



2018 Corales Puntacana Resort & Club Championship
(The 21st of 44 events in the PGA TOUR Season)

Punta Cana, Dominican Republic
Puntacana Resort & Club (Corales Course)

March 22-25, 2018
Par/Yards: 36-36—72/7,670

Purse: \$3,000,000

Third-Round Notes – Saturday, March 24, 2018

Weather: *Partly cloudy with occasional scattered showers in the afternoon. High of 83 with NE wind at 15-20.*

54-hole cut: With more than 78 players advancing to Saturday’s third round, a 54-hole cut to 70 plus ties was utilized. 76 professionals at even-par 216 advanced to Sunday’s final round.

Third-Round Leaderboard

Brice Garnett	63-68-69—200 (-16)
Corey Connors	64-71-67—202 (-14)
Tyler McCumber	67-70-67—204 (-12)
Tom Lovelady	69-68-68—205 (-11)

Brice Garnett

After holding one-stroke leads through 18 and 36 holes, Brice Garnett extended his lead to six strokes at one point during the third round, before dropping three shots in his last six holes to shoot 3-under 69. His 16-under total through 54 holes leads Canada’s Corey Connors by two strokes.

Prior to this week, Garnett’s only lead after any round on the PGA TOUR was following round two of the Fort Worth Invitational. He finished T30.

The last player to win in wire-to-wire fashion on the PGA TOUR was Marc Leishman at the 2017 BMW Championship.

Garnett, a Gallatin, Missouri native, missed the cut at last year’s Web.com Tour event played at Corales Puntacana after rounds of 73-67.

In 12 previous starts this season, Garnett has claimed two top-25 finishes (T17/Safeway Open, T25/OHL Classic at Mayakoba). He comes into the week at No. 110 in the FedExCup standings.

Garnett and Rob Oppenheim (T28/-5) lead the field with the most birdies (18) through 54 holes.

Two Web.com Tour wins last season (Utah Championship presented by Zions Bank, WinCo Foods Portland Open presented by Kraft-Heinz) contributed to Garnett’s No. 2 position in the final priority-ranking order. He secured his PGA TOUR card for the 2017-18 season with a first-place finish on the 2017 Web.com Tour Regular Season money list.

Here’s a look at Garnett’s progression through each round of his two Web.com Tour victories last year;

<u>Tournament</u>	<u>R1</u>	<u>R2</u>	<u>R3</u>	<u>R4</u>
2017 Utah Championship	T4	T3	T5	1-shot win at 21-under
2017 WinCo Foods Portland Open	T66	T29	T1	4-shot win at 18-under

Should Garnett go on to claim his first PGA TOUR victory on Sunday in his 88th career start, he would do so at age 34 years, 6 months, 19 days. Entering this week at No. 110 on the FedExCup standings, a victory is projected to move Garnett to No. 35.

With a top-10 finish Sunday, Garnett would secure his fifth top-10 result and first since the 2015 OHL Classic at Mayakoba (7th).

Top-10s	Event
6 th	2014 OHL Classic at Mayakoba
7 th	2015 OHL Classic at Mayakoba
T7	2014 Houston Open
9 th	2015 Sanderson Farms Championship

Garnett and Conners both qualified for the 2017 U.S. Open at Sectional Qualifying at Springfield CC, Springfield, Ohio. Conners shot 61-67 to qualify before rounds of 76-76 to miss the cut at Erin Hills. Garnett posted a pair of 66s in qualifying and a pair of 75s to also miss the cut at Erin Hills.

Third-Round Lead Notes

Through 19 events this season, eight third-round leaders/co-leaders have held on for the win. The most recent was Bubba Watson at the Genesis Open last month.

In the 2016 and 2017 Web.com Tour events contested at Corales Puntacana, 16-under 200 and 20-under 196 were the 54-hole leads, respectively. In the 2016 tournament, Dominic Bozzelli shared the 54-hole lead before winning by four strokes at 24-under.

Corey Conners

Corey Conners notched six birdies with a single bogey (No. 7) to shoot 5-under 67 and sit in solo second at 14-under, two strokes off the lead.

In his rookie season on the PGA TOUR, Conners has made 10 cuts in 11 events, with a T16 at the Valspar Championship two weeks ago being his best finish. Conners held the first-, second- and third-round leads at the Copperhead Course at Innisbrook Resort after coming into that week as third alternate. He received his spot in the field when Kyle Stanley withdrew. He learned of his spot in the field after shooting a 71 in the Monday Qualifier, which would not have been enough to play his way in. A final-round 77 contributed to the T16 finish.

After rounds of 70-69-68-73—280 (-8), Conners finished T53 in the Web.com Tour event at Corales Puntacana last year.

Conners made his way to the PGA TOUR this season by virtue of a 41st-place finish on the 2017 Web.com Tour priority list. On that Tour in 2017, he claimed three top-10 finishes in 23 starts.

Conners, 26, hails from Listowel, Ontario, Canada, a town of about 7,500 people. He joins fellow Canadian National Team and Kent State Flashes alum Mackenzie Hughes on TOUR this season.

While at Kent State, Conners studied actuary math, which is the study of the financial consequences of risk.

Conners sits No. 116 in the FedExCup standings.

