



LECOM Suncoast Classic

Lakewood National Golf Club | Lakewood Ranch, Florida | February 13-16, 2020

Korn Ferry Tour Media Contact

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Quick Facts

Golf Course: Lakewood National Golf Club (Commander Course)

Par-72 – 7,161 yards

Course Designer: Arnold Palmer

Purse: \$600,000 (Winner: \$108,000 / 500 points)

Field Overview (as of February 10)

- 41 Korn Ferry Tour winners with 64 victories
- Nine PGA TOUR winners with 22 victories
- [Power Rankings](#)
- [Inside the Field](#)
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Past Champion

Last season, Mark Hubbard capped the inaugural LECOM Suncoast Classic in style with a final-round 67 on his way to a two-stroke victory. He looked ready to coast to victory on Sunday after five birdies on the front nine built a large advantage, but Maverick McNealy surged to draw within one stroke late in the day before a birdie by Hubbard at the 16th led to a two-stroke win.

Hubbard, a Denver product, went on to secure his PGA TOUR card during the Regular Season by virtue of finishing ninth on the season-long points list. He added three more top-10s during the 2019 Korn Ferry Tour season, including a T3 finish at the Visit Knoxville Open. Now back on the PGA TOUR, Hubbard more than took advantage of his status during the fall season. Hubbard finished T10 at A Military Tribute at The Greenbrier, the first event on the TOUR's 2019-20 schedule. The top-10 was the first of his TOUR career, in his 84th event played. A month later, Hubbard broke through with his best performance on TOUR to date, a runner-up finish at the Houston Open. He was edged by Lanto Griffin and finished tied with Scott Harrington, both players who made the cut at last year's LECOM Suncoast Classic. Just two weeks ago, Hubbard notched the third top-10 of his career at the Waste Management Phoenix Open (T9).

At 29th in the FedExCup standings, Hubbard has put himself in prime position to make a run at the FedExCup Playoffs in August.

| Year | Champion | Scores | To Par | Margin |
|------|--------------|-----------------|--------|--------|
| 2019 | Mark Hubbard | 65-66-64-67—262 | -26 | 2 |

Tournament History

In 2019, Mark Hubbard outlasted a host of players to win the first edition of the tournament. Georgia Tech alum J.T. Griffin posted a 9-under 63 during the first round to take a one-stroke lead before eventually finishing fifth. The top-five finish was huge for Griffin, who had to Monday Qualify to gain entry into the tournament. By finishing in the top-25 after Monday Qualifying, Griffin also gained entry into the next tournament and gained status for the rest of the year through the reshuffle.

Maverick McNealy, the former top-ranked amateur in the world while at Stanford University, claimed a share of the lead (with Griffin) after 36 holes. Hubbard went on to earn the 54-hole lead and the tournament title after 72 holes and secured his PGA TOUR card midway through the Korn Ferry Tour season. McNealy stayed around the top-25 bubble for most of the season before earning his TOUR card at the last event of the Regular Season at 23rd on the points list.

Local Players in the Field

Seath Lauer, a former professional golfer on the Mackenzie Tour – PGA TOUR Canada in 2015 and 2016, will return to the LECOM Suncoast Classic for the second year in a row after missing the cut last season. He has been working at Virtus Health in Sarasota for the past few years and is a native of the Sarasota area. Phillip Knowles, originally from Bradenton and an alum of The Bradenton Christian School, will make his first start on the Korn Ferry Tour. He competed full-time on the Mackenzie Tour in 2019 where he made eight cuts in 11 starts, including four top-25s. David Perritt, who won a qualifier among head golf professionals to earn an exemption into the tournament, is the Director of Golf at Lakewood National Golf Club. Jimmy Stanger, the top returning finisher from last year's tournament (T3), will look to continue his success near his hometown of Tampa, Florida.

Course Information

Lakewood National Golf Club's Commander Course, an Arnold Palmer design, provided a unique test in year one of the LECOM Suncoast Classic. While the 7,161-yard course ranked as the fifth-easiest on Tour according to scoring average (70.349), several holes were among the Tour's most difficult. The par-4 second hole (491 yards) ranked as the toughest par-4 hole on Tour in 2019, and the second-toughest hole overall by scoring average at 4.538. The very next hole (the par-3, 253-yard third) ranked as the third toughest hole on Tour in 2019 with a scoring average of 3.435. Combined with a difficult par-4 first hole, which ranked as the 102nd-toughest hole last year, the opening three holes on the front nine are among the toughest three-hole stretches on Tour.

