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First-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Charlie Saxon	61 (-10)
2	Vincent Whaley	63 (-8)
T3	Ryan Brehm	65 (-6)
T3	Ben Kohles	65 (-6)
T5	Five tied at	66 (-5)

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

**Charlie Saxon cards career-low round to lead at
Lincoln Land Championship presented by LRS**

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – Three weeks ago, Charlie Saxon set a career-low round on the Korn Ferry Tour with an opening-round 63 at the Albertsons Boise Open. On Thursday, he blew past that mark to set a new career-best with a 10-under 61 and take the first-round lead at the Lincoln Land Championship presented by LRS. Saxon leads Vincent Whaley by two strokes.

Competing in the first tee time of the afternoon, Saxon birdied his first three holes and five of his first eight to turn at 5-under 30. He tacked on four more in a row from Nos. 10-13 before a final one at the par-5 16th allowed him to reach double digits under par.

“I saw that it was going to be dead in the morning and pretty windy in the afternoon, so I knew I was going to have to have my best stuff today,” said Saxon. “I got off to a great start when the wind wasn’t quite at its peak...There are birdies to be had, but the wind was going to be up. But I just drove it so well and was in such good spots that I could take on some pins. I had a lot of good looks today.”

The low round was no aberration for the 27-year-old University of Oklahoma alum. Saxon has been a mainstay atop the leaderboard of late. Despite a missed cut last week, Saxon has been inside the top-10 on the leaderboard after 10 of his last 14 rounds on Tour.

“I’ve played some really good rounds lately,” exhaled Saxon. “I feel like I’m really close to breaking through. I just need to put a complete week together. I feel like I’ve had one round each week that has kept me from competing on Sunday. Why not this week?”

Saxon had an outside chance at a 59 entering the final hole, needing to hole out for eagle from the fairway for a sub-60 round. Instead he hit the green and two-putted for a 61. His roommate

and frontrunner for PGA TOUR Rookie of the Year, Scottie Scheffler, shot a 59 at THE NORTHERN TRUST two weeks ago.

“It was going through my mind a little bit out there, but I knew I still needed a lot of birdies coming in,” said Saxon. “It would have been fun to have a 59 to match Scottie’s 59, but I’ll take a 61 any day.”

Had he carded a sub-60 round it would have been the eighth such round in the history of the Korn Ferry Tour. Most recently, Sam Saunders carded a 59 during the 2017 Korn Ferry Tour Championship.

Saxon entered the week 51st in the Korn Ferry Tour points standings during an up-and-down season. The former Sooner missed his first four cuts of the season but has earned five top-20 finishes over his last eight starts. Saxon has competed full time on the Korn Ferry Tour over the past two seasons after winning twice on PGA TOUR Series-China in 2018. With four wins in China, he is the all-time leading money winner on that Series.

While Saxon competed in the first group of the afternoon wave, Whaley teed off in the first group of the day at 6:50 a.m. The Georgia Tech alum took advantage of calmer morning conditions with six birdies and an eagle at the par-5 16th to reach 8-under. Ryan Brehm and Ben Kohles each sit four shots off the lead and two strokes back of Whaley at 6-under 65.

The tournament will continue with the second round on Friday with tee times from 6:50 a.m. to 2 p.m. off of the first and 10th tees.

THURSDAY NOTES:

- * Thursday’s weather: Mostly sunny with a high of 88 degrees and wind SW at 8-15 mph.
- * The Lincoln Land Championship presented by LRS is the 19th event of the season. Will Zalatoris leads the points standings through 18 events, while first-round leader Charlie Saxon projects to move to 13th with a victory after entering the week 51st.
- * The 10-under 61 ties the low round of the year on the Korn Ferry Tour, matching Cameron Young’s 10-under 61 in the third round of the Albertsons Boise Open three weeks ago. Last year there were seven rounds of 61 or better over the course of the year, led by Chris Baker’s 60 at the REX Hospital Open.
- * This marks the third time Saxon has held at least a share of the lead after a round on Tour and his first solo lead. He previously co-led after the first round of the 2019 Albertsons Boise Open (before finishing T11) and after the second round of the 2020 WinCo Foods Portland Open (finishing T14). He is looking to become the fourth first-round leader to go on to win this season.
- * Saxon and Whaley highlighted 11 bogey-free rounds on Thursday. David Skinns was the only player to card 18 pars.
- * Whaley’s 63 is the lowest round of his career in 41 starts across the Korn Ferry Tour and PGA TOUR. He previously had

- * 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-3 17th hole (233 yards) played as the hardest hole on Thursday with a scoring average of 3.224.
- * The par-5 16th hole (529 yards) played as the easiest hole on Thursday with a scoring average of 4.301.

	Front	Back	Total	Cumulative
R1	35.237	34.699	69.936	

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