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**First-Round Leaderboard**

**The Players Cup**

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Cody Blick (U.S.)	33-30—63 (-9)
T2	Ben Geyer (U.S.)	32-33—65 (-7)
T2	Franklin Corpening (U.S.)	33-32—65 (-7)
T2	David Pastore (U.S.)	33-32—65 (-7)
T2	Alex Chiarella (U.S.)	31-34—66 (-7)
T6	James Love (Canada)	31-35—66 (-6)
T6	Mark Anguiano (U.S.)	33-33—66 (-6)
T6	Derek Barron (U.S.)	33-33—66 (-6)
T6	Lorens Chan (U.S.)	32-34—66 (-6)
T6	Jonathan Garrick (U.S.)	32-34—66 (-6)
T6	Justin Doeden (U.S.)	33-33—66 (-6)
T6	Jere Pelletier (U.S.)	32-34—66 (-6)
T6	Daniel Stringfellow (U.S.)	34-32—67 (-6)

**[Full leaderboard](#)**

**Blick sets sights on first-career victory at The Players Cup**

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Canada—Cody Blick has a lot to be happy about these days. He sits at No. 11 on the Mackenzie Tour’s Order of Merit, has recorded a pair of top-5 finishes, and is as confident as ever in his golf game. He’s also coming off a respectable T22 showing last week at the ATB Financial Classic. But he’s still not satisfied.

“I’ve been inside the top 10 all year, so it kind of... not upset me, but fired me up a little bit last week when I didn’t have a great week,” he said. “You play good golf, it’s all going to take care of itself.”

It took care of itself on Thursday. The San Ramon, Calif., native fired a 9-under 63 in the first round of The Players Cup and will take a two-shot lead on Ben Geyer, Franklin Corpening, David Pastore and Alex Chiarella into Friday's second round at Southwood Golf and Country Club. Eight players are tied for third at 6 under.

Blick carded just one bogey in his opening round—a three-putt on No. 6—but a closing stretch of six birdies over his final seven holes was enough to vault him to the top of the leaderboard. It's the second time he's led after 18 holes this year, as he previously entered Friday in a three-way tie for first at the Lethbridge Paradise Canyon Open. He also had a 36-hole lead in the 55 Freedom Financial Open.

The 24-year-old feels closer than ever to his first career victory.

"It's been close. Even last year I had a lot of close, close finishes," he said. "But just trying to stay patient. I'm not really trying to think about it. I just want to be better every week. The more I put myself in that situation, the more comfortable I'm going to feel and I'll get one at some point."

### **Key Information**

- When he approached the No. 9 green, Alex Chiarella noticed the leaderboard didn't have a name card for him. For good reason, too. The Makawao, Hawaii, native got into the field on the second reorder, and has only two events to his name this season: A T26 and a missed cut. But he's OK with that. He enters Friday in a four-way tie for second after posting a bogey-free, 7-under 65 on Thursday. "They didn't have my name, but that's fine," he said, laughing. "I'm keeping it undercover."
- Frustrated with his short game, Ben Geyer changed putters before The Players Cup began. The move paid off Thursday, when the 26-year-old missed just two putts inside 10 feet during the opening round. He missed 14 such putts over the first 36 holes last week at the ATB Financial Classic.
- Mark Scheifele of the National Hockey League's Winnipeg Jets, in the field on a sponsor's exemption, recorded a 15-over 87 Thursday.
- James Love is the low Canadian through 18 holes, as the 35-year-old is tied for sixth after posting a 6-under 66. He carded a pair of eagles on Nos. 5 and 13 after entering with six to his name all season.
- The par-4 10th was the most-difficult hole in the opening round, yielding 13 birdies, 40 bogeys and one double-bogey. The scoring average was 4.186. The par-5 fifth hole played the easiest, with 13 eagles, 95 birdies and a stroke average of 4.263.
- Four of the 10 Monday qualifiers are inside the top 60 after 18 holes, led by Eric Hallberg, who is T14 at 5 under, and Parker Dudley, who is T33 at 4 under. So far this season, 32 of 90 (35.6 percent) Monday qualifiers have made the cut.
- There are eight Manitobans in the field, but only two of them three of them posted even-par or better Thursday. Kevin Giesbrecht and amateur Devon Schade finished at 1-under, while Aaron Cockerill shot even-par 72. The last Manitoban to win a Mackenzie Tour event was amateur Rob McMillan at the 1996 Manitoban Open.
- The first-round leader at any 2018 Mackenzie Tour event—tied or otherwise—has yet to go on to win this season. Most recently, Jonathan Garrick, Chris Killmer and Tyler

McCumber opened with 8-under 63s at the ATB Financial Classic. None led after 36 holes.

### Quotable

“It was 6 feet. It was above the hole. I read it going left at first and then T.T. (Crouch) was below the hole and it went the opposite way I was expecting. So I went center and tried to hit it hard. Of course it went left. I was fine. But missing the 3-footer coming back, that was just a bonehead mistake, that’s all.” – **Cody Blick on his lone bogey, a three-putt on No. 6**

“I made two putts outside 10 feet, which was nice. I’ll take that, the way it’s been rolling lately. There’s been a lid on the hole for the last few weeks. It’s been very frustrating. But at the same time, I’ve kept myself in a very good mindset because of how well I’ve been hitting it, and I haven’t hit it this well in the last few years, which is a positive, even though the results don’t show that.” – **Ben Geyer**

“It felt great. I was 5 under, all of the sudden 3 (under), and that kind of rattles you mentally when something happens like that. I hit an awful drive on the next hole, I was lucky to make par. And then I rolled in that eagle putt to get me back on track.” – **James Love on his eagle on No. 13**

“Really my only bad, mental error—maybe the worst one of the year. It was a tough par-3, I hit a four iron and short sighted myself on the left. I hit a good chip to like 4 feet and I missed the putt. I went to tap it in and just missed it. It was more of a bogey than a double, but you’ve got to put a 5 down, unfortunately. I was a little upset with the putt I hit for par and just kind of reached over the hole and it didn’t go in again.” – **James Love on his double-bogey on No. 11**

“I got to like the 13th hole and I was just wiped, like I need a nap right now. It was crazy, the mental fortitude that they have. The bounce back you need to have. They have one bad shot, you’ve got to regroup and you can’t just quit. It’s not just like, ‘Ah, I’ll take the maximum on this one.’ You’ve got to putt everything out, you’ve got to make every shot. They’re definitely really special athletes.” – **Mark Scheifele on Mackenzie Tour players**

“It was fun. I hit some great shots, hit some bad shots. Probably spent a little too much time in the fescue but I had two great guys I was playing with in Andrew Steep and (amateur) Justin McDonald. They made it easy. It was fun to be out there.” – **Mark Scheifele**

“It was honestly pretty smooth sailing out there all day. I just had some good targets off the tee, and didn’t really force anything out there too much. I was left with a few longer putts out there, and just had some good pace control and gave myself a chance for birdies.” – **Ruben Sondjaja on his bogey-free 67.**

“I holed out from 58 yards, worked all the way across the green and trickled in. It caught the last little piece of it to drop into the hole. I used a 60 degree (wedge), kind of like a chunk and run out of there.” – **Sam Fidone on his eagle on the par-4 No. 14.**

**Tournament Fast Fact**

Timothy Madigan is the only Players Cup champion in the field. The Rio Rancho, New Mexico, native won the event in 2014 before finishing third on the Mackenzie Tour Order of Merit. He's currently T94 after posting a 1-under 71 on Thursday.

**Second-Round Weather:** Sunny with occasional cloudy skies. High of 29. Wind S at 20 km/h.