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Second-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Brad Brunner	68-64—132 (-12)
2	Curtis Thompson	68-65—133 (-11)
T3	Stephan Jaeger	70-65—135 (-9)
T3	Adam Svensson	69-66—135 (-9)
T3	Brad Hopfinger	69-66—135 (-9)
T3	Alex Chiarella	67-67—135 (-9)

[Full Leaderboard](#) | [Tee Times](#)

Brad Brunner claims 36-hole lead at Evans Scholars Invitational

WESTCHESTER, Ill. – Entering last week, Brad Brunner was struggling to get starts on the Korn Ferry Tour with just four made cuts and a high finish of T50 this season. Fast forward a week and the southpaw has collected a solo-ninth finish at the Lincoln Land Championship presented by LRS and now holds the 36-hole lead at the Evans Scholars Invitational. Brunner carded an 8-under 64 on Friday to reach 12-under for the tournament and take a one-stroke lead over Curtis Thompson at Chicago Highlands Club.

“I’m just trying to take advantage of the opportunities I have,” said Brunner, who began the year with conditional status after a T53 finish at the Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament last fall. “I’ve never been able to play with this kind of status where I know I’m going to get some starts out here. Last week helps and I like where my heads at.”

Starting at the 10th hole, Brunner birdied four of his first five holes, dropped a shot at the 16th and eagled the 18th to turn in 5-under 31. The 32-year-old tacked on four more birdies – along with a bogey – on his second nine for a 64. The 64 ties the competitive course record at Chicago Highlands, set 10 minutes prior by Mito Pereira.

“I asked somebody what the course record was and I think they thought 65 was the record, so on nine I just thought let’s get this up and down for the record,” laughed Brunner. “And then I heard Mito shot a 64 right before me. But either way that was great.”

Brunner has had an adventurous path in pro golf thus far. After attending the University of North Florida, the Tampa native caddied for a while to make ends meet until he could pursue a pro golf career. He competed on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica in 2016 and 2017 followed by 12

starts on the Korn Ferry Tour in 2018. A T6 at the KC Golf Classic in 2018 marked his only career top-10 before last week.

Three weeks ago Brunner made an equipment change to all Callaway clubs but credited his recent surge as much to his mental approach as to his equipment.

“I’ve been just trying to get my head in the right place, just trying to be me,” said Brunner. “I went all Callaway a few weeks ago. I had been using their putters, but they’ve been treating me well and it’s been good... But a lot of it is getting my mental side of it in the right spot. But equipment is part of it and I trust it.”

Brunner leads former Louisiana State University golfer Curtis Thompson by one stroke entering the third round. Thompson began his day with a bogey at the 10th but rebounded with six birdies and an eagle at the par-5 12th for a 65 and a two-day total of 11-under.

“The hole was just bigger for our group today,” joked Thompson, whose group combined to go 20-under on Friday. “[Erik]Compton made eagle on the first hole and then another one on seven. And Mito [Pereira] made everything for the first nine holes out there...We were just kind of fueling off of each other.”

Thompson is the older brother to LPGA Tour star Lexi Thompson and the younger brother to fellow Korn Ferry Tour pro Nicholas Thompson. Curtis Thompson previously competed on the Korn Ferry Tour from 2015-18 and earned full status on Tour this season after earning co-medalist honors at the 2019 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament.

Four players sit three shots off the lead at 9-under: Stephan Jaeger, Adam Svensson, Alex Chiarella and Chicago native Brad Hopfinger.

The tournament will continue with the third round on Saturday with tee times from approximately 7-9 a.m. off of the first and 10th tees.

FRIDAY NOTES:

- * Friday’s weather: Cloudy with showers throughout the day with a high of 69 degrees and wind NE at 7-14 mph. Lift, clean and place was in effect in Friday’s round.
- * The lead is the first of Brunner’s career in his 22nd career start. He is looking to become the fifth second-round leader to go on to win this season in the 20th tournament of the year.
- * Brunner has hit 27 of 36 greens in regulation thus far, good for T7 in the field, and had just 25 putts on Friday. He also ranks T4 in scrambling this week after converting eight of nine opportunities.
- * Thompson is one of the longest hitters on the Korn Ferry Tour, an advantage in soft conditions on a course being played at 7,490 yards. Thompson ranks fifth in driving distance this season (326.4 average).

- * Adam Svensson is the only player in the field without a bogey through 36 holes. Theo Humphrey (-8, T7) is the only other player with less than two bogeys.
- * Chicago resident Brad Hopfinger is the highest local player through two rounds at T3. Other players with local ties to make the cut include former Northwestern University star Dylan Wu (T32) and Chicago resident Nick Hardy (T42).
- * Garrett Rank, the lone amateur in the field, missed the cut by one stroke at 2-under 142. The 32-year-old won the 2019 Western Amateur to earn an exemption into the field and is a current NHL referee.
- * This week's purse is \$600,000 with \$108,000 going to the champion. The champion will also receive 500 Korn Ferry Tour points.
- * The combined 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour schedule will conclude with 25 PGA TOUR cards awarded at the 2021 WinCo Foods Portland Open presented by KraftHeinz, with an additional 25 cards awarded at the conclusion of the 2021 Korn Ferry Tour Finals.
- * The par-4 15th hole (519 yards) played as the hardest hole on Friday with a scoring average of 4.266.
- * The par-5 18th hole (573 yards) played as the easiest hole on Friday with a scoring average of 4.396.

	Front	Back	Total	Cumulative
R1	35.705	36.199	71.904	
R2	35.013	35.390	70.409	71.156

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