



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Third-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Sam Burns	72-65-65—202 (-14)
2	Julian Etulain	68-68-67—203 (-13)
	Justin Hueber	67-67-69—203 (-13)
	Edward Loar	68-65-70—203 (-13)

Sam Burns cards 65 to grab 54-hole lead at the Savannah Golf Championship

SAVANNAH, Ga. – Sam Burns is 18 holes away from earning his maiden Web.com Tour win. The 21-year-old from Shreveport, Louisiana vaulted up the leaderboard, on moving day, with a 7-under-par 65 to take the outright lead at the inaugural Savannah Golf Championship. After opening with an even-par 72 on Thursday, Burns answered with matching 65s, at Deer Creek Golf Course at The Landings Club, good for a 54-hole total of 14-under-par 204.

Chitimacha Louisiana Open presented by NACHER champion Julian Etulain, Justin Hueber and second-round leader Edward Loar are one back heading into the final round.

“I think the first day I just couldn’t get any momentum going,” said Burns, who made three birdies and three bogeys in the first round. “I would make a birdie and then follow it up with a bogey on the next hole.”

After a stagnant start, the former Bayou Bengal has recorded an eagle, 14 birdies and two bogeys to place his name on top of the leaderboard for the first time in his Tour career.

“I think it kind of works both ways. When you make a few birdies, you get the momentum going your way and things seem a little easier,” said Burns, who had three birdies and an eagle in a five-hole stretch on Saturday. “I think the consistency of play was a lot better the last two days. So hopefully we have one more of those tomorrow.”

Burns turned pro last year after just two years at Louisiana State University. Success has come in waves for the Tour rookie, but Burns has done a great job of keeping things in perspective.

“You work hard to play well and try and win,” Burns said. “It’s happened pretty quick for me. I didn’t know what to expect from professional golf coming out of college. It’s been fun and really exciting for me.”

One of the highlights of his brief professional career came at The Honda Classic earlier this season on the PGA TOUR. Burns played alongside 79-time TOUR winner Tiger Woods and carded 2-under 68 for a T8 showing at PGA National’s Champion Course. In six appearances on TOUR this season, Burns has five cuts and accrued 189 non-member FedExCup points. Needing 80 more points to earn Special Temporary Membership, he has two more exemptions left, plus his start at the Memorial Tournament presented by Nationwide for winning the Jack Nicklaus Award as the nation’s best college golfer.

“I’ve been very fortunate to play in some PGA TOUR events and have some success there,” Burns said. “I’ve been extremely pleased with how my game is trending. If I can keep doing that and work hard on certain aspects of it, hopefully I will keep playing well.”

After the round Burns shared his recipe for success when bouncing back-and-forth between the PGA TOUR and Web.com Tour.

“Each week is a new week,” said Burns. “You try and come into it with a fresh start. You’re starting over each week. If you can prepare the best way you can. I think you’re preparing yourself to play well. That’s what I do each week.”

Loar played flawless for the first 15 holes and held a two-stroke lead over Burns on the 16th tee. The diehard Oklahoma State Cowboy-fan went bogey-double-bogey-par to end his third round and is 13-under after a 2-under 70 on Saturday.

The 18-year pro, who has played in 28 different countries, tried to focus on the positives after losing a two-stroke advantage over the final three holes.

“I really played flawless until that point,” said Loar. “Stuff happens in golf. I still have a really good chance going into tomorrow. Tomorrow is another opportunity, it’s what we all play for.”

On Sunday, Etulain has a chance to become the first player to win in back-to-back starts, on the Web.com Tour, since Michael Putnam in 2013. The 29-year-old from Buenos Aires, Argentina doesn’t have a number in mind for Sunday, but his confidence, in his game, is higher than ever after his breakthrough in Broussard.

“I have hit a lot of good drivers and putts the past few weeks,” said Etulain. “I feel great.”

Hueber entered the week No. 49 on the money list and is off to the best start of his career. The 30-year-old from Fayetteville, Arkansas, who has played in 44 career Tour events, had a breakthrough season in 2017, posting one top-10, ending the season No. 56 on the money list, retaining his Tour card for the first time in three attempts.

On Sunday, Hueber will play alongside Loar in the penultimate group, a new experience for him. The University of Indianapolis grad relishes the challenge of trying to chase down Burns in his quest for his first Web.com Tour win.

“I have to stay patient but at the same time be aggressive,” said Hueber. “It’s not one of those where I’m going to be able to limp in and get a win, I’m going to have to go get it. There are going to be some birdies made tomorrow. I’m going to have to earn it.”

Saturday Notes:

* Saturday 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.

* Final-round play at Deer Creek Golf Course will begin at 7:30 a.m. (ET) on Sunday morning.

* In 2018, the 54-hole leader/co-leader has gone on to win thrice on the Web.com Tour, with Sungjae Im (The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic), Ben Taylor (Club Colombia Championship) and Julian Etulain (Chitimacha Louisiana Open) achieving the feat.

* 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.

* Local favorite Tim O’Neal, who earned his spot in the field via the tournament’s Monday qualifier, opened his week 66-73 and carded a third-round 77. Through three rounds, O’Neal is T72. 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 9 days.

* Cameron Champ eagled the par-5 18th hole for a 5-under 67 and is two back heading into Sunday. The long-hitting Champ is currently N0. 90 on the money list after making three of five cuts. His best performance, a T21, came at The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic at Sandals Emerald Bay.

* Scoring Averages for the week:

	Front (36)	Back (36)	Total (72)
R1	35.487	36.256	71.744
R2	34.888	35.428	70.316
R3	35.244	36.244	71.487

* **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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