

Third-Round Notes – Saturday, June 19, 2021

Course Setup: Par 70 / 6,910 yards

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Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Kevin Yu	64-66-61—191 (-19)
2	Harry Hall	64-63-66—193 (-17)
3	Patrick Flavin	66-67-62—195 (-15)
T4	Five Tied	196 (-14)

Quick Links

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

Inaugural PGA TOUR University class member Kevin Yu takes lead at Wichita Open Benefitting KU Wichita Pediatrics

WICHITA, Kan. – Kevin Yu came to Arizona State University without a set pathway to PGA TOUR. When the COVID-19 pandemic washed out what would have been the 2019-20 season, Yu, fresh off a historic junior year with the Sun Devils, had professional talent but no way to earn status. Enter [PGA TOUR University](#). The program produced its inaugural 15-player class [earlier this month](#), with Yu finishing fourth on the ranking list and earning Korn Ferry Tour starts in open, full-field events for the remainder of the 2020-21 season.

And in a span of 18 days, Yu's gone from wrapping up his collegiate career at the NCAA Championships, to making his professional debut at last week's BMW Charity Pro-Am presented by SYNEX Corporation, to securing the 54-hole lead at the Wichita Open Benefitting KU Wichita Pediatrics.

Yu gave himself a chance to shoot golf's magic number Saturday, but happily settled for a 9-under 61, which tied Crestview Country Club's course record and matched the 18-hole scoring record for a tournament in its 32nd year on the Korn Ferry Tour schedule. Yu's nine-birdie, zero-bogey scorecard took him to 19-under par for the week, putting him two strokes ahead of the 36-hole leader, Harry Hall.

"I drove the ball well today and hit a lot of greens, so it gave me a chance to make some birdies and I took those opportunities," Yu said. "I didn't think about 59. I was close, but I didn't even think about it. I just wanted to hit a good shot every shot I hit. Tried to stay in the present."

Yu opened his third round with four consecutive birdies and chipped in for another at the par-4 ninth. Four birdies in the next six holes took Yu to 9-under with three holes remaining. A pair of 15-foot birdie putts slid by at the par-4 16th and par-3 17th, and Yu made a delicate up and down from the back of the par-4 18th to solidify the third 61 of the week.

Yu has played his last 23 holes at 13-under par.

"I think I knew I could be in this situation. I just never thought about leading the tournament during the round," Yu said. "I just tried to focus on every shot and not think about future stuff. My game right now, I can win here. Coming from last week to this week, I feel like my game has been solid. Definitely gives me a lot of confidence going into tomorrow."

A Chinese Taipei player, Yu first announced his presence to the golf world with a win at the 2015 Western Junior, the oldest national junior golf tournament in the United States. The event's list of past champions includes accomplished PGA TOUR players Collin Morikawa (2013), Rickie Fowler (2005), and Jim Furyk (1987).

In his first three seasons at Arizona State, Yu won a tournament each spring. Leading into the spring half of his junior season, Yu won the 2019 Australian Master of the Amateurs Championship, topping a field which included future PGA TOUR winner Matthew Wolff. Yu then finished the 2018-19 season with a 69.20 scoring average – which was second only to five-time PGA TOUR winner Jon Rahm's junior campaign (2014-15) in Arizona State's statistical records dating back to 1987 – and earned an All-America First Team laurel.

Yu capped the incredible season with a third-place finish at the 2019 NCAA Championships, where he finished behind Wolff and Georgia Southern's Steven Fisk.

When COVID-19 hit the following year, Yu returned to Arizona State for a fifth year, electing to chase Korn Ferry Tour status via the newly created PGA TOUR University. The mission of PGA TOUR University is to elevate the path to the PGA TOUR for college golf's top seniors. It also incentivizes players to stay in school longer and continue to work toward a degree.

The top-five players in this year's PGA TOUR University Ranking List earned Korn Ferry Tour status and an exemption into the Final Stage of the upcoming Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament. Players who finished Nos. 6-15 earned Forme Tour status and an exemption into the Second Stage of the Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament.

"It's just such a good opportunity for us to graduate and get a chance to play on Korn Ferry Tour straight from college," Yu said. "After COVID happened... I just had nowhere to play. I was going to turn pro but just didn't know where to play. Staying one more year, I had a chance to stay in the top five and get into Korn Ferry (Tour). This is definitely a good experience for me. I have to play good every week to make the cut or stay on top. It's a really good test for me. The program has helped me a lot to get to here."

