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CONTACTS:

Preston Smith – [PrestonSmith@pgatourhq.com](mailto:PrestonSmith@pgatourhq.com), (706-844-2100)

**Third-Round Leaderboard**

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Derek Ernst	69-68-67—204 (-12)
T2	Davis Riley	70-69-66—205 (-11)
T2	Austin Smotherman	66-69-70—205 (-11)
T2	Paul Barjon	67-70-68—205 (-11)
T5	Two tied at	206 (-10)

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

**Derek Ernst claims 54-hole lead at  
TPC San Antonio Championship at the Oaks**

**SAN ANTONIO, Texas** – Two weeks ago, Derek Ernst received a call from his wife, Laney, after the second round of the TPC Colorado Championship at Heron Lakes. He had just made the cut on the number but wasn't playing particularly well and had yet to post a strong finish this season. They discussed a possible career change.

"My wife called me and said it might be time for me to get another job because this was obviously not working out," said Ernst. "That must have been something I needed to hear because I had a top-10 there after making the cut on the number and then a T12 last week. I'm just feeling really good."

Since that call after the second round in Colorado, Ernst has posted nine straight rounds in the 60s, including rounds of 69-68-67 this week at the TPC San Antonio Championship at the Oaks. Ernst will carry a one-stroke lead into tomorrow's final round at 12-under.

"It's been a while since I've been in the last group," noted Ernst. "I think Knoxville two years ago was the last time I was in the final group. I felt the pressure a little bit today and I'll feel it a little bit tomorrow."

While some players grinded on their game during the three-month hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Ernst took a different approach. He didn't touch a club for seven and a half weeks. Instead he ate healthy and worked out regularly to lose about 18 pounds, citing the long season as motivation to work on strengthening himself.

“Two years ago I weighed 198 and had 18 percent body fat, now I’m 175 with nine percent body fat,” said Ernst, who has been accompanied by his family at the resort over the past two weeks. “I just have more energy. Just eating healthy and working out, nothing special.”

Ernst, a 30-year-old UNLV alum, found immediate success on the PGA TOUR when he won the 2013 Wells Fargo Championship as a 22-year-old rookie. He competed full time on TOUR through the 2015-16 season and has played primarily on the Korn Ferry Tour over the past four seasons. After just a T105 finish at Q-School last fall, Ernst wasn’t even sure that he would get any starts. As a past PGA TOUR champion, he got into four of the first five events this season and made two cuts, enough to get him into the Utah Championship presented by Zions Bank and the TPC Colorado Championship at Heron Lakes. After a missed cut in Utah, the T10 finish in Colorado has turned his year around.

“When you’re playing well you don’t really look at the status and trying to get in,” said Ernst. “I’ve never been in this position before. Checking my commitment worksheet and seeing where I am each week. I’ve definitely done that more in the last few months than I have in the last few years.”

Ernst leads three players by a single stroke entering Saturday’s final round. Reflecting on his moving day surge in Panama earlier this year, Davis Riley carded a back-nine 6-under 30 to reach 11-under and sit one stroke back. Texas Christian University alum Paul Barjon continued his strong play to match the 11-under total, along with 36-hole leader Austin Smotherman. Smotherman double-bogeyed the first hole but rebounded with four birdies for a third-round 70.

Final-round tee times will run from 7:30-9:40 a.m. on Saturday off of the first and 10<sup>th</sup> tees.

#### **FRIDAY NOTES:**

- \* Friday’s weather: Mostly sunny with a high of 99 degrees and wind S/SE at 5-12 mph.
- \* Derek Ernst’s 54-hole lead is the first lead he’s held after a round since the second round of the 2018 WinCo Foods Portland Open (he eventually finished T4). Five of 11 54-hole leaders/co-leaders have gone on to win this season.
- \* The final group will consist of Ernst, Davis Riley and Austin Smotherman. The champion has come out of the final group in the last five tournaments on Tour and nine of 11 overall this season.
- \* Paul Barjon, a New Caledonia native, has been top-three on the leaderboard after 10 of his last 19 competitive rounds on Tour dating back to the third round of the El Bosque Mexico Championship by INNOVA in early March.
- \* Austin Smotherman’s best career finish on the Korn Ferry Tour came at the 2019 Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail Championship (T3), while his only other career top-10 came in his first career start at the 2019 Bahamas Great Exuma Classic at Sandals Emerald Bay (T9).

\* In Davis Riley's only win on the Korn Ferry Tour, earlier this year at the Panama Championship, he went 6-under on the back nine on moving day. He carded a 6-under 30 to close his round today.

\* After a T6 on the Canyons Course last week, Roberto Diaz (-9, T7) is seeking back-to-back top-10 finishes in his hometown. He posted back-to-back top-10 finishes earlier this season (T7/runner-up).

\* Will Zalatoris, who holds the top spot on the season-long Korn Ferry Tour points list, began the tournament with a 5-over 77. Since then he has carded rounds of 67-66 to make the cut on the number and sit T13 after three rounds. He was T141 after the first round.

\* 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 fourth hole (481 yards) played as the hardest hole on Friday with a scoring average of 4.4.269. The par-4 17<sup>th</sup> hole (347 yards) played as the easiest hole on Friday with a scoring average of 3.423.

	<b>Front</b>	<b>Back</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Cumulative</b>
<b>R1</b>	<b>37.083</b>	<b>35.897</b>	<b>72.981</b>	
<b>R2</b>	<b>36.608</b>	<b>35.301</b>	<b>71.908</b>	<b>72.445</b>
<b>R3</b>	<b>36.449</b>	<b>35.077</b>	<b>71.526</b>	<b>72.138</b>

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