

Second-Round Notes – Friday, August 13, 2021

Course Setup: The Club at Indian Creek – Par 71 / 7,581 yards

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Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
T1	Andrew Novak	65-69—134 (-8)
	Vince India	67-67—134 (-8)
	David Skinnis	67-67—134 (-8)
T4	Six Tied	135 (-7)

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Three-way tie atop the leaderboard as bubbles burst at Pinnacle Bank Championship presented by Aetna

OMAHA, Neb. – On a devastating day for a number of players on both sides of the top 25 and top 75 of the 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour points standings, Friday’s second round at the Pinnacle Bank Championship presented by Aetna concluded with a three-way tie atop the leaderboard.

Andrew Novak, who mathematically locked up his first PGA TOUR card last week, and Vince India and David Skinnis, both of whom need a victory to have a chance at a TOUR card this week, are all 8-under par through 36 holes. There are 14 players within two strokes of their shared lead.

Novak, one of the 18-hole co-leaders after a 6-under 65 Thursday, carded an eagle at the par-5 fourth and made two bogeys and two birdies for a 2-under 69 Friday afternoon. The putter was once again the key to Novak’s success, as the Wofford College alum noted it was another difficult day off the tee.

“I didn’t have my best today, but I managed to putt well enough and piece together a pretty good round,” Novak said. “I hit it terrible off the tee. If I’m hitting driver, it’s great. Three-wood, 5-wood, 4-iron, I don’t know how to hit the fairway. Some of the holes I have to hit those on are just holes I don’t like the shape of anyway. It’s probably a two-part combination. I’ve got to get it worked out.”

India entered the week already a major winner in one regard. The Deerfield, Illinois native turned professional in 2011 and has played the Korn Ferry Tour since 2014. In all those seasons, India never finished higher than 85th in the points standings; he came painstakingly close in 2019, when he was in contention down the stretch of the WinCo Foods Portland Open presented by KraftHeinz, previously the Korn Ferry Tour’s final regular season event, and double bogeyed the 72nd hole. India finished that tournament solo fifth and only moved up to 85th in the regular season points standings.

This week, India came in ranked 43rd and assured of a place inside the top 75 – which guarantees him a spot in the Korn Ferry Tour Finals, as well as fully-exempt status on the Korn Ferry Tour next season.

“I’ve got a job next year. A pretty good one,” India said. “I’ve always been on the other side of the bubble. It’s not fun, because you’re wound up, every shot is weighted a little bit more, and you’re wearing every shot on your sleeve as well. This week is a little bit easier, and it’s certainly helping.”

India carded a second consecutive 4-under 67 Friday, highlighted by an eagle at the par-5 seventh which moved him into a tie for the lead with two holes left in his round.

“I just tried to hit it to the fat sides (of greens) a little more and see if I could roll in some putts,” India said. “I got a pretty good feel for my putter right now. I feel like I’m reading the greens fairly well. If I can get the ball in the fairway, then somewhere in the right quadrant around here, I’ve got a pretty good chance to make some birdies.

“I imagine there will be some decent crowds out here in Omaha the next couple days. I hope to play some good golf in front of the people. I’m really looking forward to it. No matter what happens.”

Skinns won this tournament in 2018 and is currently one of the hottest players on Tour. The 39-year-old Englishman has three top-10s and a T16 in his last four starts, including a T2 at the TPC Colorado Championship at Heron Lakes last month.

“It’s a blast. It’s just so much fun being in contention,” Skinns said. “This is what we all play for. The start of every week, your focus should be there. That’s where you want to be.”

Even with three birdies, Skinns only made the turn at 1-under par, but he carded three birdies against zero bogeys on the back nine for a second consecutive 4-under 67.

“The course is challenging, but never unfair,” Skinns said of The Club at Indian Creek. “It’s firm and fast, but it’s not unfair. I think there’s a reason they made this the final regular season event. It’s a great testament. You’re not going to get away with a lot here.”