Tyler McCumber

Former Florida Gator golfer Tyler McCumber moved into contention with a bogey-free, third-round 67, matching the low score of the day (Corey Conners, Harris English). McCumber has played his last 39 consecutive holes without a bogey. In Saturday's third round, he hit 15 of 18 greens in regulation, matching Martin Flores for most in the round.

With three, McCumber leads the field in eagles this week. In the opening round, he posted eagles on the two front-nine, par-5 holes (Nos. 4 and 7). He eagled No. 7 again in round three.

McCumber, the son of 10-time PGA TOUR winner Mark McCumber, turned professional in 2013 and owns three wins on PGA TOUR Latinoamerica.

McCumber played the Web.com Tour in 2015 where his lone top-10 was fifth in the Colombia Championship.

The Corales Puntacana Resort & Club Championship marks his PGA TOUR debut.

Tom Lovelady

Tom Lovelady's 4-under 68 leaves him in solo-fourth headed into Sunday's final round. In 12 starts on TOUR, Lovelady's best result is T17 at The Honda Classic last month.

With rounds of 69-68-68, the University of Alabama graduate needs another under-par round Sunday to post four-sub-par rounds in a TOUR event for the first time. Lovelady's college teammates included fellow PGA TOUR professionals Trey Mullinax and Justin Thomas, who he currently lives with in Jupiter, Florida. Mullinax sits T28 at 5-under through 54 holes, while Thomas advanced out of pool play at the World Golf Championships-Dell Technologies Match Play in Austin, Texas this week.

In the Web.com Tour event at Corales Puntacana last year, Lovelady was disqualified for signing an incorrect scorecard after he'd played the first round.

Additional Player Notes

Ireland's Seamus Power sits T5 at 10-under after a third-round 71 and seeks to improve on his best result in 36 previous TOUR starts, a T10 at the 2017 RBC Canadian Open. Following a T11 showing at this season's CareerBuilder Challenge, Power notched four consecutive missed cuts heading into this event.

Maryland native and Jupiter, Florida resident Denny McCarthy sits T5 at 10-under. This marked the first time in 13 career starts on TOUR that McCarthy, a PGA TOUR rookie, has begun a tournament with three under-par rounds.

In just his third career start on the PGA TOUR, Seungsu Han sits T5 at 10-under. Han's scorecard this week is a tale of two nines. He is 10-under-par on the front nine and even-par on the inward nine holes. In 2017, Han won the Casio World Open on the Japan Golf Tour, one of seven top-five finishes that helped vault him to No. 4 on the Japan Golf Tour money list. Currently No. 85 in the Official World Golf Ranking, the 31-year-old, former UNLV golfer was born in South Korea but is a United States citizen.

After a volatile second-round 69 which included a 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 on his scorecard, Harris English recorded a bogey-free 5-under 67 in round three, matching the low score of the day to sit T8 at 9-under.

Steve Wheatcroft (76) and Keith Mitchell (75), in Saturday's final group with leader Brice Garnett, both struggled and sit T15 and T8, respectively. All three players in the group made bogey at the opening hole of the third round.

In search of his seventh career PGA TOUR title and first since the 2014 THE NORTHERN TRUST, Hunter Mahan began the third round T6, started with a double bogey, shot 4-over 76 and tumbled to T28.

Emiliano Grillo, a Puntacana Resort ambassador and the highest-ranked player in the field at No. 75 in the Official World Golf Ranking, posted scores of 72-68-73—213 (-3) to sit T44.

Julio Santos, 45, the only player from the Dominican Republic to make the 36-hole cut, notched scores of 70-72-74—216 (E) to sit T68. Santos made history in Dominican golf by participating in the PGA TOUR's Puerto Rico Open in 2010 (MC). He's posted one top-10 in 31 career starts on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica.

Six of 10 major champions who began the tournament advanced to the weekend; Geoff Ogilvy (71/T8), Retief Goosen (69/T21), Davis Love III (72/T62), John Daly (71/T51), Trevor Immelman (74/MDF) and Mike Weir (73/T68).

Troy Merritt began the third round with an eagle-2 at the par-4 first hole and went on to shoot 1-under 71. Merritt also made an eagle-2 at the par-4 16th during a first-round 69. No other player has recorded an eagle at a par-4 hole this week.

Miscellaneous Notes

Scoring Averages:

	Front 9	Back 9	Total	Cumulative
R1	34.742	36.583	71.326	--
R2	34.758	36.538	71.295	71.311
R3	35.333	36.938	72.272	71.536

The par-4 18th hole ranked as the hardest hole in round three with an average of 4.272. The easiest was the par-5 fourth, which played to an average of 4.370.

Bogey-free rounds:

R1 – Brice Garnett (63), Brendon de Jonge (66), Paul Dunne (67), Martin Flores (68), Michael Kim (68), Kelly Kraft (68), Julio Santos (70), Steve Wheatcroft (66), Xinjun Zhang (66).

R2 – Hunter Mahan (65), Steve Wheatcroft (66), Keith Mitchell (66), Trey Mullinax (66), Abraham Ancer (67), Matt Jones (67), K.J. Choi (68), Brice Garnett (68), Denny McCarthy (69), Ethan Tracy (69), Tim Herron (70), Tyler McCumber (70).

R3 – Harris English (67), Tyler McCumber (67).