

Second-Round Notes – Friday, April 30, 2021

Course Setup: Par 70 / 7,118 yards

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Second-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Joey Garber	65-64—129 (-11)
T2	Paul Barjon	65-67—132 (-8)
	Harry Hall	66-66—132 (-8)
T4	Brandon Wu	68-65—133 (-7)
	Will Cannon	65-68—133 (-7)

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Joey Garber shakes off double bogeys, leads by three at Huntsville Championship

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. – Even after double bogeys Thursday and Friday, Joey Garber holds a three-stroke lead through 36 holes at the Huntsville Championship. The Petoskey, Michigan native erased the two mishaps with 16 birdies across his two rounds, three more than anyone else in the field.

Garber’s field-leading eight birdies Friday washed away his scorecard’s only blemish, a double bogey at the par-4 15th, statistically the toughest hole at The Ledges through two rounds. With seven birdies in his final 12 holes, Garber posted a 6-under 64, matching the lowest score of his Korn Ferry Tour career; he previously carded five 64s in 61 starts on Tour, with the most recent coming eight days ago at the inaugural Veritex Bank Championship.

Garber’s 11-under 129, the lowest 36-hole score of his Korn Ferry Tour career, is even more impressive given the fact he opened the tournament with a double bogey at No. 1, a 425-yard par 4.

“I hit a really good shot. It landed two feet from the pin, and it started to spin left where there’s a little fall off left of the green,” Garber said of his approach Thursday. “It was on the green for probably 20 seconds and rolled off down the cliff and into the hazard. I wasn’t too upset about that. The way it happened let me get over it pretty quickly. We joked about it.

“Those holes are really hard. You’re one swing away from making a double on those holes and, unfortunately, I did that,” Garber continued. “As long as you can keep plugging along, stay positive and make birdies, you’re never out of it.”

Putting is typically the strength of Garber’s game, but his flatstick took a little extra time to warm up this spring. Through two rounds, Garber has 51 putts (and zero three-putts), the last of which was a 25-footer he drained for a walk-off birdie on the par-3 9th.

“These are bentgrass greens. They look familiar to me. They look good to my eyes. A lot of times, whether it’s five feet or 30 feet, I’m able to see the line right away,” Garber said. “This is typically the time of year I play well. My game is pretty sharp right now.”

Garber’s collegiate career began at the University of Michigan. Following his freshman season in Ann Arbor, Garber transferred to the University of Georgia, where he played alongside PGA TOUR members Keith Mitchell and Sepp Straka, as well as fellow Korn Ferry Tour member Greyson Sigg. After graduating in 2014, Garber turned pro and eventually earned Korn Ferry Tour status for the 2018 season.

At 19th on the Tour’s regular season money list, largely a product of his win at the REX Hospital Open, Garber earned his PGA TOUR card for the 2018-19 season. It was a short stint on TOUR, as Garber missed 12 cuts, only managed two top-10s in 22 starts, and finished 170th in the FedExCup standings.

Garber lost his TOUR card, then failed to retain it at the three-event 2019 Korn Ferry Tour Finals.

Although he’s never led a Korn Ferry Tour event prior to the final round, Garber does have a pair of top-10s this season. Garber will also draw on his PGA TOUR experience as he pursues a return to the winner’s circle and golf’s highest level.

“The big TOUR trains you to play proper golf, and this is a course that makes you play properly,” Garber said. “Golf is such a tough game. It’s so mental. You’re fighting yourself the whole time. I’m just trying to stay positive and be myself out there, which is easy to do when you play with two friends like Zack (Sucher) and Kevin (Dougherty).

“Hopefully I’ll get some good buddies the next couple days and we’ll have some fun. That’s when I play my best.”

Third-round tee times will run from 6:46 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. local time Saturday off the first tee. Garber will play with Paul Bajorn, who is sitting T2 at 8-under par, in Saturday’s final pairing.

Friday Notes

- The 36-hole cut was made at 1-under par, with 71 professionals advancing to the weekend
- Garber projects to jump from 69th to 22nd in the Korn Ferry Tour points standings with a win; he is also looking to become the seventh 36-hole leader/co-leader to win this season
- Garber’s highest position prior to the final round of a Korn Ferry Tour event was solo second after 36 holes and T2 after 54 holes at the 2018 REX Hospital Open, the week of his only win
- Garber’s 11-under 129 usurped the 12-under 130 he posted at the 2020 Orange County National Championship presented by Knight 39 for the lowest 36-hole score of his Korn Ferry Tour career
- After a bogey-free 5-under 65 Thursday, **Will Cannon** (T4 / -7), a University of Alabama-Birmingham graduate and Birmingham resident, countered a double bogey and a bogey with five birdies for a 2-under 68
- University of Alabama alum **Davis Riley** (T6 / -6) rose 16 spots with a 4-under 66; he made five birdies and a bogey
- **Zack Sucher** (T6 / -6), a Birmingham resident who played collegiately at UAB, held the solo lead early in the day but bogeyed three of his final six holes and finished with a 1-under 69
- **Lee Hodges** (T41 / -2) went 1-over par on the back nine and carded another 1-under 69; Hodges was born in Huntsville, grew up in nearby Ardmore, and played at UAB and Alabama

- **Harry Hall** (T2 / -8) ended 2020 with consecutive top-10s at the Club Car Championship at The Landings Club and Orange County National Championship presented by Knight 39, but only has one top-30 finish in his six starts thus far in 2021
- At last week's Veritex Bank Championship, **Paul Barjon** (T2 / -8) shot the tournament course record (9-under 62) and logged his first top-25 since last September's Evans Scholar Invitational
- **Brandon Wu** (T4 / -7), who sits at No. 7 in the 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour points standings, made six birdies and an eagle en route to a 5-under 65
 - Wu's best finish in four KFT starts in 2021 is a T14 at the LECOM Suncoast Classic, but he ended 2020 with four top-10s in six starts, including a win at the Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by United Leasing & Finance
- **Jim Knous** (T6 / -6) drained a 60-plus-foot putt for a walk-off birdie at No. 18, which solidified his first made cut at a PGA TOUR-sanctioned event since last July's TPC San Antonio Championship at the Oaks; he missed six consecutive KFT cuts and three PGA TOUR cuts after that event
- Knous (65), **Taylor Moore** (65), **Cameron Young** (66) carded Friday's three bogey-free rounds
- Of the eight Monday qualifiers, only Sahith Theegala (T14 / -5) and Joseph Winslow (T54 / -1) survived the 36-hole cut
- Weather: Partly cloudy with a high of 77 degrees and wind N at 8-14 mph (gusts up to 20 mph)
- 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 Huntsville Championship is the seventh event of 2021 and the 30th of the 2020-21 combined season
- 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

Second-Round Course Statistics

- Toughest Hole – No. 15, Par 4, 491 yards (4.391 – 11 birdies, 45 bogeys, 12 double bogeys or worse)
- Easiest Hole – No. 10, Par 5, 548 yards (4.417 – 11 eagles, 77 birdies, 11 bogeys)
- Scoring Average (Front 9) – 34.954
- Scoring Average (Back 9) – 34.901
- Scoring Average (Total) – 69.854

Cumulative Course Statistics

- Toughest Hole – No. 15, Par 4, 491 yards (4.386 – 17 birdies, 86 bogeys, 23 double bogeys or worse)
- Easiest Hole – No. 10, Par 5, 548 yards (4.425 – 16 eagles, 169 birdies, 21 bogeys or worse)
- Scoring Average (Front 9) – 35.145
- Scoring Average (Back 9) – 34.960
- Scoring Average (Total) – 70.105