



## Bridgestone SENIOR PLAYERS Championship

Firestone Country Club (South Course) | Akron, Ohio | June 24-27, 2021

### Third-Round Notes

Saturday, June 26, 2021

**Course Setup:** Par 70 / 7,063 yards (R3 average: 73.468; Cumulative: 73.146)

**Weather:** Mostly cloudy skies with highs in the mid-80s with SSW winds around 10-15.

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	Player	To Par	Scores
1.	Steve Stricker	-7	63-68-72 – 203 (-7)
2.	Jerry Kelly	-3	69-70-68 – 207 (-3)
3.	Ken Duke	-2	67-71-70 – 208 (-2)
T4.	David Toms	E	72-72-66 – 210 (E)
T4.	Jim Furyk	E	71-68-71 – 210 (E)
T4.	Ernie Els	E	72-67-71 – 210 (E)

#### Quick Links:

- [Leaderboard](#)
- [Final-Round Tee Times](#) (Golf Channel coverage: 3:00-6:00 p.m.)
- [PGATOURmedia.com](#) (transcripts and other resources available for download)

#### **Steve Stricker, 63-68-72 – 203 (-7)**

- Stricker, who led by as many as nine strokes during Saturday's third round, posted 2-over 72 and holds a four-stroke lead entering the final round.
- After birdying each of his first three holes, Stricker played his next 12 holes in 6-over before birdying the par-5 16<sup>th</sup> hole.
- Stricker leads the field in birdies (13) and has the fewest bogeys (4) this week. He was the last player in the field to make a bogey, going the first 39 holes of the tournament without a bogey before the fourth hole on Saturday.
- Stricker has held the solo lead entering the final round in all three senior majors this season. He is 0-for-2 converting those leads into victories.
- This is the fifth time in 10 senior major starts that Stricker has held the lead entering the final round. He is 2-for-4 converting those into wins.
  - o He finished runner-up at the 2021 Regions Tradition after holding a one-stroke lead entering the final round.

- o He finished T11 at the 2021 KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship after holding a one-stroke lead entering the final round.
- o Before this season, Stricker had converted each of the first two times he held the lead entering the final round of a senior major (2019 Regions Tradition, 2019 U.S. Senior Open).
- o This is the ninth time Stricker has held a lead/co-lead entering the final round of any event on PGA TOUR Champions. He is 4-for-8 converting those leads/co-leads into wins.
- Sunday will be the third time Stricker has played in the last group of the final round this season on PGA TOUR Champions (2020 Sanford International, 2021 Regions Tradition).
- With a win on Sunday, Stricker would become the second player on PGA TOUR Champions this season to go wire-to-wire (Phil Mickelson, 2020 Charles Schwab Series at Ozarks National).
  - o The Bridgestone SENIOR PLAYERS Championship has produced two wire-to-wire winners (Arnold Palmer, 1985; Bernhard Langer, 2015).
- With a win on Sunday, Stricker would become the ninth two-time winner in 2020-21 on PGA TOUR Champions, joining Jerry Kelly, Ernie Els, Kevin Sutherland, Jim Furyk, Alex Cejka, Darren Clarke, Miguel Angel Jimenez and Phil Mickelson.
- Making his third start at the Bridgestone SENIOR PLAYERS Championship, this is Stricker's best position entering the final round. He was T3 in 2019 and finished sixth. He was T12 in 2020 and finished T23.
- Making his 11th start of the season, Stricker has posted eight top-10s, including a win at the 2021 Chubb Classic.
- Stricker owns six wins on PGA TOUR Champions in 32 starts since joining in 2017. He has finished in the top three on 17 occasions (53%).

#### **Jerry Kelly, 69-70-68 – 207 (-3)**

- Despite a bogey on No. 1, defending champion Jerry Kelly sits in second after posting 3-under 68. He made three birdies and no bogeys on his last 17 holes of the day.
- Kelly has finished each of the last seven rounds at this tournament among the top-five. Last year, he was T1-1st-1st-1st, and this year he was T4-T5-2nd.
- With a win on Sunday, Kelly would become the:
  - o First three-time winner during the 2020-21 PGA TOUR Champions season.
  - o First player to win back-to-back tournaments since Bernhard Langer in 2017.
  - o First player to win back-to-back starts since Phil Mickelson in 2020.
- First player to win the Bridgestone SENIOR PLAYERS in consecutive years since Bernhard Langer (2015-17). The last time two straight tournaments were won by the defending champion was in 2008 – Bernhard Langer won the Insperty Invitational and John Cook won the AT&T Championship. Kelly won the American Family Insurance Championship as the defending champion two weeks ago.
- In 24 starts this season, Kelly has four top-three finishes and 11 top-10s, including seven of his last 10 outings.
- Since joining the PGA TOUR Champions in 2017, Kelly has won eight PGA TOUR Champions events, at least once each season, including a three-win season in 2019.

#### **Other Notes**

- Wisconsin natives **Steve Stricker** and **Jerry Kelly** will play together in the final group on Sunday for the first time since the 2019 U.S. Senior Open.
- **Ken Duke** posted even-par 70 during the third round, placing him in third at 2-under 208 heading into the final round. He carded two birdies and two bogeys, birdying two holes he bogeyed during round two.
- **David Toms** carded the round of the day with a 4-under 66 and improved from T19 to T4. Toms is tied with **Jim Furyk** (71-68-71 – 210) and **Ernie Els** (72-67-71 – 210) following the third round.
- After missing the last five events with a back injury, **Kevin Sutherland** is 1-over and seventh after rounds of 70-69-72 – 211.
- **Larry Mize** (back) withdrew before Saturday's third round.