

First-Round Notes – Thursday, June 17, 2021

Course Setup: Par 70 / 6,910 yards

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Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
T1	Taylor Moore	63 (-7)
	Kevin Lucas	63 (-7)
T3	Nine Tied	64 (-6)

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Taylor Moore, Kevin Lucas lead a congested leaderboard at the Wichita Open Benefitting KU Wichita Pediatrics

WICHITA, Kan. – Two players at opposite ends of the Korn Ferry Tour spectrum share the 18-hole lead at the Wichita Open Benefitting KU Wichita Pediatrics. Kevin Lucas and Taylor Moore carded matching 7-under 63s and lead a group of nine players at 6-under par by a single stroke.

Moore turned to the front nine at 3-under par and reached 7-under par with back-to-back eagles at the par-5 second and par-4 third. The San Angelo, Texas native went driver-7-iron into No. 2, then drove the 343-yard third and canned a 40-footer. Moore's round Thursday morning was his 297th on the Korn Ferry Tour, and it marked the first time he made multiple eagles. It also marked the ninth time during the 2020-21 season a player made back-to-back eagles.

"I don't know if I've done that ever," Moore said. "That was pretty fun. Birdied the next hole and fed off those two eagles."

Moore bogeyed the par-4 sixth, which played as the toughest hole of the day, and settled for the seventh 63 of his 91-start career on the Korn Ferry Tour, with the most recent 63 coming at the Veritex Bank Championship this past April.

Not much else has gone wrong for Moore as of late. Prior to last week's missed cut at the BMW Charity Pro-Am presented by SYNEX Corporation, Moore had a streak of nine consecutive top-25 finishes which dated back to March.

"Once I missed the cut last week, I just put it behind me and got ready for this week," said Moore, a University of Arkansas alum. "Didn't really think too much into it. Just had an off week on the greens. I've been in a good space mentally, hitting a lot of good golf shots, doing a lot of good things.

"I think I've grown up a lot since I first turned pro and have been on this tour – on and off the golf course. I think it keeps me even-keeled. I'm in an emotionally good spot as well. I'm able to take a step

back and make really good decisions when it's going well, or if I'm in a spot that is a little bit tricky. That's big for me."

Moore's recent run of outstanding play took him to 20th in the 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour points standings, while Lucas has struggled to get anything going after a season-opening T6 at the 2020 Country Club de Bogota Championship last February. Lucas made the cut in just three of his next 20 starts and plummeted to 156th in the points standings.

Despite the funk Lucas found himself in, the 32-year-old Californian did not let it snowball from a mental perspective. A revelation last week also provided a new approach for the rest of his season.

"Every week is a new week. I'm not holding onto anything," Lucas said. "It's good to say over the media, but it's not inside me. If I just keep working hard and playing the game I know how to play, I'm going to come out of it. I don't know if this will be it this week, but there is no reason I can't win this week. I've won plenty of golf tournaments in my life, and it has nothing to do with what I did last week, or the week before that.

"I talked to my step-dad (last week), too, and we were talking about athletic flow. As soon as you start thinking about something, you're losing that looseness you might have naturally. I went out on the range the next morning before I teed off, didn't have a single swing thought, and I couldn't have hit the center of the face any better. That was a big realization to me. Get the heck out of your way, let's go play some golf.

"I don't fear anything in this world. There's no reason for me to fear not keeping my card, or not getting to the PGA TOUR. That just frees me up to play the game I know how to play."

Lucas carded one of Thursday's four bogey-free rounds, with the majority of his seven birdies coming from dialed-in approaches. Among those were a 4-footer for birdie at the par-4 10th, a tap-in birdie at the par-3 12th, a two-putt birdie at the par-5 14th, and a 6-footer for birdie at the par-4 16th.

Lucas' 63 tied the second-lowest score of his career and earned him a share of the lead for the first time at any point in his 50 starts on the Korn Ferry Tour. This is the third time Moore holds a share of the 18-hole lead, with the previous two coming at the 2018 BMW Charity Pro-Am presented by SYNEX Corporation and the 2019 Wichita Open Benefitting KU Wichita Pediatrics.

Second-round tee times will run from 6:55 a.m. through 2:21 p.m. local time off the first and 10th tees.

Thursday Notes

- **Taylor Moore** projects to jump from 20th to eighth in the 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour points standings with a win, while a win for **Kevin Lucas** projects to move him from 156th to 69th
 - A win for Moore would also take him 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 of the 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour points standings and earn a PGA TOUR card for this fall
- In 36 events this season, only eight 18-hole leaders / co-leaders went on to win
- Following a stretch of 15 Korn Ferry Tour tournaments without a player making back-to-back eagles, **Taylor Moore** became the second player in the last three events to make back-to-back eagles, with the other being **Brady Schnell** two weeks ago at the REX Hospital Open

- **Kevin Lucas** came within a shot of his career-low round of 62 (9-under) from the 2018 Utah Championship presented by Zions Bank; his only other sub-64 score was a 7-under 63 at the 2019 Ellie Mae Classic at TPC Stonebrae
- Three of the top-five finishers from the inaugural PGA TOUR University Ranking List are in the field this week, and all three – No. 3 **Austin Eckroat**, No. 4 **Kevin Yu**, No. 5 **Garett Reband** – shot a 6-under 64 and are in T3 position
- Defending champion **Jared Wolfe** (T17 / -4) opened with a 4-under 66; he shot a 7-under 63 in the first round when he won this event last September
 - Wolfe is bidding to become the first player in the 32-year history of the Korn Ferry Tour to win the same event in consecutive years
- Four bogey-free rounds were recorded – Lucas (63), **Kevin Roy** (64), **Patrick Flavin** (66), **Trey Mullinax** (67)
- **Mason Overstreet** (T26 / -3) led the eight Monday qualifiers; he is making his second career Korn Ferry Tour start, with the other being a T65 finish at this event in 2018
- Weather: Sunny, hot and breezy, high of 100 degrees, wind SSW at 8-15 mph (gusts up to 22 mph)
- This week's purse is \$600,000 with \$108,000 going to the champion; the champion will also receive 500 Korn Ferry Tour points
- The Wichita Open Benefitting KU Wichita Pediatrics is one of the four original tournaments from 1990 still on the Korn Ferry Tour schedule, and this year marks the 32nd playing of the event
- The Wichita Open Benefitting KU Wichita Pediatrics is the 14th event of 2021 and the 37th 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

First-Round Course Statistics

- **Toughest Hole** – No. 6, Par 4, 495 yards (4.340 – nine birdies, 38 bogeys, 11 double bogeys or worse)
- **Easiest Hole** – No. 2, Par 5, 563 yards (4.468 – eight eagles, 80 birdies, 10 bogeys or worse)
- **Scoring Average (Front 9)** – 34.692
- **Scoring Average (Back 9)** – 34.442
- **Scoring Average (Total)** – 69.135