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First-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
T1	Steven Alker	66 (-5)
T1	Nicholas Thompson	66 (-5)
T1	Stephen Franken	66 (-5)
T1	Greyson Sigg	66 (-5)
T1	Ryan Ruffels	66 (-5)
T6	Four players tied	67 (-4)

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

**Five players share first-round lead at
Pinnacle Bank Championship presented by Aetna**

OMAHA, Nebraska – Five players share the first-round lead after Thursday’s opening round of the Pinnacle Bank Championship presented by Aetna. Steven Alker, Nicholas Thompson, Stephen Franken, Greyson Sigg and Ryan Ruffels posted 5-under 66 to reach the top of the leaderboard after the first round.

Franken, who is making his first start at The Club at Indian Creek, tallied five birdies en route to a bogey-free, 5-under 66. The North Carolina State University product began his day with a birdie on the par-4 10th, his first hole of the day. He went to add birdies on Nos. 15 and 18 to make the turn at 3-under. After pars on Nos. 1-3, he added his fourth birdie of the day at the par-5 fourth and tallied his final birdie of the round on the par-5 seventh.

“I putted it pretty well; I got up-and-down every time, which was great,” Franken said. “It’s playing really tough out there. It wasn’t playing easy, but I kept it in front of me and I was just grateful to have some looks at birdie, and I was able to make a few.”

Franken, a rookie on the Korn Ferry Tour this season, earned status after finishing T7 at the Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament’s Final Stage last December. In 11 starts this season, he has made six cuts and earned his first top-25 with a T17 at the TPC Colorado Championship at Heron Lakes earlier this month.

“It’s been a little up-and-down,” Franken said of his rookie campaign. “I’ve really enjoyed the grind of figuring out what works for me. I feel like I’ve learned a ton and am a totally different player than I was in December. I feel like I’m starting to really put everything together.”

Sigg, who also finished T7 at the Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament's Final Stage, carded six birdies against one bogey to reach the top of the leaderboard after the first round. Despite a bogey on his second hole, he rebounded playing his next 16 holes in 6-under, including five birdies on his back nine.

"I got off to, not a slow start, but just kind of a steady start on the front and shot even," Sigg said. "I went to the back and started making some putts there. I rattled off five on the back. I kind of got heated there towards the end. "

In 12 starts this year, Sigg has made 11 cuts recording eight top-25s. After missing his first cut of the season at the TPC San Antonio Championship at the Oaks two weeks ago, the 25-year-old took a much-needed break last week.

"It feels like almost the start of the season again having taken a week off," he said. "I think I was worn out to be honest. I played six in a row, I was playing good, so I was out there every week. It just kind of takes a toll on you playing every week and I needed a break, that's for sure."

Ruffels, another Korn Ferry Tour rookie, carded three birdies and an eagle en route to a 5-under 66 on Thursday. After making the turn at 2-under, the 22-year-old took advantage of the downwind par-5 fourth with an eagle. He added a birdie at the par-4 sixth to reach 5-under and move into a tie for the lead.

Ruffels entered the week ranked 54th in The 25 and in search of a strong finish. The Australian has made eight cuts in 11 starts this season but is still in search of his first top-10.

"It's been fine without anything spectacular," Ruffels said of his season thus far. "I've played some nice golf in parts, but quite haven't finished off any tournament how I would've like yet. I'm looking for a big week here and in the next few to put me closer to The 25."

Rounding out the group atop the leaderboard are veterans Nicholas Thompson and Steven Alker.

Thompson carded seven birdies against two bogeys on Thursday to earn a share of the lead. Through the first 13 events of the season, Thompson has made just two cuts and entered the week ranked 128th on the points list. The 37-year-old has been battling a lingering back injury since the Tour's return to golf. At The King & Bear Classic at World Golf Village, he had to withdraw after making the cut.

Alker tallied five birdies on Thursday en route to a bogey-free, opening-round 66. The 49-year-old has made five cuts in eight starts this season and entered the week ranked 138th on the points list.

Alker is making his third start in Omaha and 284th career Korn Ferry Tour start. Throughout his career, Alker has four Korn Ferry Tour titles with his most recent coming at the 2014 Cleveland Open. That year, he won in a record 11-hole playoff to take home the title.

THURSDAY NOTES:

- * Thursday's weather: Mostly cloudy, scattered showers with a high of 80. Wind NE at 9-18 mph with gusts up to 20 mph.
- * This week's purse is \$600,000 with \$108,000 going to the champion. The winner will also receive 500 Korn Ferry Tour points.
- * Stephen Franken's 5-under 66 on Thursday matched his lowest opening round in relation to par on the Korn Ferry Tour.
- * Franken held a share of the first-round lead at the TPC Colorado Championship at Heron Lakes before finishing the week T17.
- * Throughout his career, Steven Alker has only held a share of the 18-hole lead one other time on the Korn Ferry Tour at the 2013 Albertsons Boise Open presented by Kraft Nabisco where he finished T40.
- * Last December, Ryan Ruffels finished T21 at the Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament's Final Stage to earn status this season.
- * This marks the seventh time that Nicholas Thompson has held a share of the 18-hole lead on the Korn Ferry Tour.
- * Two of the 13 18-hole leaders/co-leaders have gone on to win this season. Will Zalatoris most recently converted a share of the first-round lead into a win at the TPC Colorado Championship at Heron Lakes.
- * Cameron Yong sits T6 after an opening-round 67. Young is making his Korn Ferry Tour debut this week and earned a spot in the field through Monday qualifying.
- * Brandon Crick, who previously worked at The Club at Indian Creek, sits T6 at 4-under 67 after Thursday's opening round.
- * Scott Gutschewski, who resides minutes from The Club at Indian Creek, sits T48 after a first-round 71.
- * After Thursday's round, Omaha natives and brothers Alex and Carson Schaake sit T90 and T149, respectively.
- * The par-4 third hole (468 yards) ranked as the toughest hole on Thursday with a scoring average of 4.532.
- * The par-5 15th hole (573 yards) ranked as the easiest hole on Thursday with a scoring average of 4.370.

*** The Club at Indian Creek Scoring Average**

	Front	Back	Total
R1	36.831	35.097	71.929

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