



SAVANNAH  
GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### Second-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Edward Loar	68-65—133 (-11)
T2	Christian Brand	65-69—134 (-10)
T2	Kyle Jones	65-69—134 (-10)
T2	Justin Hueber	67-67—134 (-10)

### Edward Loar secures 36-hole lead at Web.com Tour's inaugural Savannah Golf Championship

SAVANNAH, Ga. – Edward Loar opened his week at the inaugural Savannah Golf Championship with a 4-under 68 to sit tied for eighth through 18 holes of play at Deer Creek Golf Course at The Landings Club. On Friday morning, during a rain shower that enveloped the greater Savannah area for three hours, the 40-year-old played brilliantly, recording seven birdies against zero bogeys to reach 11-under 133, good for a one-shot lead at the halfway point of the \$550,000 event.

Starting his second round on the back nine of the Tom Fazio signature course, Loar birdied Nos. 12 and 16 to turn in 2-under 34 as the rain began to pelt the vast majority of Georgia's coastal region.

After making the turn, Loar birdied the par-4 first and par-3 second to vault to 8-under par for the tournament before diving further into red figures with birdies on Nos. 4 and 5 to secure the outright lead.

The former Oklahoma State golfer, who represented the United States in the 1999 Walker Cup, recorded pars on Nos. 6, 7 and 8 before hitting his approach shot to the par-4 ninth to 15 feet and converting the birdie try to close in 5-under 31, good for a second-round 65.

"I hit the ball really good today and hit a bunch of greens, giving myself a lot of birdie chances," he said. "I didn't birdie a single par-5 today. For me to shoot 7-under without a single par-5 birdie is pretty outstanding."

While Loar entered the week at No. 40 (4.65) in par-5 scoring on the 2018 Web.com Tour, he is No. 1 in par-4 scoring, and more than delivered on that statistic with five par-4 birdies on Friday.

The key to any good round on the Web.com Tour is a plethora of birdies, but when it's raining for over three hours, the key becomes staying dry, and the Dallas native managed to do just that in the second round.

"I have two MVPs today – one is my caddie Alex, and one is my host for the week, Mike, who gave me a few extra towels this morning for the inclement weather," Loar said. "I don't care if I get wet, but being able to keep all of your tools dry helps a lot."

Loar entered the week in Savannah at No. 12 on the money list, thanks to a T2 finish at the Panama Championship in February. The married father of triplets, who has now made five of seven cuts in 2018, cites a new level of consistency for his solid start to the season.

“I’ve been real consistent. Nothing real flashy, but I’ve tried to make fewer mistakes, which has been key to my good start. The pressure is kind of off from only having eight starts to begin the year,” said Loar, citing his T30 finish at Q-School in December, which netted exempt status for roughly the first third of the season.

That slight bit of exhale is a welcome addition to Loar’s 18-year golf career after scraping by on past champion status in 2016 and 2017, where nine total starts delivered just one made cut – a T66 at the El Bosque Mexico Championship by Innova in 2016.

“I’m a lot more consistent now with less up and down. It’s not nearly as much of a roller coaster as I’ve been on, which is good for me and good for my fans,” said Loar, referencing the infamous “Loar Loonies,” who follow his every move on social media.

Loar’s social media persona has taken on a life of its own, especially with a secured card for his latest Web.com Tour campaign. One benefit from his good start has been the idea that a return to the PGA TOUR could be in the cards come August, but the other is that everyone wins when he plays well – especially when he plays bogey-free golf and earns a trip to fast-food chain Whataburger.

“I try not to get too excited or too down on anything. Obviously, it’s a great way to end the day,” said Loar about his closing birdie on the ninth. “As all of my Loonies would know, that’s my first Whataburger clean card of the year, which happens about three times a year for me.”

First-round co-leaders Christian Brand and Kyle Jones are tied for second alongside Justin Hueber, one shot back of Loar at 10-under 134.

Brand, who entered the week at No. 124 on the money list with just two made cuts to his name, set the early mark for the week with a 7-under 65 on Thursday before being matched by Jones just a few groups later.

Brand, a former Marshall University standout, was even par through 11 holes on day two before rebounding late with birdies on Nos. 3, 5 and 6 (his back nine) to post 3-under 69.

“I didn’t hit it quite as well today as I did yesterday, so we had to rely on the wedge game and some strategic placement to eek out some pars and keep the round going,” said Brand. “I’m excited, and hopefully we can turn out another good round tomorrow.”

