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| **First-Round Leaderboard** |  |
| **Changsha Championship** |  |
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| **Pos.** | **Name** | **Scores** |
| 1 | Jeffrey Kang (U.S.) | 33-33—66 (-6) |
| T2 | a-Bi Liu (China)  | 36-32—68 (-4) |
| T2 | Hongfu Wu (China) | 35-33—68 (-4) |
| T2 | Beonyeong Lee (Canada) | 34-34—68 (-4) |
| T2 | Ryann Ree (U.S.) | 33-35—68 (-4) |
| T6 | Chiehpo Lee (Chinese Taipei) | 36-33—69 (-3) |
| T6 | Taihei Sato (Japan) | 36-33—69 (-3) |
| T6 | a-Yuxin Lin (China) | 36-33—69 (-3) |
| T6 | Kurt Kitayama (U.S.) | 35-34—69 (-3) |
| T6 | Gregory Moss (U.S.) | 35-34—69 (-3) |
| T6 | Sam Chien (U.S.) | 34-35—69 (-3) |

**American Kang leads Changsha Championship**

*Chinese teen Yuxin Lin in the hunt*

CHANGSHA, China—American Jeffrey Kang is back in a familiar position. The winner of the season-opening Chengdu Championship shot an opening 6-under 66 Thursday to take a two-shot advantage at the Changsha Championship. He leads Chinese amateur Bi Liu, who tied for first in the Monday qualifier, and compatriot Hongfu Wu. They each shot 68s to share second with Canada’s Beonyeong Lee and American Ryann Ree at Hunan Dragon Lake International Golf Club.

Kang, 26, first announced himself on the Tour by winning the International Qualifying Tournament No. 1 at Haikou in February, earning membership for the 2018 season. He then won the season-opening Chengdu Championship before missing the cut in Chongqing the following week. But the University of Southern California alum regained his confidence after racking up six birdies in a bogey-free round at PGA TOUR Series-China’s third event of the season.

“I played very good. I had a game plan going into the week, and I feel like I executed it perfectly,” said Kang, fluent in both English and Korean. “I wanted to hit a lot of greens, and I missed two, and the two misses were right by the green so I didn’t have too much trouble and ended up with a good score.”

After winning two out of his three Tour starts in 2018, Kang is among the favorites this week, but he is not getting ahead of himself after his disappointment in Chongqing.

“Obviously, it’s a big confidence booster, but it’s a new week every week,” Kang said. “I was champion just a few weeks ago. Today, it’s a new week, a new day and that’s how I’m going to go about it.”

Ree, who played college golf for San Diego State, was thrilled with his performance, which included five birdies and one bogey.

“I drove it pretty well, and, honestly, I made everything I saw. My short game really saved me and I think that was really key,” said the 24-year-old Ree.

Chinese teenager Yuxin Lin, competing in his first event on the Tour after playing on the PGA TOUR in the Masters Tournament last month, shot 69 to tie for sixth, despite complaining of stomach pains from eating too much spicy food.

Lin was pleasantly surprised by his 3-under round after struggling the entire day with illness.

“It was definitely something I ate, too much chili and stuff. I am used to eating extremely spicy food like in Chengdu, Sichuan, but I guess I couldn’t take it. It was *too* spicy,” said Lin, who said he hasn’t been scared off by his preferred gastronomic choices. “No, I’m still going to have spicy—but maybe just medium spicy this time.”

Japan’s Taihei Sato, Chinese Taipei’s Chiehpo Lee and Americans Kurt Kitayama, Gregory Moss and former PGA TOUR Series-China winner Sam Chien also shot 69. China’s Yi Cao, who won the Chongqing Championship in late March, made six birdies in his opening round but carded a 73 after double bogeys on Nos. 12 and 17.