



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**August 16, 2018**

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**First-Round Leaderboard**

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Derek Ernst	61 (-10)
2	Taylor Moore	63 (-8)
3	Jimmy Gunn	64 (-7)
	Fernando Mechereffe	64 (-7)
5	Three tied at	65 (-6)

**Derek Ernst cards career-low round to take 18-hole lead at WinCo Foods Portland Open presented by Kraft-Heinz**

NORTH PLAINS, Oregon – On the same day that PGA TOUR player Brandt Snedeker shot a 59 in the opening round of the Wyndham Championship in Greensboro, North Carolina, Derek Ernst came close to achieving the same feat at the WinCo Foods Portland Open presented by Kraft-Heinz. Needing to finish his last two holes in 2-under par, Ernst carded a par-par finish to come two shots shy of a sub-60 number. With a 10-under 61, the 28-year-old tied the course record at Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club and carded his career-best round on the Web.com Tour.

Entering the week No. 76 on the money list, Ernst made five consecutive birdies on Nos. 4-8 before making the turn at 5-under 31. After adding three more consecutive birdies on Nos. 10-12, Ernst birdied the par-4 14th to move to 9-under.

Ernst needed to birdie three of his last four holes to pick up the elusive 59. On the par-3 15th, the winner of the 2013 Wells Fargo Championship stuck his tee shot to 5 feet from 177 yards.

“That wind was the weirdest wind we had all year long,” Ernst said about his tee shot on the 15th. “Luckily my caddy helped me out and he called some shots off. We committed to that and hit a good couple of shots there.”

He converted the putt for birdie and moved to 10-under with three holes left to play.

Leaving himself with a testy 15-footer on the par-4 16th, Ernst left his birdie putt above the hole and tapped in for par. After leaving himself with a birdie putt from a similar distance on the par-4 17th, the four-time All-American from UNLV couldn’t convert the opportunity and settled with par. His only option for a 59 was to eagle the par-5 18th last.

After hitting his drive into the rough, Ernst was 250 yards out for his second shot on the last hole. Electing to hit a hybrid, his approach flared right, hitting a row of trees near a scoreboard. With a narrow opening for his third, the California native punched out to the middle of the green and two putted for par. He finished with three straight pars and finished with a 10-under 61 in the opening round.

Despite not being able achieve what Snedeker did earlier that day, Ernst wasn’t disappointed with his efforts. With his second daughter on the way, the 29-year-old talked about his newfound appreciation for life as a father, rather than a golfer.

“I’m just doing all the right things,” Ernst remarked. “I’m not trying too hard and I’m king of letting golf come to me. I can shoot 100 or I can shoot 61, and my daughter and wife will love me the same.”

Ernst tied the course record previous shot by two-time TOUR winner Ted Potter, Jr., who carded a 61 in the second round of the event's 2016 iteration.

Playing in his second year on the Web.com Tour, Taylor Moore mixed nine birdies with a lone bogey to card an 8-under 63. He hit 11 of 13 fairways and 17 of 18 greens in regulation. The University of Arkansas product produced the lowest first-round of his Web.com Tour career and starts the second round two shots back.

"I have nothing to lose every day I tee it up," the Texas native commented. "This is my job, to come out here and play golf, so I'm lucky to do that. I'm trying to have a positive outlook on it."

At this event last year, Moore made eight straight birdies in the final round to make a charge for The 25 but fell just short of clinching a spot and a PGA TOUR card.

Scotland native Jimmy Gunn fired a bogey-free 7-under 64 to move into a two-way tied for third. He hit 14 of 18 greens in regulation and successfully got up-and-down in each of the four times he missed the green.

The Scotsman, who entered the week No. 125 on the money list, caught a cold on his plane ride from Kansas to San Francisco last week and played his first round with the sickness lingering.

"I must've picked up something because I felt terrible all last week," said the 38-year-old. "Just completely choked up. I have a little bit of a head-cold, but no excuses."

Also tied for third at 7-under is Brazil's Fernando Mechereffe, who made three eagles on the back nine alone and only needed 26 putts in the opening round.

Regular Season money list leader Sungjae Im combined seven birdies with a lone bogey to shoot an opening round 6-under 65. The 20-year-old has led the money list for 22 consecutive weeks and is seeking to become the first Web.com Tour player in history to hold the No. 1 position for the entirety of the Regular Season. He is only two weeks shy of beating Michael Sims's record of 24 consecutive weeks at No. 1.

