

Final-Round Notes – Sunday, February 13, 2022

Course Setup: Country Club de Bogota (Lagos) – Par 71 / 7,237 yards

Media Contacts: German Rozo, 904-315-2901, GermanRozo@pgatourmail.com; Zach Dirlam, 517-262-5109, ZachDirlam@pgatourhq.com

Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Brandon Matthews	67-65-66-66—264 (-19)
T2	Ryan McCormick	61-69-69-66—265 (-18)
	Ben Griffin	68-61-68-68—265 (-18)
4	Joey Garber	69-64-64-69—266 (-17)

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

Brandon Matthews wins Astara Golf Championship presented by Mastercard with birdie-birdie-eagle finish

BOGOTA, Colombia – As four players held a share of the lead on the final hole of regulation, Brandon Matthews' eagle-three at the par-5 18th of Country Club de Bogota's Lagos course capped a birdie-birdie-eagle finish and a one-stroke victory at the Astara Golf Championship presented by Mastercard.

Matthews' first Korn Ferry Tour victory came in his 50th Tour start. The 2020-21 PGA TOUR Latinoamérica Order of Merit winner, Matthews began the final round in T3 position and reached 19-under par for the week, one stroke ahead of runner-up finishers Ryan McCormick and Ben Griffin, with a 5-under 66 Sunday.

"It's pretty special," an emotional Matthews said. "My game has been trending in the right direction for the past few years – been playing really, really good golf. Support system I've had is absolutely unbelievable. I can't thank everyone enough. My fiancée has been unbelievable and she's supported me through everything. I can't wait to get home to her, my dog, and I can't wait to see my dad, share this with him, because without them I wouldn't be here.

"Growing up as a kid, hitting balls for hours upon hours, dreaming of this, it's pretty awesome to see it come true."

Matthews made the turn at 1-under par, as bogeys at Nos. 7 and 9 dampened his birdies from Nos. 3, 5 and 6. The Temple University alum parred the first four holes of the back nine and squandered a birdie at the par-4 14th with a bogey at the par-3 15th. It looked as though Matthews was headed for a second consecutive top-five, but a win appeared out of reach.

Instead, the 27-year-old caught fire and birdied the par-4 16th and 17th, and hit a 9-iron to 5 feet and poured in his eagle putt on the 72nd hole.

“Hit a great drive on No. 16, set up a perfect little pitch in there that I honestly thought I made, which was great to get there, because I knew that I was going to have to do something special down the stretch to either win or get a playoff,” Matthews said. “Hit a great drive on No. 17. Didn't hit the best pitch shot. Left it about 20 feet short. Such a good putt there. I made that dead center, and that was so big for me, especially with some of the putts I hit in the middle of the round. To be able to get there and really make that putt was awesome.

“And coming down the 18th, I hit three perfect golf shots,” Matthews continued. “Hit a great drive over the trees. Hit a really nice little cut 9-iron in there to about 5 feet behind it, and it was fun going into that putt realizing that this could be the one.”

The win today may have been the first career Korn Ferry Tour victory for Matthews, but he won three times on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica (twice in 2020-21, once in 2017). This week's win also followed a near-miss at The Panama Championship last week, where Matthews finished T2 and one stroke behind the champion.

Matthews, a native Pennsylvanian, turned professional out of Temple in 2016. He enjoyed immediate success on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica in 2017, winning his second start and adding a solo third three months later. A T42 finish at Final Stage of the 2017 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament awarded him conditional status, but Matthews finished 82nd in the 2018 regular season standings and had to retain status via Final Stage at year's end. Matthews missed 14 cuts in 21 starts on Tour in 2019, bouncing him back to PGA TOUR Latinoamérica.

“If PGA TOUR Latinoamérica didn't exist, I wouldn't be here,” Matthews said. “It's pretty amazing what's culminated out of all that and where I am now compared to when I first got out here.”

Matthews already had fully exempt status like the Korn Ferry Tour's tournament winners, but now he is well positioned to earn a PGA TOUR card at season's end, as he moved to No. 1 in the Regular Season Points Standings. With 766 points, Matthews sits 245-plus points ahead of the other three winners this season.

“In my opinion, I think I should be in contention and be winning golf tournaments all the time,” Matthews said. “My game feels great. My mental has been really, really good over the last few years. If we can continue on this path, I'm pretty excited to see what we can do.”

