

Final-Round Notes – Sunday, February 21, 2021

Course Setup: Par 71 / 7,113 yards (R4 Scoring average: 71.881)

Media Contact: Preston Smith – PrestonSmith@pgatourhq.com, (706-844-2100)

Final-Round Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Hayden Buckley	68-65-68-70—271 (-13)
T2	Dawson Armstrong	66-70-68-67—271 (-13)
T2	Taylor Montgomery	66-70-68-67—271 (-13)
4	Billy Kennerly	66-67-68-71—272 (-12)

Quick Links:

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

Hayden Buckley wins first Korn Ferry Tour title at LECOM Suncoast Classic

LAKWOOD RANCH, Fla. – Hayden Buckley went from first alternate on Thursday morning to tournament champion in four days as the 24-year-old birdied the first playoff hole on Sunday afternoon to claim his first Korn Ferry Tour title at the LECOM Suncoast Classic. Buckley sunk a 10-foot birdie putt at the par-4 18th to edge out Dawson Armstrong and Taylor Montgomery at Lakewood National Golf Club.

“I didn’t want to play two holes; I’m tired and my legs hurt,” laughed Buckley after his victory. “It’s hard to believe. To get up there and do what you know you have to do, knowing it will change your life, it’s hard to put into words. It’s just a lot of relief, knowing I can plan a schedule. I have a whole year no matter what and I can compete for a TOUR card.”

With two holes to go, it looked like Clemson alum Billy Kennerly would cruise to victory. Kennerly held a two-stroke lead standing on the 17th tee box, but double-bogeyed the 17th and bogeyed the 18th to miss the playoff entirely.

“With three or four holes left I felt out of it,” reflected Buckley. “Billy was playing so well all day, I think he had a three-shot lead with four to play. I think he bogeyed a few coming in and all of the sudden we were tied going into 18.”

Buckley was the last player in the field and learned he had gained entry into the field approximately 15 minutes before his tee time early on Thursday morning. He raced to the range to hit 10 balls and then made it to the tee in time for his 7:17 a.m. tee time.

“It is painful warming up in the dark but getting the call 15 minutes before and going out and shooting a bogey-free 68 is awesome,” said Buckley. “I really made one bogey through three rounds. That was some of the best golf I’ve seen from myself in really ever.”

On Sunday, Buckley sandwiched a bogey at the fifth with birdies at the fourth and sixth to turn at 1-under. He countered a birdie at the 11th with a bogey at the 13th before paring out the remaining holes. He noted the turning point in his round the par-5 ninth, where he saved par after almost losing his approach shot.

“I don’t even think the crowd saw it, I hit it right over them and it plugged,” said Buckley. “From there honestly I saw the flag and just swung. There’s not much you can do except rely on what you do at home...but that ninth saved me. Just saving par, it could have been a double bogey to take the steam out of me. I think I’ll look back on that shot and making par. It was just a grind.”

With the win, Buckley leaps from 85th to 27th in the points standings. This is his rookie season on Tour after a year on the Mackenzie Tour – PGA TOUR Canada in 2019. Prior to that, Buckley attended the University of Missouri where he began as a walk-on and left with the lowest scoring average in program history.

While Armstrong and Montgomery each missed after making par in the playoff, the T2 finish set a new career-high for Armstrong and matched a career-best for Montgomery. Montgomery moves to 14th in the points standings while Armstrong advances to 37th.

Sunday Notes

- Sunday’s weather: Mostly sunny with a high of 78 degrees and wind E at 10-15 mph
- Buckley leaps to 27th in the points standings with the win while also becoming the 13th 54-hole leader/co-leader to go on to win this season; Buckley had yet to notch a top-10 prior to the week with a top finish of T11 at the WinCo Foods Portland Open presented by KraftHeinz
- Last year Taylor Montgomery sunk a 30-foot birdie at the 17th on Sunday to briefly lead the tournament at 22-under; after splitting the fairway at the 72nd hole of the tournament, he shanked his approach shot out of bounds and making bogey; minutes later Andrew Novak went birdie-birdie over the last two holes to win at 23-under
- David Lipsky (T23) was the only player in the field that will also compete across the street on the PGA TOUR next week at the World Golf Championships-Workday Championship at The Concession (due to his top-10 ranking in the European Tour’s Race to Dubai)
- There was only one bogey-free round on Sunday: Greyson Sigg (67, T7); The 67 matched the round of the day, along with Dawson Armstrong (T2), Taylor Montgomery (T2) and Michael Miller (T47)
- After making his first cut on the Korn Ferry Tour (or PGA TOUR) since 2012, Derek Lamely finished T23
- Albin Choi led the contingent of Monday qualifiers with a T14 finish after capturing the 18-hole lead; Choi, who caddied for PGA TOUR star Sungjae Im last year, was the only Monday qualifier to make the cut
- The LECOM Suncoast Classic was the first event of 2021 and the 24th event of the 2020-21 combined season; Wake Forest University alum Will Zalatoris (1,876 points) maintains his lead in the standings and has now led for the past 10 weeks;
- This week’s purse was \$600,000 with \$108,000 going to the champion, Hayden Buckley. Buckley also receives 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



- Next up: the Korn Ferry Tour will have three weeks off before the Chitimacha Louisiana Open presented by MISTRAS (March 18-21) in Broussard, Louisiana

Final-Round Course Statistics

- Toughest Hole – Par-4 second (4.537)
- Easiest Hole – Par-5 sixth (4.552)
- Scoring Average (Front 9) – 36.164
- Scoring Average (Back 9) – 35.716
- Scoring Average (Total) – 71.881
- Scoring Average (Cumulative) – 70.675