

Partial Second-Round Notes – Friday, June 4, 2021

Course Setup: Par 71 / 7,257 yards

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Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Derek Ernst	64-66—130 (-12)
2	Andrew Novak	61-[-1 / 4*]—(-11)
3	Ben Kohles	68-64—132 (-10)
T4	Three Tied	(-9)

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

Derek Ernst leads after marathon day at REX Hospital Open

RALEIGH, N.C. – It was a marathon day at the REX Hospital Open, with some players walking upwards of 16 miles and playing 36 holes. When the sun finally set Friday, Derek Ernst sat atop the leaderboard at 12-under par, holding a one-stroke lead over Raleigh, North Carolina native Andrew Novak, whose 10-under 10 from Thursday held up for the 18-hole lead.

After inclement weather suspended Thursday’s opening round at 1:21 p.m., with only 30 players officially posting a score, play resumed Friday at 8 a.m. The second round was suspended due to darkness at 8:22 p.m.

Ernst made just one bogey in 36 holes Friday, carding a bogey-free 7-under 64 in the morning and a 5-under 66 in the afternoon. The Woodland, California native birdied four of his first seven holes – Nos. 3, 4, 6, and 7 – in his first round, opened his second round with back-to-back tap-in birdies at Nos. 10 and 11, and closed his day with four birdies in the last six holes.

“This might be the first time in my nine years on the PGA (TOUR) and Korn Ferry (Tour) I’ve played 36 in one day,” Ernst said. “Playing pretty good. Took last week off. It was just nice hanging out with the family (and) coming here a little more refreshed and ready to go.

“Making a lot of putts. I felt like my speed was good. Just not really missing it much, keeping it in play.”

Ernst currently ranks 107th in the 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour points standings, and missed 19 cuts in his 28 previous starts this season. The University of Nevada-Las Vegas alum is coming off a T21 finish at the AdventHealth Championship, but he admits golf and his ranking are hardly what he worries about anymore.

“I’m just trying to have fun,” Ernst said. “I’ve got a girl who’s turning 5 in a couple months. Just not really thinking about golf as much. And studying on things that don’t pertain to golf. My mind is off golf.”

Novak, who was born at REX Hospital, began his second round off No. 10 at 7:17 p.m. He birdied the par-4 10th and moved to 11-under par for the tournament. Novak has 14 holes remaining in his second round. Cary, North Carolina native Ben Kohles carded a 3-under 68 in the morning and a 7-under 64 in the afternoon Friday, putting him in solo third position at 10-under par through two days.

Play will resume Saturday at 7 a.m., and tee times for the third round will begin at 1 p.m., with groups of three off the first and 10th tees.

Friday Notes

- **Brady Schnell** made his second hole-in-one of his Korn Ferry Tour career; he hit an 8-iron at the 170-yard par-3 fifth
- **Andrew Novak's** 10-under 61, which he posted prior to Thursday's suspension of play, held up for the first-round lead, marking the third 18-hole lead of his Korn Ferry Tour career
 - Novak previously led the 2018 Rust-Oleum Championship (finished T62) and the 2021 Emerald Coast Classic at Sandestin (finished solo third) this past April
- **Mito Pereira** shot a career-low 9-under 62 with a career-high 11 birdies in the first round; his 11 birdies also tied **Adam Svensson** (2021 MGM Resorts Championship at Paiute / Round 2) and **Paul Haley II** (2020 Price Cutter Charity Championship presented by Dr Pepper / Round 4) for the most in any Korn Ferry Tour round during the 2020-21 season
 - Prior to this week, Pereira's career high for birdies in a round in his 75 career starts on the Korn Ferry Tour was eight at the 2020 The King & Bear Classic at World Golf Village last June
 - Pereira entered the week with a career-low score of 63 – which he shot at the 2020 El Bosque Mexico Championship by INNOVA (Round 2) and 2021 Veritex Bank Championship (Round 2)
- **Whee Kim's** 8-under 63 in the first round (which he started and completed Friday) was his lowest score in 257 career rounds played on the Korn Ferry Tour; he is in his third full season on the Korn Ferry Tour and making his 86th career Tour start this week
 - Kim's career-low score in a PGA TOUR-sanctioned event remains his 8-under 62 at the 2018 A Military Tribute at The Greenbrier, which also came in the first round
- There were 28 bogey-free rounds recorded in the first round, and four were posted in the second round prior to the suspension of play
- **Brinson Paolini** sits T76 at 3-under par and leads the eight Monday qualifiers, though none of them are inside the current cut line of 4-under par
- Weather: Mostly cloudy, high of 85 degrees, wind S/SW at 3-14 mph
- This week's purse is \$650,000 with \$117,000 going to the champion; the champion will also receive 500 Korn Ferry Tour points
- The REX Hospital Open is the 12th event of 2021 and the 35th 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