Jones, who managed to match Brand’s first-round 65 with two bogeys on his card, played steady golf in the second round, notching four birdies against one lone bogey on his way to a 69.

The former Baylor University golfer is one week removed from a career-best T8 finish at the Chitimacha Louisiana Open presented by NACHER.

“I’m in a good position. I’m happy with where I am right now, so I just need to keep doing what I’m doing. I’m playing well and not making many mistakes,” said Jones. “I’m playing solidly and putting myself in good position, so I just need to keep doing that and we’ll see how it goes down on Sunday.”

Hueber posted consecutive rounds of 67 to reach his 10-under mark through 36 holes. The 30-year-old Jacksonville, Florida resident birdied four of his first six holes on Friday before double-bogeying the par-4 seventh and bogeying the par-4 ninth to turn in 2-under par.

Hueber rallied late on his closing nine, however, notching birdies on 14, 16 and 18 to close out a 3-under 33 to match his opening-round effort.

### **Friday Notes:**

\* Friday weather: Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and a high of 70 degrees with winds W at 8-15 mph.

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

\* The 36-hole cut fell at 3-under 141, with 78 players making it to the final two rounds of play. The 3-under-par cut is the lowest of the 2018 season. Third-round play at Deer Creek Golf Course will begin at 7:30 a.m. (ET) on Saturday morning.

\* In 2018, the 36-hole leader/co-leader has gone on to win twice on the Web.com Tour, with Ben Taylor (Club Colombia Championship) and Julian Etulain (Chitimacha Louisiana Open) achieving the feat.

\* All six Web.com Tour events in 2018 have been won by first-time winners. Through 36 holes in Savannah, five players with wins on Tour are inside the top 10: Edward Loar, Julian Etulain, Cameron Percy, Mark Anderson and Scott Langley.

\* If Loar goes on to win the Savannah Golf Championship, he would join Scott Langley (Panama Championship) as the only left-handed players to win in 2018; however, it would mark just the second time in Web.com Tour history, and first since 2005, that multiple left-handed players won in a single season.

\* In Web.com Tour history, there have been eight left-handed players to win a total of 11 tournaments.

\* Stuart MacDonald posted an 8-under 64 on Friday to set the new course record at Deer Creek Golf Course. MacDonald posted six birdies and an eagle on the par-5 14<sup>th</sup> en route to his record-setting day.

\* There are four University of Georgia alumni in the field at the Savannah Golf Championship: Erik Compton (-5/T29), Sepp Stratka (-5/T29), Lee McCoy (+1/MC) and Joey Garber (+6/MC)

\* Former teenage phenom Ty Tryon missed the cut with rounds of 74-73—147 (3-over). The week marked his first start since the 2012 El Bosque Mexico Championship by Innova and his 29<sup>th</sup> missed cut in 37 career starts on the Web.com Tour.

\* Local favorite Tim O'Neal, who earned his spot in the field via the tournament's Monday qualifier, opened his week with a 6-under 66, but turned in 4-over 40 on Friday before rallying with a 3-under 33 to close out a second-round 73. Through two rounds, O'Neal is T29. In 150 career starts on the Web.com Tour, O'Neal has recorded 30 top-25 finishes, with his last coming at the 2008 Knoxville Open (T24) – a span of 9 years, 9 months and 8 days.

\* Monday qualifier Ryan McCormick opened the week with rounds of 69-67—136 (8-under) to sit tied for sixth. In Web.com Tour history, 22 players have won after Monday qualifying, with Rick Lamb (2016 LECOM Health Challenge) being the last to do so.

\* Lamb became the third player in 2018 to record back-to-back eagles when he did so on Nos. 5 and 6 in round two. Gonzalo Fernandez-Castaño (The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic) and John Chin (El Bosque Mexico Championship) were the other two players. Lamb is the only one of the three to have one of his two aces occur on a par-4.

\* Scoring Averages for the week:

	Front (36)	Back (36)	Total (72)
<b>R1</b>	35.487	36.256	71.744
<b>R2</b>	34.888	35.428	70.316

\* **NEXT WEEK:** The Web.com Tour is off next week before returning to action at the inaugural North Mississippi Classic, contested at The Country Club of Oxford in Oxford, Mississippi the week of April 16-22.

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