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First-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
T1	Jimmy Stanger	65 (-6)
T1	Nick Hardy	65 (-6)
T3	Lee Hodges	66 (-5)
T3	Cameron Young	66 (-5)
T5	Four players tied	67 (-4)

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

Jimmy Stanger, Nick Hardy share first-round lead at Nationwide Children's Hospital Championship

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Jimmy Stanger and Nick Hardy posted matching rounds of 6-under 65 on Thursday to claim a share of the first-round lead at the Nationwide Children's Hospital Championship. Lee Hodges and Cameron Young sit one stroke off the pace in a tie for third at 5-under 66.

Beginning the day on the back nine, Stanger got off to a fast start with birdies on Nos. 10 and 12. After pars on his next seven holes, the 25-year-old dropped his only shot of the day at the par-4 second.

Despite the setback, Stanger tallied his third birdie of the day on the par-4 third followed by an eagle on the par-5 fourth. The University of Virginia product finished his opening round with back-to-back birdies on Nos. 8 and 9 to claim a share of the lead at 6-under.

"It was just one of those rounds where I stayed in there mentally," Stanger said. "I didn't hit the ball particularly great, didn't putt the ball particularly great, but the wedges came on strong at the end and I was able to manage a 6-under par round, which was fantastic."

Stanger, who is playing in his third season on the Korn Ferry Tour, entered the week ranked 47th on the Korn Ferry Tour points list and earned his best finish of the season with a T6 result at last week's Albertsons Boise Open presented by Kraft Nabisco.

"It's just more so that confidence, the idea that I'm ready to be here," he said of his strong finish last week. "It's just a matter of gaining confidence in that area and going out there and staying in the present and trying not to think too much."

Tied atop the leaderboard is Hardy who tallied nine birdies during Thursday's first round. After opening his round with pars on Nos. 1 and 2, Hardy carded four consecutive birdies on Nos. 3-6.

Despite a double bogey on the par-4 seventh, he rebounded with back-to-back birdies on Nos. 8 and 9 to make the turn at 4-under.

Hardy dropped a shot on the par-4 11th to fall back to 3-under but converted birdies on three of his final four holes to gain a share of the lead.

“There's obviously more at stake this week but I kind of treat it like every other week,” Hardy said. “I'm trying to position myself well for the weekend and Sunday, so I got off to a good start. Hopefully, I keep that going.”

Hardy is making his professional debut at the Nationwide Children's Hospital Championship but is no stranger to the Ohio State University Golf Club's Scarlet Course. As a standout at the University of Illinois, Hardy played several rounds in Columbus during his collegiate career. In 2018, he finished T2 at the Robert Kepler Intercollegiate contested at the Scarlet Course. Later that spring, he finished T4 at the NCAA Columbus Regional, also played at the Scarlet Course.

“We played well here as a team,” Hardy recalled. “I had a couple really high finishes here. It suits my game pretty well and it feels like a Chicago golf course to me, tree lined and long. You can't really fake it out here, you've got to drive it well and you've got to hit strong sides, you cannot short-side yourself out here at all.”

Lee Hodges and Cameron Young sit in a tie for third at 5-under 66. Two weeks ago, Hodges captured his first Korn Ferry Tour title at the WinCo Foods Portland Open presented by KraftHeinz. With the victory, he secured a spot in the 2020 U.S. Open and is now in great position to secure entry in PGA TOUR additional events during the 2020-21 season.

Young is making his fourth Korn Ferry Tour start of the season this week. Three weeks ago, he Monday qualified into the Pinnacle Bank Championship presented by Aetna before finishing T14. Last week, he finished T6 in Boise, good for his best result on the Korn Ferry Tour.

Second-round tee times will run from 7:30 a.m. to 2:36 p.m. EDT on Friday. The tournament will be broadcast live on Golf Channel from 1-3 p.m. on Friday.

THURSDAY NOTES:

- * Thursday's weather: Mostly sunny, with a high of 82. Wind NE at 4-8 mph.
- * This week's purse is \$1,000,000 with \$180,000 going to the champion. The champion will also receive 600 Korn Ferry Tour points.
- * This marks the first time that Jimmy Stanger and Nick Hardy have held at least a share of the lead after 18-holes on the Korn Ferry Tour.
- * Three of the 16 first-round leaders/co-leaders have gone on to win this season. Max McGreevy most recently won after holding a share of the first-round lead at the Price Cutter Charity Championship presented by Dr Pepper.

- * Stanger is making his second start at the Nationwide Children’s Hospital Championship. Last season, he finished T66 in Ohio.
- * Hardy leads the field after carding nine birdies during his opening round on Thursday.
- * Since the Tour’s return to golf, Lee Hodges (T3, -5) has missed only one cut and has recorded seven top-25s including a victory.
- * Cameron Young (T3, -5) is making his fourth Korn Ferry Tour start of the season and has yet to finish outside the top-15 this year.
- * Brandon Wu sits T5 after an opening-round 67. Wu finished T2 at last week’s Albertsons Boise Open and is making only his fifth start of the season this week.
- * Charlie Saxon (T5, -4) continued his strong play of late with an opening-round 67. Saxon finished T6 at last week’s Albertsons Boise Open presented by Kraft Nabisco.
- * In his first competitive round since his daughter Mia’s passing, Camilo Villegas sits T30 at 1-under.
- * The Nationwide Children’s Hospital Championship serves as the third event of the four-event Korn Ferry Tour Championship Series, which includes elevated purses and points. Five exemptions into the 2020 U.S. Open are also available to the top-five players (not otherwise exempt) in a points list specific to the Albertsons Boise Open presented by Kraft Nabisco, Nationwide Children’s Hospital Championship and Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by United Leasing & Finance. The top-10 players on the Korn Ferry Tour’s overall point standings following the conclusion of the Korn Ferry Tour Championship will also earn entry into the PGA TOUR’s additional events (also known as opposite-field events) during the 2020-21 season.
- * 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 11th hole (473 yards) played as the hardest hole on Thursday with a scoring average of 4.313.
- * The par-5 12th hole (562 yards) played as the easiest hole on Thursday with a scoring average of 4.646.

***Ohio State University Golf Club – Scarlet Course Scoring Average:**

	Front	Back	Total
R1	36.285	35.68	71.972

For highlights from today’s round, or any 2019 event visit <http://bit.ly/kornferry2019video>

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