"I'm aware that this event has a bigger purse, since it's the last tournament of the Regular Season," said Im when asked about the importance of this week. "I'm trying to finish well at this event, so that I can give myself a good chance of finishing No. 1 after the Finals events."

The Jeju Island native won the season-opening The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic at Sandals Emerald Bay and already has his PGA TOUR card locked up for the 2018-19 season.

#### **THURSDAY NOTES:**

\* Thursday weather: Sunny, High of 86, Winds N/NW 6-12 mph.

\* This week's purse is \$800,000, with \$144,000 going to the champion.

\* Derek Ernst's opening 10-under 61 ties the previous low 18-hole tournament record, carded by Ted Potter Jr. during the second round in 2016. It is also a career-best for Ernst on the Web.com Tour, besting his previous low round of 63 (2018 Knoxville Open).

\* Ryan Brehm is the only 18-hole leader to convert his lead into a tournament victory in Portland (2016). 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.

\* Since the movement to have all 50 PGA TOUR cards come from the Web.com Tour in 2013, the most players to move in and out of The 25 in Portland stands at four, having occurred in 2013. Last year was the first year that The 25 remained unchanged after the season-ending event.

\* Brazilian Fernando Mechereffe carded three eagles in his opening-nine Thursday, joining Erik Barnes as the only other player to do so this season (Barnes recorded three during the third round of the El Bosque Mexico Championship by Innova).

\* The highest opening-round score by an eventual tournament champion currently stands at even-par 71, carded by Brice Garnett in the first round in 2017. Garnett went on to win the event, becoming the second two-time winner of the season and finishing atop the Regular Season money list.

\* The Web.com Tour has produced 19 first-time winners this year. With 54 holes to play at Pumpkin Ridge, there are currently 12 players T10 or better seeking their first Tour title.

\* Through 18 holes of play, there are eight international players inside the top 10 on the leaderboard. Thus far in 2018, the Web.com Tour has had winners from seven different countries claim titles in the first 21 events: Argentina, Canada, England, Germany, Mexico, South Korea and the United States. Carlos Ortiz is the only international player to have won the WinCo Foods Portland Open (2014).

\* Players just inside the top 25 (21-25) and where they stand:

Entered the Week	Player	Score	Position	Projected \$ List
21	Brady Schnell	70 (-1)	T55	23
22	Julian Etulain	66 (-5)	T8	16
23	Roberto Castro	69 (-2)	T38	26
24	Hank Lebioda	69 (-2)	T38	28
25	Ben Taylor	73 (+2)	T111	30

\* Players just outside the top 25 (26-30) and where they stand:

Entered the Week	Player	Score	Position	Projected \$ List
26	Wes Roach	68 (-3)	T26	29
27	Joseph Bramlett	70 (-1)	T55	31
28	Henrik Norlander	68 (-3)	T26	32
29	Nelson Ledesma	66 (-5)	T8	27
30	Sepp Straka	65 (-6)	T5	22

\* Players just inside the top 75 (71-75) and where they stand:

Entered the Week	Player	Score	Position	Projected \$ List
71	Rico Hoey	69 (-2)	T38	71
72	Gonzalo Fdez Castano	65 (-6)	T5	57
73	Jamie Arnold	77 (+6)	T146	80
74	Jim Knous	70 (-1)	T55	77
75	Matt Harmon	69 (-2)	T38	78

\* Players just outside the top 75 (76-80) and where they stand:

Entered the Week	Player	Score	Position	Projected \$ List
76	Derek Ernst	61 (-10)	1	10
77	Brandon Matthews	69 (-2)	T38	81
78	Lee McCoy	69 (-2)	T38	82
79	Brian Richey	68 (-3)	T26	79
80	Oscar Fraustro	78 (+7)	T151	84

\* Witch Hollow scoring average:

	<b>Front (36)</b>	<b>Back (35)</b>	<b>Total (71)</b>
<b>R1</b>	36.308	34.494	70.801

\* NEXT WEEK: The Web.com Tour travels up the west coast to Oregon for the WinCo Foods Portland Open presented by Kraft-Heinz, the final event of the Regular Season.

*For highlights from today's round, or any 2018 event visit <http://bit.ly/webcomtour2018>*

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