On the other hand, the par-72 course also claimed three of the 15 easiest holes on Tour in 2019 (by scoring average). The par-5 16th (563 yards) played as the easiest hole on Tour with a scoring average of 4.294 while relinquishing more eagles (29) than bogeys (10). The par-5 10th (550 yards/4.383 scoring average) ranked as the eighth-easiest hole on Tour, while the drivable par-4 fourth hole (298 yards/3.414 scoring average) ranked as the 15th-easiest hole on Tour and the easiest par-4.

By the Numbers: Lakewood National Golf Club (Commander Course)

Hardest hole (2019): No. 2 (par 4, 491 yards) – 4.538 average, 147 bogeys, 40 double bogeys or worse

Easiest hole (2019): No. 16 (par 5, 563 yards) – 4.294 average, 29 eagles, 246 birdies

Tournament Record (18 holes): 63 (-9), 2019 – J.T. Griffin – First Round

Tournament Record (72 holes): 262 (-26), 2019 – Mark Hubbard

Top Five to Watch

- **Jimmy Stanger** – In addition to being a resident of nearby Tampa, the 24-year-old has the benefit of being the top returning finisher from last year's tournament. Stanger finished T3 at 23-under after four rounds of 68 or better.
- **Mito Pereira** – Pereira is currently the hottest golfer on the Korn Ferry Tour, with back-to-back finishes of T3-win. Prior to two weeks ago, Pereira had two top-10s in 45 career starts.
- **Mike Weir** – The 49-year-old made waves at last year's LECOM Suncoast Classic, shooting three rounds in the 60s to open the tournament and sat T10 before faltering with a final-round 75. The 2003 Masters champion will make his second start of the season at Lakewood National this week.
- **Billy Kennerly** – In addition to getting off to a strong start this season with an early T3 finish, Kennerly finished solo-sixth last season at Lakewood National after four rounds in the 60s.
- **Will Zalatoris** – Zalatoris, one of the best ball strikers on Tour, has made all four cuts this season. He has taken advantage with two top-10s thus far, in large part due to a consistent low round on moving day. Zalatoris leads the Tour in third-round

scoring average at 66.25.

Chase for The 25

The Korn Ferry Tour points list replaced the money list prior to the 2019 season as the system to ascend to earn one of the 25 PGA TOUR cards awarded at the end of the Regular Season in Portland. At the conclusion of the WinCo Foods Portland Open presented by KraftHeinz, the top-25 point earners will receive their PGA TOUR cards. Additionally, the top-75 players in Korn Ferry Tour points (plus ties) will be eligible to play in the Korn Ferry Tour Finals.

| Rank | Name | Points |
|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. | Davis Riley | 644 |
| 2. | Mito Pereira | 634 |
| 3. | Jared Wolfe | 572 |
| 4. | Tommy Gainey | 500 |
| 5. | Roberto Diaz | 482 |

Season Recap

1. *The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic at Sandals Emerald Bay* – Tommy Gainey birdied his final three holes to pull away from the field and earn the first title of the 2019 season. It was the 44-year-old’s first win since the 2012 RSM Classic on the PGA TOUR.
2. *The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at Baha Mar* – Jared Wolfe ran away from the field with birdies on three of his final four holes at The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at Baha Mar. Wolfe battled windy conditions in the final round to clinch the first Korn Ferry Tour title of his career.
3. *Panamá Championship* – After an eagle on the back nine during his final round, Davis Riley held on to win the Panama Championship by one stroke over Roberto Díaz. The victory was Riley’s first on the Korn Ferry Tour and came in just his 21st Tour start.
4. *Country Club de Bogota Championship* – Mito Pereira carded a final-round 64 to claim his first Korn Ferry Tour victory at the Country Club de Bogota Championship. Entering the 72nd hole tied at the top, Pereira sunk a long eagle putt to clinch the two-stroke victory.

About Korn Ferry Tour

Founded (1990), owned and operated by the PGA TOUR, the Korn Ferry Tour identifies and develops those players who are ready to compete and win on golf’s biggest stage. In 2013, the Korn Ferry Tour became The Path to the PGA TOUR with all 50 available PGA TOUR cards coming through the Tour and the season culminating at the Korn Ferry Tour Finals. This season marks the 30th year of competition on the Korn Ferry Tour. Three out of four PGA TOUR members are Korn Ferry Tour alumni. Tour alumni have won more than 500 PGA TOUR titles, including 24 major championships and eight PLAYERS Championships. To learn more about the PGA TOUR, the Korn Ferry Tour and to follow the season-long quest for a PGA TOUR card, visit PGATOUR.COM, or follow the Tour on social media via Instagram (@KornFerryTour), Twitter (@KornFerryTour) and Facebook ([facebook.com/KornFerryTour](https://www.facebook.com/KornFerryTour)).