

First-Round Notes – Thursday, June 10, 2021

Course Setup: Thornblade Club – Par 71 / 7,062

The Cliffs Valley – Par 72 / 7,029

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First-Round Leaderboard

| Pos. | Name | Scores |
|------|---------------------|---------|
| 1 | Michael Miller (TC) | 62 (-9) |
| T2 | Vince India (TC) | 63 (-8) |
| T2 | Justin Lower (CV) | 64 (-8) |
| T2 | Lee Hodges (CV) | 64 (-8) |

**TC designates Thornblade Club; CV designates The Cliffs Valley*

Quick Links:

- [Leaderboard](#)
- [Tee Times](#)
- [Tournament Media Site](#) (interviews and other resources available for download)

Michael Miller seizes first-round lead at BMW Charity Pro-Am presented by SYNEX Corporation

GREER, S.C. – Michael Miller had to wait two years to return to the site of his career-best finish. After a runner-up in 2019 at the BMW Charity Pro-Am presented by SYNEX Corporation and a tournament cancellation in 2020, Miller carded an opening-round 9-under 62 at the Thornblade Club to claim a one-stroke lead over Justin Lower, Vince India and Lee Hodges.

“I just enjoy it here,” laughed Miller about his success at the tournament. “This was one of my first couple of events that I ever got into when I first had some status in 2014. And I played well and I’ve always kind of rode the momentum from there. I like the driving and the atmosphere and the people around.”

Though still looking for another breakthrough performance, Miller entered this week’s tournament in better shape on the points list (99th) than in 2019. In 2019, Miller missed his first eight cuts of the season and 10 of 12 overall to enter the BMW Charity Pro-Am at 188th in the points standings.

“I enjoy when I’m kind of feeling happy-go-lucky,” said Miller. “Sometimes this game will beat you up and lately it’s been beating me up. It’s nice to get back to a place where you know you have some good vibes and hopefully can continue them.”

After a birdie at the par-4 10th to start, Miller tacked on three more birdies, a bogey and a hole-out eagle at the par-4 14th to reach 5-under 31 at the turn. On the front side, Miller added three more birdies, a bogey and another eagle at the fifth. With the 62, Miller sets a new career-low round on the Korn Ferry Tour, replacing a 63 at The Cliffs Valley course at the 2019 BMW Charity Pro-Am presented by SYNEX.

With more than 80 percent of the Korn Ferry Tour's combined 2020-21 regular season in the books, Miller noted the urgency that has started to set in.

"I'm playing for my job," said Miller. "That's the way I look at it. It's either you're going to make it or break it. I've got eight events to hopefully prove that I belong at the next level and hopefully today's a good start to build some momentum going forward."

Different goals are looking to be achieved by the trio one shot back of Miller. Lower and India are each looking to make the jump from top-50 in the points standings to top-25 and earning their PGA TOUR cards. Entering the week 10th in the points standings, Hodges is on the cusp of earning his first PGA TOUR card.

Elsewhere in the tournament, the team of professional Evan Harmeling and former MLB All-Star pitcher David Wells lead the low-handicap celebrity division (termed the X6 Division) while professional Chandler Phillips and Olympic gold medalist curler Matt Hamilton lead the high-handicap celebrity division (X7 Division).

Second-round tee times will run from 7 a.m. to 1:49 p.m. on Friday off of the first and 10th tees at both Thornblade Club and The Cliffs Valley.

First-Round Notes

- Thursday's weather: Partly cloudy with isolated showers with a high of 85 degrees and wind SW at 10-16 mph; play was suspended at The Cliffs Valley course at 3:51 p.m. due to heavy rain before resuming at 4:13 p.m.
- The BMW Charity Pro-Am presented by SYNEX Corporation is the 13th event of 2021 and the 36th (of 43) of the 2020-21 combined season; Miller projects to move to 42nd in the Korn Ferry Tour points standings with a victory; just eight of 35 first-round leaders/co-leaders have gone on to win this season, but that includes four of the last five
- Two of the players tied for second (Vince India and Justin Lower) were born one day apart in April 1989; India (4/3/1989) is one day older
- After earning just one top-10 over the first six years of his career on the Korn Ferry Tour, Vince India has five this season
- Justin Lower hit the flagstick with his approach shot from 258 yards on his final hole of the day (par-5 ninth) before a two-putt birdie to cap his round
- Lee Hodges needs 12 points to pass the 1,700-point threshold the Korn Ferry Tour is currently using as its fail-safe mark to secure a spot in The 25 and earn his PGA TOUR card; 12 points is the equivalent of a finish of 44th or better
- Two players made holes-in-one at Thornblade Club on Thursday: Tyrone Van Aswegen (No. 11 / 179 yards) and Mickey DeMorat (No. 17 / 210 yards); through a promotion on that hole, DeMorat earns a one-year lease of the BMW X6 that was displayed on the hole
- Three members of the inaugural PGA TOUR University class made their professional debuts at the Thornblade Club on Thursday: Austin Eckroat (-5, T24), Kevin Yu (-5, T24) and Garrett Reband (+2, T149)
- Korn Ferry Tour points leader Stephan Jaeger followed up his runner-up performance last week with an opening 65 (-7, T5) at Thornblade Club; Jaeger has sat inside the top-three after nine of his last 17 tournament rounds; Jaeger is a prior winner of the BMW Charity Pro-Am presented by SYNEX Corporation (2017)

- Jaeger, Davis Riley (-7, T5), Mito Pereira (-7, T5) and Cameron Young (-6, T15) are each seeking their third victory of the season which would earn them an immediate promotion to the PGA TOUR
- This week's purse is \$700,000 with \$126,000 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 in August at the 2021 Pinnacle Bank Championship presented by Aetna, with an additional 25 cards awarded at the conclusion of the 2021 Korn Ferry Tour Finals

First-Round Course Statistics (Thornblade Club)

- Toughest Hole – Par-3 17th (3.188)
- Easiest Hole – Par-5 second (4.388)
- Scoring Average (Front 9) – 33.600
- Scoring Average (Back 9) – 35.100
- Scoring Average (Total) – 68.700

First-Round Course Statistics (The Cliffs Valley)

- Toughest Hole – Par-3 15th (3.125)
- Easiest Hole – Par-5 17th (4.288)
- Scoring Average (Front 9) – 34.463
- Scoring Average (Back 9) – 34.525
- Scoring Average (Total) – 68.988