**Featherstone heads to the weekend in Tijuana with a two-shot lead**

TIJUANA, Mexico—Colin Featherstone began the 59th Mexican Open with a bogey on the par-4 first hole at Club Campestre de Tijuana. It’s been nothing but an eagle, birdies and pars since. Featherstone has played his last 35 holes in 11-under and goes to the weekend in PGA TOUR Latinoamerica’s second event of the 2018 season alone in first place, one shot ahead of Austin Smotherman. Eric Steger, Harry Higgs and MJ Maguire are tied for third, at 8-under. First-round leader Sean Walsh is one of sevenplayers at 7-under and tied for sixth, all chasing Featherstone whose nine birdies this week have all come on different holes (Nos. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 15, 17 and 18). It’s been the ninth hole that has been particularly good to the Oceanside, California, resident—with an eagle there in the first round and a birdie Friday. Trying to stay patient during the second round when birdies were initially hard to come by, Featherstone, at 1-under for the day, hit his approach shot on his 12th hole—No. 3 at Club Campestre de Tijuana—to six feet and made the birdie putt. He birdied his next hole, made a strong save on his second-to-last hole of the day and then finished in style with one more birdie.

**Did You Know Colin Featherstone**

played collegiate golf at San Diego State University, counting among his teammates future professional golfers J.J. Spaun (PGA TOUR), Alex Kang (Web.com Tour), Bryan Martin (PGA TOUR Latinoamerica) and Todd Baek (PGA TOUR Series-China)?

**Key Information**

* Colin Featherstone has elected to stay at his home in Oceanside, California, this week, commuting to Tijuana each day. “I was a little worried about the border crossing and getting through, but it’s been easy,” he said.
* This week marks Colin Featherstone’s 16th career PGA TOUR Latinoamerica start. His tie for second at the 2017 NEC Argentina Classic in November is his best finish. He also finished fourth at the Honduras Open and tied for seventh at the Paraguay Open, both also in 2017.
* Austin Smotherman from Loomis, California, not far from California’s capital of Sacramento, has birdied No. 17 two days in a row on the strength of approach shots into the par-4 that have landed inside two feet of the cup.
* The cut came at 2-under, with 62 players qualifying for the weekend.
* Mexico’s Juan Pablo Hernandez, England’s Charlie Bull and Norway’s Andreas Halvorsen are the highest-placed non-Americans on the leaderboard through 36 holes. The trio is tied for sixth, at 7-under.
* Besides Juan Pablo Hernandez, five other Mexicans made the cut: Santiago Gavino (3-under), Alfredo Ruiz (3-under), Adrian Rodriguez (3-under) and amateurs Raul Pereda (3-under) and Alvaro Ortiz Becerra (2-under).
* Order of Merit leader and Guatemala Stella Artois Open winner Ben Polland opened with a 2-under 68 and followed that with a 69.He goes into the weekend tied for 44th.

**Quotable**

“I had a lot of good opportunities, lots of good looks at birdies. I just kind of stayed patient. The putts weren’t going in at the start of the round, but I stayed patient and made a couple coming in. It was good.” –Colin Featherstone

“I’m hitting it really well. I’m hitting a lot of greens and not putting myself in bad positions. I’m just keeping it in the fairway and giving myself looks.” –Colin Featherstone

“I think a big thing is it was hard to adjust to playing in the morning. It was 7 a.m., and the ball doesn’t fly very far. I definitely had some longer clubs into 1 and 2, which are longer holes.” –Sean Walsh

“I knew I would need a lot of patience today to take some things on the chest that probably weren’t going to go my way that went my way [Thursday]. I think I did a really good job of that mentally.” –Sean Walsh

“I have a lot of friends in San Diego. Maybe if Sunday comes around, I can give them a call and have them cross the border.” –Austin Smotherman

“The course is good. It reminds me a lot of courses I grew up, with that tighter tree line where I drive it pretty straight. These fairways seem really narrow, but it’s what I grew up on so they’re pretty normal to me.” –Austin Smotherman

**Tournament Fast Fact**

This is the fourth time Club Campestre de Tijuana has hosted the Mexican Open. The club was also the home to Mexico’s national open in 1983 and 1984. The winner in 1983 was American Tommy Armour III, with Canadian Danny Mijovic winning the following year.

**Second-Round Weather Report**

Overnight rain softened the course. Overcast and cooler, with a high of 63. Wind WNW at 8-12 mph.