

Third-Round Notes – Saturday, June 5, 2021

Course Setup: Par 71 / 7,257 yards

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Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
T1	Andrew Novak	61-71-64—196 (-17)
	Stephan Jaeger	66-67-63—196 (-17)
	Mito Pereira	62-67-67—196 (-17)
4	Taylor Moore	68-65-64—197 (-16)
5	Tom Whitney	67-67-64—198 (-15)

Quick Links

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

Three-way tie atop leaderboard as field makes up lost time at REX Hospital Open

RALEIGH, N.C. – After another marathon day at the REX Hospital Open, which saw the field complete the second and third rounds just before darkness set in, the three co-leaders – Stephan Jaeger, Andrew Novak, and Mito Pereira – each have an opportunity to secure PGA TOUR cards in one form or another if they finish off a victory Sunday.

The second round resumed Saturday at 7 a.m. Inclement weather suspended Thursday’s opening round at 1:21 p.m., with only 30 players officially posting a score. Roughly half the field played 36 holes Friday, while the majority of Thursday’s morning wave began their second rounds late Friday evening. The second round was completed, with the 36-hole cut made at 4-under par, shortly before 1 p.m. Saturday.

“That was a lot of holes of golf today,” Novak said. “A 4:45 alarm this morning. I’m looking to eat some dinner and sleep a bit.”

For Jaeger, Sunday is simple.

At No. 1 in the 2020-21 points standings and well over the 1,700-point threshold the Korn Ferry Tour is currently using as its fail-safe number for players to finish inside the top 25, only a win will satisfy Jaeger. The Munich, Germany native already has a pair of victories this season, and a third Sunday afternoon would earn him an immediate promotion to the PGA TOUR.

Jaeger, one of seven players in Korn Ferry Tour history with six career wins, played 36 holes Friday and fired an 8-under 63 Saturday to reach 17-under par. After Jaeger opened with three pars, he birdied five of the last nine on the front side. Following three more pars to open the back nine, Jaeger made a bogey and four more birdies down the stretch, the last of which came via a 20-foot putt at the par-4 18th.

This is the sixth time Jaeger enters the final round with a lead, although this is the first of those occasions he is sharing it. Jaeger converted four of his previous five 54-hole leads into victories, with the lone exception being last month's Visit Knoxville Open.

Novak, currently No. 19 in the Korn Ferry Tour points standings, needs a win to cross the 1,700-point threshold and secure a PGA TOUR card.

The Raleigh, North Carolina native enjoyed a long layoff after his career-low 10-under 61, one of just 30 first-round scores posted Thursday. Novak, who was born at REX Hospital, drew a 7:17 p.m. tee time Friday for his second round and finished four holes before play was suspended due to darkness.

"I was very glad to finish Thursday. Glad I didn't have to come out Friday morning," Novak said. "I had no golf all day yesterday, probably the latest tee time I've ever had. It was a little weird getting up for that one, just doing nothing all day and then all of a sudden you're playing."

Novak's 31-hole Saturday did not get off to a great start, as he made a double bogey at the par-3 16th and followed it with a bogey at the par-4 17th. Novak bookended a streak of eight pars with a pair of birdies, giving him an even-par 71 for the second round.

At 1-under through eight holes of the third round, Novak tumbled down the leaderboard. Then the putter warmed up, and Novak birdied six of his final 10 holes, punctuating his strong finish by spinning a wedge back to a foot at the par-4 18th.

"I hadn't really made too much as far as putts, but I was hitting a lot of good putts," Novak said. "I got one to go on No. 9. I actually missed a good look at No. 10, then made kind of a mess of No. 11 and made a really nice 12-footer for par. A good momentum par is always nice to get a run going. I'm very happy with the position I'm in."

Ranked No. 12 in the points standings, Pereira could settle for a three-way T3 finish and still cross the 1,700-point threshold and lock up a PGA TOUR card. But the Santiago, Chile native would love to make amends for a playoff loss to Paul Barjon at last month's Huntsville Championship, where he had a three-stroke lead on the back nine.

Pereira shot a career-low 9-under 62 in the first round – highlighted by 11 birdies, tied for the most by any player in a Korn Ferry Tour round this season – and played just one hole of his second round Friday night. Across 35 holes Saturday, Pereira made a single bogey and eight birdies for a pair of 4-under 67s, with the latter being one of the five bogey-free scorecards posted in the third round.

"I want to win. I've been having really good results. Everything is going in the right direction," Pereira said. "Excited to see what tomorrow will bring. I'm putting really well, so that's a big plus for me right now."

Another wild storyline Saturday was Chad Ramey's career-low 10-under 61, which tied Novak for the lowest round of the tournament. Ramey woke up and assumed the cut line would end up at 5-under par. Having finished his second round Friday, Ramey stayed at the hotel and refreshed the leaderboard all day. He made the cut on the number, and sits in T6 position ahead of Sunday's final round.

“I 100 percent thought I was not playing today,” Ramey said. “I never left the hotel until I knew I was officially playing today. I normally give myself about an hour and 20 minutes (to warm up), and today I had about an hour. I didn’t expect to have a tee time, so I came out here and made the most of it.”

Final-round tee times will run from 8:15 a.m. through 10:35 a.m. Sunday in groups of three off the first and 10th tees.

Saturday Notes

- The 36-hole cut was made at 4-under par, with 84 professionals and an amateur making the cut
- **Mito Pereira** (T1 / -17) 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)
 - Pereira’s 9-under 62 in the first round featured 11 birdies, tying **Adam Svensson** and **Paul Haley II** for the most in a round this season (2020-21) on the Korn Ferry Tour; his career high for birdies in a round in 75 career starts on the Korn Ferry Tour prior to this week was eight at the 2020 The King & Bear Classic at World Golf Village last June
- Pereira has a 54-hole lead for the second time in his career; he held a solo 54-hole lead at the 2020 El Bosque Mexico Championship by INNOVA and finished T4, one shot out of a playoff
- **Andrew Novak** (T1 / -17) has a 54-hole lead for the second time in his career; he held a solo 54-hole lead at the Emerald Coast Classic at Sandestin this April and finished solo third, one shot out of a playoff
- With a win, **Stephan Jaeger** (T1 / -17) would tie Jason Gore for the most career wins in Korn Ferry Tour history (seven)
- Jaeger and **Chad Ramey** (T6 / -14) lead the field with 21 birdies apiece
- **Taylor Moore** (4th / -16) made his first hole-in-one since a high school qualifying round; he hit a pitching wedge at the 170-yard par-3 fifth
- There were 28 bogey-free rounds recorded in the first round, while only eight were posted in the second round, and just five were carded in the third round
 - **Scott Gutschewski** (T11 / -12) was the only player without a bogey in the first and second rounds
- **Carson Young** (T71 / -3) was the only one of the eight Monday qualifiers who survived the 36-hole cut, marking the ninth time this season fewer than two Monday qualifiers made the cut
- Weather: Partly cloudy, high of 89 degrees, wind S at 2-10 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

Cumulative Course Statistics

- **Toughest Hole** – No. 17, Par 4, 480 yards (4.210 – 39 birdies, 88 bogeys, 15 double bogeys or worse)
- **Easiest Hole** – No. 4, Par 5, 587 yards (4.572 – nine eagles, 177 birdies, 21 bogeys or worse)
- **Scoring Average (Front 9)** – 35.095 (-0.905)
- **Scoring Average (Back 9)** – 34.446 (-0.554)
- **Scoring Average (Total)** – 69.540 (-1.460)