**Techakanokboon leads trio at Zhuhai Championship**

ZHUHAI, China—American Kevin Techakanokboon fired a 5-under 66 on a difficult scoring day to take a three-shot lead after the third round of the Zhuhai Championship. Right behind him are three of the top four players in the Order of Merit, setting up what promises to be an exciting final round of the the penultimate event of this year’s PGA TOUR Series-China.

Techakanokboon was one of just six players to shoot under-par at Orient Golf Club, and he was the only player to better 69 Saturday as he moved to 6-under.

Order of Merit leader Charlie Saxon, the first- and second-round leader, carded a 74 to sit in second, at 3-under, one ahead of New Zealand’s Nick Voke and South Korea’s Todd Baek (70), third and fourth on the money list, respectively.

Techakanokboon, 25, was ready for another difficult scoring day but managed to stay out of trouble to card six birdies and one bogey as he seeks to win his first 72-hole pro tournament.

“I knew it was going to be a tough day, so I just picked out small targets. My lag putting was pretty good, and I don’t think I had any three-putts and when I hit it close, I converted,” said Techakanokboon, whose caddie Saturday was Malaysian Tour pro Arie Irawan, who missed the cut.

“Today I executed the shots a lot better. I also had Arie on the bag, so that helped a lot. I wasn’t really nervous at all.”

In his first year on the Tour, Techakanokboon, who also has citizenship in Thailand, has been playing well recently and will play in Sunday’s final group with multiple champions Saxon and Baek. They’ve combined to win six tournaments on PGA TOUR Series-China.

“My game has been better over the last month or so. It’s definitely more stable, so I just need to stay focused because one lapse of focus could cost you the whole tournament,” said Techakanokboon, who graduated from Long Beach State University in 2015.

“Nothing is going to change. I’m just going to keep playing my game. It would be great if I’m able to win, but I’m not going to try and force anything out of myself.”

Saxon won the Tour’s first event at this course in November 2016 on the way to finishing second on the Order of Merit to earn status for the 2017 Web.com Tour. Now, the American is hoping to triumph again but admitted the course was getting the better of him as he followed an opening 64 with rounds of 72 and 74.

“It’s just a hard course. It beats you up. It’s just grind, grind, grind, and sometimes you fall on the good side of things and sometimes you don’t. It’s a very fine line out there, and I didn’t ride the good side of the line today,” said Saxon, bidding for his third Tour title of the season.

“I’m just going to shake it off and restart tomorrow. I’m three off the lead and if you told me on Thursday I would be here, I’d probably take it.” A tough finish for Saxon left him disappointed. After making an eight-foot birdie putt on No. 17, he hit his drive on 18 into the left hazard. After a penalty drop, he hit his third shot into a waste area on the right side. He eventually made double bogey.

Voke will play in Sunday’s second-to-last group—as he has done during his past two wins—with amateur Yilong Chen and Yuwa Kosaihira as he tries to win a record-breaking third consecutive title on the Tour.

Despite carding three birdies in his opening four holes, Voke failed to keep the momentum going but is looking at the positives as he heads into Sunday.

“I got off to a really good start, 3-under through four, thinking, Here we go. And then I think I may have glanced at a few leaderboards, and I think I got a little bit carried away when I should have been focusing on myself,” said Voke, who played golf at Iowa State University.

“It’s just such a tough golf course, and you’re going to make a mistake. At the end of the day, I’m four shots back, and that’s nothing on this golf course, so a nice early night for me and then hopefully get things rolling [Sunday].”

Japan’s Kosaihira—sixth on the Order of Merit—shot 69 to share fifth at 1-under, with Italy’s Aron Zemmer and Chen, one ahead of Chinese duo of Zeming He and Zihao Chen.