

First-Round Notes – Thursday, August 18, 2022

Course Setup: Hillcrest Country Club (Par 71 / 6,880 yards)

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Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Philip Knowles	61 (-10)
2	Min Woo Lee	63 (-8)
T3	Five Tied	64 (-7)

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

Philip Knowles records career-low round for outright 18-hole lead at Albertsons Boise Open presented by Chevron

BOISE, Idaho – Playing out of the next to last group of the afternoon wave, University of North Florida alum Philip Knowles swooped in and took the outright 18-hole lead from Min Woo Lee with a 7-under 29 on his second nine holes at the Albertsons Boise Open presented by Chevron. Knowles carded a career-low round of 10-under 61 that included two eagles and eight birdies against two bogeys.

“It’s my lowest round in competition,” the 25-year-old Knowles said. “Honestly, I wish I wearing some type of heart rate monitor because I never felt like my heart rate really got that elevated. It felt like I was supremely in control of everything that I was doing and so there was no need to be fearful.”

Knowles’ day started on the back at Hillcrest Country Club, where he got off to a solid start with birdies at the par-4s 10 and 11. He carded two bogeys on the day at Nos. 13 and 17, which bookended a trio of birdies at the 14th, 15th and 16th. After making the turn at 3-under par, the 25-year-old climbed the leaderboard late in the afternoon with the 29 on his second nine holes.

“I just kept telling myself to stay patient, stay aggressive,” Knowles said of his mentality. “The golf course can lend itself to a lot of birdies if you put yourself in good positions and you can get a good feel with the putter.”

Knowles played Nos. 1-3 at 5-under par after a birdie-eagle-eagle stretch. On the three par 5s, Knowles was 5-under par with two eagles (Nos. 2, 3) and a birdie (No. 16). He rolled in two more birdies at the fifth and eighth to finish at 10-under, securing his [second-consecutive 18-hole lead](#) after he achieved the same feat at last week’s Pinnacle Bank Championship presented by Aetna.

“The bones of my game have been so good for months now, and it seems like I’m just catching fire all of a sudden at this peak time,” said Knowles. “Honestly, it just feels like this has been coming for me. Not

to say that I'm going to go shoot 10-under every day, but it's been really rewarding last week and this week to see that patience pay off."

Knowles, who is in his first full season on the Korn Ferry Tour, entered last week's regular season finale No. 87 on the Eligibility Points List, which would have left him out of the Korn Ferry Tour Finals. Powered by an opening-round 65 and a third-round 64, Knowles finished T10 and jumped 19 spots to 68th, earning him fully-exempt status for the 2023 season, but more importantly, access to the Korn Ferry Tour Finals and another opportunity to chase his first PGA TOUR card.

Knowles began the season with conditional status after a T73 finish at Final Stage of last year's Qualifying Tournament. His year got off to a slow start as he missed the cut in four of his first six starts. Since then, Knowles has logged five top-25 finishes in 10 events, including the first top-10 of his Korn Ferry Tour career last week.

"I've been playing really good, solid golf for a few months and the scores hadn't really been actualizing," Knowles said when reflecting on his season. "I've been telling myself to stay patient for months now. It's not like I just caught fire in two weeks. You can go back – I was playing well in Greenville three months ago. I was right there near the lead in the middle of the front nine and ended up finishing 12th or 13th. It was there, but I made a couple of bogeys, a couple of mistakes. That's kind of been the story for the past few months."

Knowles prepped at Bradenton Christian School, where his now wife, Olivia, played alongside him on the boys golf team since it did not have a girls team. Olivia went to Clemson University and was a cheerleader, while Knowles played golf at University of North Florida in Jacksonville. The two wed in December 2018, midway through Knowles' senior season and roughly two years after the couple reconnected.

Knowles capped his four-season career at UNF with a 2019 All-America Third Team selection and Atlantic Sun Conference Player of the Year honors.

Knowles turned professional that summer, played a full season on PGA TOUR Canada, and reached Final Stage of the 2019 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament. A T105 at Final Stage left him buried on the priority ranking for what became the 2020-21 season, so Knowles played predominantly on PGA TOUR Canada. A victory at the 2021 Auburn University Club Invitational propelled him to a No. 7 finish on the Order of Merit, which granted him an exemption to Final Stage last November.

Second-round tee times will run from 7:30 a.m. through 2:31 p.m. local time off the first and 10th tees.

First-Round Notes

- Eleven players carded bogey-free rounds Thursday
- 24-year-old Aussie **Min Woo Lee** (2nd / -8) carded a bogey-free 8-under 63 and held the solo lead for a majority of the day
 - The Perth, Australia native entered the week 68th on the Official World Golf Ranking, the highest ranked player in the field and one of just two players inside the OWGR Top 100 (the other being **Dean Burmester**, No. 72).
 - Lee played in 12 TOUR events this year, including all four majors where he made the cut in three, with the PGA Championship being the exception: T14 at the Masters Tournament, T27 at the U.S. Open, T21 at The Open Championship

- Since turning professional in 2018, Lee has primarily played on Europe's DP World Tour where he logged 10 top-10 finishes in 60 starts, including two victories at the 2020 ISPS Handa Vic Open and the 2021 Aberdeen Scottish Open
- The Albertsons Boise Open presented by Chevron is the first tournament of the three-event Korn Ferry Tour Finals, which conclude with the Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by United Leasing & Finance (September 1-4)
- This week's purse is \$1,000,000, with \$180,000 going to the champion; the champion will also receive 1,000 Korn Ferry Tour points

First-Round Course Statistics

- Scoring Average (Total – Par 71): 68.887 [-2.113]
- Scoring Average (Front Nine – Par 36): 35.000 [-1.000]
- Scoring Average (Back Nine – Par 35): 33.887 [-1.113]
- Toughest Hole: No. 13, Par 3, 219 yards – 3.204 [+0.204]
- Easiest Hole: No. 16, Par 5, 538 yards – 4.197 [-0.803]