On the bubble for The 25, Austin Smotherman carded the round of the week – a 7-under 64 – and climbed into the top 10 of the tournament leaderboard as players ranked 21st, 24th, 25th, 27th, and 29th the points standings missed the cut. Smotherman, No. 26 in the points standings, is 6-under par for the tournament and catapulted himself from T87 to T10 position on the leaderboard Friday. Additionally, No. 23 Curtis Thompson bolstered his chances for his first PGA TOUR card with a 4-under 67; he moved into a six-way T4 at 7-under par for the tournament.

Third-round pairings will run from 9:25 a.m. to 2:50 p.m. local time off the first tee.

Second-Round Notes

- The 36-hole cut was made a 2-under par, with 65 professionals advancing to the weekend
- The combined 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour regular season schedule (43 events) concludes this week at the Pinnacle Bank Championship presented by Aetna, with 25 PGA TOUR cards awarded to the top-25 in the points standings after the tournament
 - An additional 25 TOUR cards are awarded at the conclusion of the three-event 2021 Korn Ferry Tour Finals, which begin next week with the Albertsons Boise Open presented by Chevron

- Despite a missed cut, **Nick Hardy** mathematically secured his PGA TOUR card due to the results from the first two rounds; he becomes the 20th player to officially secure his TOUR card, and he will be a rookie on TOUR this fall
- **Curtis Thompson** (T4 / -7), who sits 23rd in the 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour points standings, is seeking his first PGA TOUR card and bidding to become the first player to win the Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament's Final Stage and secure a TOUR card the following season
- **Austin Smotherman** (T10 / -6) carded the lowest round of the tournament, a 7-under 64; he entered the week ranked 26th in the 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour points standings, trailing the No. 24 spot by 17 points (the equivalent of a solo 41st finish), and the No. 25 spot by seven points (the equivalent of a two-way T54)
- Players on The 25 bubble who missed the cut:
 - No. 24 **Taylor Montgomery**
 - No. 25 **Peter Uihlein**
 - No. 27 **Roberto Díaz** (no longer able to finish in the top 25)
 - No. 29 **Justin Lower** (no longer able to finish in the top 25)
- No. 22 **Brett Drewitt** (T51 / -2) climbed more than 50 spots on the leaderboard Friday, bouncing back from a first-round 2-over 73 with a 4-under 67 in the second round
- No. 21 **Ben Kohles** (MC / -1) fell outside the cut line late Friday evening; he is currently projected to remain inside the top 25 of the points standings as he attempts to return to the PGA TOUR for the first time since the 2013 season
- **Jared Wolfe** (T4 / -7), **Stephan Jaeger** (T10 / -6), and **Davis Riley** (T10 / -6) are all vying for their third victory of the season, which would earn them fully-exempt status on the PGA TOUR for the 2022 season
- Nebraskans **Brady Schnell** (T18 / -5), **Brandon Crick** (T31 / -4), and **Scott Gutschewski** (T40 / -3) all survived the 36-hole cut
 - Gutschewski led the contingent with a bogey-free 4-under par 67 in the second round
- Five bogey-free rounds were carded Friday – three more than Thursday's opening round
- This week's purse is \$750,000 with \$135,000 going to the champion; the champion will also receive 600 Korn Ferry Tour points
- Second-Round Weather: Mostly sunny with a high of 84 degrees and wind NE at 4-10 mph

Second-Round Course Statistics

- **Toughest Hole** – No. 11, Par 4, 533 yards (4.284 – 13 birdies, 47 bogeys, five double bogeys)
- **Easiest Hole** – No. 4, Par 5, 576 yards (4.432 – 13 eagles, 72 birdies, 10 bogeys)
- **Scoring Average (Front 9 – Par 36)** – 36.052
- **Scoring Average (Back 9 – Par 35)** – 34.632
- **Scoring Average (Total)** – 70.684

Cumulative Course Statistics

- **Toughest Hole** – No. 11, Par 4, 533 yards (4.363 – 20 birdies, 93 bogeys, 19 double bogeys or worse)
- **Easiest Hole** – No. 4, Par 5, 576 yards (4.334 – 37 eagles, 148 birdies, 15 bogeys)
- **Scoring Average (Front 9 – Par 36)** – 36.135
- **Scoring Average (Back 9 – Par 35)** – 34.880
- **Scoring Average (Total)** – 71.015