

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 11, 2020

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First-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Paul Barjon	64 (-6)
T2	Eight players tied	66 (-4)

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

Three months later, Barjon continues momentum at Korn Ferry Challenge at TPC Sawgrass

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Florida – For three long months, Paul Barjon waited patiently for another chance.

In early March, at the El Bosque Mexico Championship by INNOVA, the 27-year-old came tantalizingly close to his first career Korn Ferry Tour victory. But a three-putt at the 72nd hole forced him into a playoff with David Kocher, who later emerged with the win after Barjon hit his approach shot into a hazard short of the green.

“It was a little bitter, for sure,” Barjon recalled. “I could have two-putted the last hole from maybe 70-feet and wouldn’t have had to go in a playoff. I think I learned from that. You learn from defeat. I wish I would have won, obviously, but it was definitely a good week overall. I didn’t have a top-20 before that and finished second, so I can be happy about that and learn a lot.”

Now, more than 100 days later, Barjon is getting his first opportunity to right those wrongs. And he took the first step toward that goal with a 6-under 64 Thursday in the opening round of the Korn Ferry Challenge at TPC Sawgrass, the Tour’s first return to competition since play was halted in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The tournament—contested without fans on the Dye’s Valley Course—marks the seventh event of the Regular Season and the first of two straight events in Northeast Florida, with The King & Bear Classic at World Golf Village in St. Augustine slated for June 17-20.

“Three months is a long time, and I haven’t played any tournaments in between,” Barjon said. “I’ve been able to play every day, thankfully, and try to play 18 or more every day. I think that’s what kept me sharp, but I don’t know about momentum. It’s been a while, so it was definitely weird on the first few holes to be playing tournament golf and taking the pin out of the hole and putting with no pin. That was definitely weird.”

But nothing else appeared out of the ordinary for Barjon, who carded a bogey-free round en route to a two-shot lead over eight others: Tim Wilkinson, Taylor Moore, Kristoffer Ventura, Ryan Brehm, Luke List, Chase Wright, Erik Compton and Scott Langley. The New Caledonia native, who started on the back nine, made the turn at 1-under before going on a tear with five birdies over his next seven holes, including three consecutive at Nos. 3-5.

“I hit the ball pretty good all day, but during the first nine holes I had some issues with the speed of the greens,” said Barjon, the reigning Player of the Year on Mackenzie Tour – PGA TOUR Canada. “I don’t remember the last time I’ve played greens this fast, and they’re soft at the same time, so they’re hard to figure out. On the back nine, I hit it a little closer and made a few putts. My speed was a little better so, I definitely turned it on.”

A two-week business trip to the Sunshine State might actually prove to be a bit of a respite for Barjon, who has spent the last month settling into his new Fort Worth, Texas, home with his wife, Katrina. And when he wasn’t deep into his newfound hobby of “fixing a thing or two and making sure nothing was going to break in the next six months,” he was busy putting games together at his local golf course with friends and colleagues.

Now it’s back to the customary rigors of the Korn Ferry Tour, and perhaps soon, that coveted shot at redemption.

“I think we all know that if we play well and have a good week, someone isn’t beating us,” he said. “Some weeks you have someone go off and you can’t win the tournament. Everyone out here knows if they play well for four days, they have a pretty good chance of lifting the trophy...It definitely helps finishing second and being in that playoff (in Mexico). That shows you that you can do it.”

THURSDAY NOTES:

- * Thursday’s weather: Partly cloudy, high of 85, winds S/SE 10-15 mph.
- * This week’s purse is \$600,000 with \$108,000 going to the winner. The champion will also receive 500 Korn Ferry Tour points.
- * Jacksonville Beach native Tim Wilkinson leads the local contingent at T2 after an opening-round 66.
- * Taylor Moore (-4, 66) carded his eighth round in the 60s in his last 10 competitive rounds. He has finished T11 and T12 over that stretch.
- * Thursday’s first round comes 102 days since the Korn Ferry Tour’s last round at the El Bosque Mexico Championship by INNOVA.
- * Curtis Luck recorded an ace on the 227-yard par-3 11th using a 4-iron.
- * The newly created 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.

- * This week's field is the most accomplished since the 2019 Korn Ferry Tour Finals. There are currently 16 former PGA TOUR champions in the field (representing 36 wins) and 54 former Korn Ferry Tour victors with 87 total victories among them.
- * This marks the first time the Korn Ferry Tour has played at the Dye's Valley Course since the 2015 Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by United Leasing & Finance.
- * The par-4 17th hole (499 yards) played as the hardest hole on Thursday with a scoring average of 4.387.
- * The 326-yard par-4 seventh played as the easiest hole on Thursday with a scoring average of 3.690.

Dye's Valley Course Scoring Average:

	Front	Back	Total
R1	34.845	35.774	70.619

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