

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 9, 2020

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First-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
T1	Andy Pope	64 (-8)
T1	John Oda	64 (-8)
3	Cyril Bouniol	65 (-7)
T4	Three players tied at	66 (-6)

[Full Leaderboard](#)

**Andy Pope, John Oda share first-round lead at
TPC San Antonio Challenge at the Canyons**

SAN ANTONIO, Texas – With temperatures reaching triple digits and gusts of wind up to 25 miles per hour, Andy Pope and John Oda carded matching 8-under 64s to share the first-round lead at the TPC San Antonio Challenge at the Canyons. Each player went bogey-free and the pair combined for 10 birdies and three eagles on Thursday.

Pope, a 36-year-old Xavier University alum, carded six birdies and an eagle at the par-5 15th to reach 64.

“It almost felt like a tougher layup,” said Pope of his driver-off-the-deck second shot on No. 15. “If you’re going to lay up with a 4-iron or a 7-wood, it seems like I could shape those shots left or right. Whereas driver, it’s a great [straight] shot for me. I felt like if I could get one up there close to the green it would be an easy chip and putt. I was fortunate enough to hit it perfect and make the putt. Definitely worth the gamble.”

The 64 marked a new career-low round on the Korn Ferry Tour in his 88th start. The co-lead is also the first after a round of his career.

In his first full season on Tour since 2014, Pope has struggled thus far in 2020. He has made three of 10 cuts with a top finish of T36 at the Country Club de Bogota Championship.

“All year I feel like I’ve played well and haven’t had any results; it’s frustrating,” said Pope. “You want to finish top-10 and top-25 every week and you almost put so much pressure on yourself. My caddie, Ryan, kudos to him, he’s been super positive over the past few weeks. To finally put together a bogey-free round felt good.”

Pope is perhaps known for his propensity for qualifying into U.S Opens. He has seven career PGA TOUR starts, four of which are at the U.S. Open. Two weeks ago today, the USGA announced that in lieu of sectional qualifying, the field of the 2020 U.S. Open will be filled through several categories including the Official World Golf Ranking, World Amateur Golf Ranking and some of the hottest players from various tours. Most importantly to Korn Ferry Tour players, the top five on the Korn Ferry Tour regular season points list and the top five in the Korn Ferry Tour Finals will earn a spot in the field.

“I’m treating this as my qualifier for the U.S. Open,” noted Pope. “If I don’t do it in the Regular Season then hopefully I will try again in the Finals. I’d love to get out to Winged Foot. I played out there last year right before I did the sectional and loved it.”

Oda, who grew up dealing with strong winds in Hawaii, turned in 4-under 32 before going birdie-par-eagle on Nos. 10-12 and tacking on a late tap-in birdie at the par-4 17th.

“My mindset was to hit a lot of fairways and a lot of greens and don’t get overly aggressive,” said Oda. “The last few weeks getting back into the groove of things, scores were really low and I felt like I was putting a lot of pressure on myself to make a lot of birdies. My game is not a power game, it’s placement. I tried today to not go at too many flags, and if I felt comfortable with a wedge in my game, then I would go after it.”

Despite ranking just 124th on Tour in driving distance (averaging 298 yards per drive), Oda was the only player in the field with multiple eagles on Thursday.

“I can reach a couple of these par-5s this week and I drove it in a good spot on both,” said Oda. “On No. 6 I hit a good 5-wood in there to 12 feet and made it and then on No. 12 I had a 4-hybrid in and hit it to the fringe and chipped it in. Those were a couple of fortunate breaks.”

The 24-year-old finished T2 in the first event of the season, The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic at Sandals Emerald Bay, but has failed to finish inside the top 30 in seven starts since.

Pope and Oda sit one shot ahead of Frenchman Cyril Bouniol (7-under 65). Bouniol was 7-under through 14 holes prior to closing with four straight pars.

“It’s an exciting time,” said Bouniol. “I’m expecting my first child in a couple of weeks so hoping to take care of business this week and I can take a week off and be with my wife.”

Friday’s second-round tee times will run from 7:30 a.m. to 2:40 p.m. off of the first and 10th tees.

THURSDAY NOTES:

* Thursday’s weather: Mostly sunny with a high of 100 degrees and wind S/SE at 7-16 mph with gusts up to 25 miles per hour.

- * The lead/co-lead is the first after any round on the Korn Ferry Tour of Andy Pope's career. This marks the fourth round that John Oda has led/co-led in his career in his 34th start.
- * Cyril Bouniol (-7, 3rd) hit all 18 greens in regulation on Thursday, the only player in the field to do so in windy conditions. Bouniol is making his ninth career start on the Korn Ferry Tour (two in 2018, six in 2020). His brother, Arnaud, is caddying for him this year on the Korn Ferry Tour for the first time. Arnaud was in the special forces in the French military over the last eight years.
- * John Chin (-6, T4) carded eight birdies to tie for most in the field on Thursday. Included in that tally were birdies at the 18th, 14th and 13th holes, which ranked as the first-, second- and third-toughest holes on the course, respectively.
- * Roberto Diaz (-1, T78) is the only San Antonio resident in the field. Originally from Veracruz, Mexico, Diaz played collegiately at the University of South Carolina Aiken before turning pro in 2009. He graduated off of the Korn Ferry Tour in 2017 (earning the 25th and final spot in The 25) and competed on the PGA TOUR over the past two seasons. He competed at the Valero Texas Open on TPC San Antonio's Oaks Course over each of the past two years (MC, T57).
- * The back nine played more than one and a half strokes tougher than the front on Thursday, with a scoring average of 36.252 compared to 34.645. The five toughest holes on the course (by scoring average) were all on the back nine on Thursday (Nos. 11, 13, 14, 16 and 18).
- * 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 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.
- * The par-4 18th hole (482 yards) played as the hardest hole on Thursday with a scoring average of 4.310.
- * The par-5 12th hole (532 yards) played as the easiest hole on Thursday with a scoring average of 4.503.

	Front	Back	Total	Cumulative
R1	34.645	36.252	70.897	

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