

First-Round Notes – Thursday, September 2, 2021

Course Setup: Victoria National Golf Club – Par 72 / 7,265

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Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Trey Mullinax	63 (-9)
2	Tyson Alexander	65 (-7)
T3	Andrew Novak	67 (-5)
	Hayden Buckley	67 (-5)
	Tommy Gainey	67 (-5)

Quick Links:

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

Trey Mullinax ties course record, takes two-stroke lead at Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by United Leasing & Finance

NEWBURGH, Ind. – Trey Mullinax is just happy to be playing pain-free golf again. Emerging from the other side of back and foot injuries, Mullinax had another reason to smile Thursday: he shot a 9-under 63 and tied the Victoria National Golf Club course record, putting him two strokes ahead of Tyson Alexander, and four strokes clear of the field at the Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by United Leasing & Finance.

Mullinax carded one of three bogey-free rounds Thursday, with the last of his nine birdies coming via an approach inside of two feet at the par-4 17th. The University of Alabama alum birdied all four of the par 5s (Nos. 3, 9, 10, 15), as well as Nos. 1, 4, 7, and 12.

“The front nine I putted well,” Mullinax said. “My iron play was really, really good, the best it’s been all year. Had a lot of in-between numbers and didn’t try to hit soft shots. I was hitting more aggressive shots. I did a good job keeping it under the hole, keeping it in the right places and trying to make putts.”

Mullinax recorded three top-10s in a stretch of five starts last fall, with the fifth being a victory at the 2020 Orange County National Championship presented by Knight 39, the final Korn Ferry Tour tournament of the calendar year. There were a trio of top-25s once the Tour returned in February, but Mullinax entered the week with five missed cuts in his last six starts.

“I had gout for a couple weeks, and it was miserable. It hurt really bad,” Mullinax said. “I was able to get some medicine, but I wasn’t in a stretch where I could take weeks off. I was guaranteed (Korn Ferry Tour) Finals no matter what, but I was close enough to where if I played well I could maybe sneak in The 25. I probably pushed it a little too hard. Probably should’ve just taken some more time off. It was tough. I played on one foot for two weeks. It was tough.”

“The last couple weeks, I felt really good. Finally not hurt anymore. Back feels good, haven’t had any issues with my foot,” continued Mullinax, who finished T16 two weeks ago at the Albertsons Boise Open presented by Chevron. “It’s been really nice to see some good results the last couple weeks. I came into this week confident in my game knowing I was hitting it pretty well. It’s just nice to walk 18 holes and have that feeling again.”

Mullinax previously graduated to the PGA TOUR following the 2016 Korn Ferry Tour season, which saw him win the REX Hospital Open and finish eighth on the regular season money list. Mullinax was a PGA TOUR member for the next three seasons, finishing as high as 102nd in the FedExCup standings in 2018. Finishing 157th in the 2019 FedExCup standings sent Mullinax back to the Korn Ferry Tour.

“Ever since 2019, it’s been a long couple years,” Mullinax said. “Getting injured, not really having much to play until I won, it’s been a very hard two years. To come out and play good... just to play really good on a really hard golf course was really nice.”

While Mullinax has his sights set on a return to the PGA TOUR, he will not be leaderboard watching this week, choosing to focus only on himself and his game plan.

“I can only control what I’m doing. I can’t control who gets what break, who doesn’t get another break,” Mullinax said. “Everybody is out here trying to get a PGA TOUR card for next year. We know what’s at stake. We know what’s happening. Do I want to win? Absolutely. I’m a competitor and I want to win by as many as I can. But the goal this week is to be committed and stick to the game plan, because if I do that, I’ll have a good chance.”

Second-round tee times will run from 6:50 a.m. to 2 p.m. CT off the first and 10th tees. Golf Channel will provide live telecast coverage from 10 a.m. through 12 p.m. ET.

First-Round Notes

- The Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by United Leasing & Finance is the third and final event of the Korn Ferry Tour Finals, a three-event series to determine the second set of 25 PGA TOUR cards given out for the upcoming 2021-22 season; the first set of 25 PGA TOUR cards was awarded to the top 25 points earners upon the conclusion of the 43-event 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour regular season three weeks ago in Omaha, Nebraska
- **Trey Mullinax**’s 9-under 63 tied the course record previously established by Chris Baker in 2019 and Sebastián Vázquez in 2016
- Mullinax’s 63 marked his lowest round since a 9-under 62 in the third round of the 2020 Orange County National Championship presented by Knight 39; he went on to win the tournament
- **Dawie van der Walt** made his second hole-in-one of the season (and first since the 2021 Club Car Championship at The Landings Club back in March) at the par-3 seventh
- Weather: sunny, high of 82 degrees, wind E/NE at 5-12 mph (gusts up to 15 mph)
- This year marks the 10th year of Korn Ferry Tour golf at Victoria National Golf Club; the venue hosted a regular season event from 2012 to 2018 before hosting the Tour’s flagship finale event beginning in 2019
- This week’s purse is \$1,000,000, with \$180,000 going to the champion; the champion will also receive 1,000 Korn Ferry Tour points

First-Round Course Statistics

- Toughest Hole – No. 16, Par 3, 208 yards (3.388)
- Easiest Hole – No. 15, Par 5, 548 yards (4.473)
- Scoring Average (Front 9) – 36.132
- Scoring Average (Back 9) – 36.388
- Scoring Average (Total) – 72.519