"The first couple (holes tomorrow) will probably be pretty nervous. But I think what I want to do is stick to the plan, just stay in the present. That's what I'm really hoping I can do tomorrow: just stay in the present and not think about things in the future, focus on the moment, stick to the plan."

Yu's a man with a plan and a talented professional golfer with a clear path to the PGA TOUR. A Korn Ferry Tour win would certainly expedite the journey.

Saturday's third round also saw the field set a record for the lowest single-round scoring average in Korn Ferry Tour history. The field's average score in the third round was 67.110, beating the previous scoring record of 67.136 from the 1993 BUY.com Siouland Open.

Final-round tee times will be in groups of three and run from 6:55 a.m. through 11:25 a.m. local time off the first tee.

Saturday Notes

- In 36 tournaments this season, 20 of the 54-hole leaders / co-leaders went on to win the event
- **Kevin Yu's** 61 tied the tournament's 18-hole scoring record previously set by eight players:
 - **Nicolas Echavarria** (2021 – R2), 9-under 61, Crestview Country Club
 - **Patrick Fishburn** (2021 – R2), 9-under 61, Crestview Country Club
 - **Curtis Thompson** (2017), 9-under 61, Crestview Country Club
 - **Ollie Schniederjans** (2016), 9-under 61, Crestview Country Club
 - Gavin Coles (2006), 10-under 61, Crestview Country Club
 - Emlyn Aubrey (1998), 11-under 61, Willowbend Golf Club
 - Greg Fleischer (1991), 11-under 61, Reflection Ridge Golf Club
 - Eric Hoos (1991), 11-under 61, Reflection Ridge Golf Club
- Yu won The Junior PLAYERS Championship in his second start in AJGA competition, and won his third start as a freshman at Arizona State
- Yu carded one of Saturday's seven bogey-free rounds
- In addition to Yu's strong representation of PGA TOUR University, two other members of the top five are in the field and playing well:
 - No. 3 **Austin Eckroat** (T13 / -12) and No. 5 **Garett Reband** (T27 / -9)
- **Quade Cummins** (T46 / -7) leads the two Monday qualifiers who survived the 36-hole cut; he finished No. 6 in the inaugural PGA TOUR University Ranking List and has Forme Tour status
- **Ollie Schniederjans** (T4 / -14), the 2016 champion of this event, shot a 5-under 65 to climb inside the top five; he is bidding to join Brad Elder (1999, 2007) as the event's only two-time champion
- Defending champion **Jared Wolfe** (T46 / -7) shot a 3-under 67; he 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
- Weather: Partly cloudy and hot, high of 98 degrees, wind SSW at 8-15 mph (gusts up to 20 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, with Crestview Country Club hosting annually since 2001
- 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

Third-Round Course Statistics

- **Toughest Hole** – No. 6, Par 4, 495 yards (4.178 – eight birdies, 16 bogeys, two double bogeys or worse)
- **Easiest Hole** – No. 14, Par 5, 501 yards (4.123 – 10 eagles, 46 birdies, two bogeys)
- **Scoring Average (Front 9)** – 33.603
- **Scoring Average (Back 9)** – 33.507
- **Scoring Average (Total)** – 67.110

Cumulative Course Statistics

- **Toughest Hole** – No. 6, Par 4, 495 yards (4.286 – 31 birdies, 97 bogeys, 20 double bogeys or worse)
- **Easiest Hole** – No. 14, Par 5, 501 yards (4.456 – 22 eagles, 199 birdies, 30 bogeys or worse)
- **Scoring Average (Front 9)** – 34.346
- **Scoring Average (Back 9)** – 34.028
- **Scoring Average (Total)** – 68.374

Lowest 18-Hole Scoring Averages in Korn Ferry Tour History

- 67.110 – 2021 Wichita Open Benefitting KU Wichita Pediatrics (Round 3)
- 67.136 – 1993 BUY.com Siouxland Open (Round 4)
- 67.213 – 2017 AdventHealth Championship (Round 3)
- 67.274 – 2018 BMW Charity Pro-Am presented by SYNEX Corporation (Round 4)