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First-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
T1	Dan McCarthy	65 (-7)
T1	Byron Meth	65 (-7)
T3	Tim Wilkinson	66 (-6)
T3	Kevin Lucas	66 (-6)
T3	Brett Coletta	66 (-6)

McCarthy, Meth shoot 7-under 65, share first-round lead at Savannah Golf Championship

SAVANNAH, Georgia – Dan McCarthy and Byron Meth share the first-round lead at the second-annual Savannah Golf Championship after carding rounds of 7-under 65 at The Landings Club – Deer Creek Course.

McCarthy, who began his day on the back nine, birdied his opening hole and used six more birdies over his last 12 holes to post the best score of the morning wave. The former Le Moyne College standout added birdies on Nos. 16 and 18 to make the turn at 3-under. He then added birdies on Nos. 1 and 3 and closed with two birdies in his final three holes to finish the day at 7-under.

“It’s not an easy golf course by any means, especially because we knew the wind was going to be out of the northeast which means the last four or five holes for me play straight into the wind,” McCarthy said. “I don’t think it’s an easy, scorable day by any means but the greens are so pure that if you’re hitting it good and giving yourself chances, you can roll them in.”

McCarthy hit 15/18 greens in regulation and had three key up-and-downs to keep momentum going as players battled a cold morning and windy conditions with gusts reaching up to 22 mph. McCarthy had only 26 putts on Thursday and cited the putter as a key to his round.

“I hit it pretty well for the most part, I kind of kept it in play and made a couple good par saves when I got out of position,” he said. “I made a 10-footer on 12 and then made another 10-, 12-footer on the second to last hole to save a par. So when I was out of position I was able to keep it together.”

McCarthy, whose best finish this year is a T42 at the Country Club de Bogotá Championship, has had a slow start to his season and currently sits 119th in The 25 standings. The Syracuse, New York, native noted his early struggles but looks to continue his strong play in Savannah.

“I haven’t gotten off to great starts so far this year in the events I’ve played, so it’s nice to get pretty deep under par right out of the gate,” McCarthy said. “Somebody always goes low out here, somebody always gets hot, and it’s nice to be that guy for a change.”



Starting on No. 10 in the afternoon wave, Meth shot 34 on the back nine before carding five front-nine birdies en route to a 7-under 65, his best score of the season. Meth's bogey-free round included nine one-putts and a chip-in birdie on No. 2. In all, he needed just 25 putts, which ranks T3 through 18 holes.

"You know the wind died down (on the back nine), so I could really fire at the hole locations," Meth said. "We were talking about targets out there and thinking two feet right of the hole so we might as well just go at it. I played pretty aggressive on that side and it paid off."

A 26-year-old from San Diego, Meth has carded nine consecutive rounds under par and said that his wedge play has been a key to his success.

"Knowing that if I'm out of position, even if it's a par-5 and I'm in the trees or fairway bunker, I'll still have a look for birdie and if it's a par-4 I'll still have a look at par," Meth said. "I'm really taking the big numbers out of play and just playing some golf."

Meth earned eight starts this season after finishing T22 in the final stage of Web.com Tour Q-School in December. In his first six starts of 2019, he has tied for 25th twice and is currently No. 65 in The 25 standings.

"It's fantastic, getting through Q-School was an unbelievable experience and getting eight starts was awesome. But there's also a ton of work to be done," Meth said. "It's an awesome experience and the brotherhood out here is amazing."

Seven players are tied for sixth at 5-under: Doug Ghim, Zecheng (Marty) Dou, Nicholas Thompson, Rob Oppenheim, Cameron Percy, Joseph Bramlett and Casey Wittenberg.

THURSDAY NOTES:

- * Thursday's weather: Partly cloudy to mostly sunny, high of 69, winds 10-15 mph with gusts up to 22 mph.
- * This week's purse is \$550,000, with \$99,000 going to the champion.
- * Forty-two former Web.com Tour champions are in the field, combining for 56 total victories.
- * Savannah native Mark Silvers is currently T128 after an opening-round 75.
- * Edward Loar, the low returning finisher from 2018 (T5), sits T18 after an opening-round 69.
- * Three players who entered the week inside The 25 are in the top 10: Zecheng (Marty) Dou (T6/No. 7 in The 25), Cameron Percy (T6/No. 18 in The 25) and Doug Ghim (T6/No. 25 in The 25).
- * The par 5s (Nos. 14 and 18) were the only two holes on the back nine that played under par. The other seven holes were among the eight most difficult in Thursday's opening round.
- * Cory Howard leads all Monday Qualifiers at T18 after a 3-under 69.
- * Brandon Crick, who Monday Qualified into the field for the second consecutive week, is T34 after an opening-round two-under 70.
- * Hardest hole: Par-4, No. 10 (+0.321) – 12 birdies, 47 bogeys, 7 double bogeys or worse



* Easiest Hole: Par-5, No. 3 (-0.532) – 7 eagles, 77 birdies, 6 bogeys, 1 double bogey

*The Landings Club – Deer Creek Course Scoring Average:

	Front	Back	Total	Cumulative
R1	35.045	36.853	71.897	

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