
24. Scott Pinckney	\$33,320	71-71—142	MC	34
25. Brian Campbell	\$32,325	69-68-69—206	T50	28
26. Justin Lower	\$31,975	68-66-66—200	T12	20
27. Henrik Norlander	\$31,687	67-67-67—201	T18	22
28. Ben Crane	\$31,305	64-69-74—207	T59	32
29. Fabián Gómez	\$29,157	68-68-69—205	T43	35
30. Matt Every	\$25,733	64-68-70—202	T21	27

*Atlantic Beach Country Club Scoring Averages:

	Front (35)	Back (36)	Total (71)	Cumulative
R1	34.363	34.823	69.185	
R2	33.504	35.423	68.927	69.056
R3	33.723	34.769	68.492	68.868

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