The 2022 Korn Ferry Tour season continues Thursday, February 17 with the first round of the LECOM Suncoast Classic at Lakewood National Golf Club in Lakewood Ranch, Florida.

Final-Round Notes

- **Brandon Matthews** (1st / -19), who won the 2020-21 PGA TOUR Latinoamérica Order of Merit for fully exempt status for the 2022 season, followed last week's career-high finish, a T2 at The Panama Championship, with his first Korn Ferry Tour win
 - In 48 Korn Ferry Tour starts prior to The Panama Championship last week, Matthews' highest finish was a T7 at the 2018 Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation

- **Ben Griffin** (T2 / -17), who held the outright 36-hole lead and co-led after 54 holes, earned his second top-10 and third top-15 in his fourth start of the season; his highest finish in nine Korn Ferry Tour starts prior to this season was a T57 at the 2019 REX Hospital Open
 - Griffin [quit professional golf last spring](#) and worked as a mortgage loan officer in his hometown of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, until he returned to the 2021 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament and earned eight guaranteed starts with a T29 at Final Stage
- A bogey-free 5-under 66 for **Ryan McCormick** (T2 / -18) capped a career-high finish in what was his 52nd career Korn Ferry Tour start; his previous career-high finish was T6 on three occasions, with the most recent coming last May at the 2021 AdventHealth Championship
- **Joey Garber** (4th / -17), a co-leader after 54 holes, logged his second consecutive top-10 and his third top-15 of the season, as he finished T10 last week at The Panama Championship, and T11 at the season-opening The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic at Sandals Emerald Bay
- Garber also recorded his highest finish since winning the 2018 REX Hospital Open
- **Augusto Nunez** (T7 / -14), **Eric Cole** (T7 / -14) and open qualifier **Chip McDaniel** (T21 / -10) carded the lowest rounds of the day with their 6-under 65s
 - McDaniel had missed cuts in six of his last seven Korn Ferry Tour starts, and had not finished higher than T39 since a T13 last June at the 2021 BMW Charity Pro-Am presented by TD SYNEX
- **Rob Oppenheim** (T5 / -15) was the first alternate for next week's LECOM Suncoast Classic as of Sunday morning; his first top-10 since a T7 at the PGA TOUR's 2021 Puerto Rico Open last February secured him a spot in next week's field
- Conditional members **Marcos Montenegro** (T5 / -15), **MJ Daffue** (T9 / -12), **Tee-K Kelly** (T9 / -12), and **Jay Card III** (T9 / -12) all posted career-high finishes and earned spots in next week's field by virtue of their top-10s – none of them were in next week's field on their priority ranking number as of this past Friday
 - Daffue, Kelly, and Card all birdied Nos. 17 and 18 to move into a top-10
 - Montenegro's start this week was his fourth on the Korn Ferry Tour (and third this season); his best finish prior to this was a T39 last week at The Panama Championship
 - Daffue's career-high finish from his previous 12 Korn Ferry Tour starts was a T15 at both the 2019 Price Cutter Charity Championship presented by Dr Pepper and 2022 The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic at Sandals Emerald Bay
 - Kelly, who played predominantly on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica and PGA TOUR Canada to this point, missed the cut at the 2018 Rust-Oleum Championship in his only previous Korn Ferry Tour start; he was the fifth-to-last player in the field this week on his priority ranking number
 - Card's missed cut at The Panama Championship last week marked his first PGA TOUR-sanctioned start; he was the seventh-to-last player in the field this week on his priority ranking number
- **Nicolas Echavarria** (T13 / -11), a Medellin native, led the five Colombians in this week's field, and **Ivan Camilo Ramirez** (T65 / -2) was the only other Colombian who survived the 36-hole cut
- Five bogey-free rounds were carded Sunday, compared to two Saturday, six Friday, and four Thursday
- The Astara Golf Championship presented by Mastercard was the fourth of 23 regular season events on the 26-event 2022 Korn Ferry Tour schedule; the first set of 25 PGA TOUR cards will be awarded at the regular season finale, the Pinnacle Bank Championship presented by Aetna (August 11-14), and an additional 25 TOUR cards will be awarded following 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 was \$750,000, with \$135,000 going to the champion, **Brandon Matthews**; he also received 500 Korn Ferry Tour points
 - All 2022 Korn Ferry Tour regular season events feature a minimum purse of \$750,000, a 25 percent increase from last season, and will boast minimum purses of \$1 million in 2023 for a [total increase of 66.7 percent](#) from 2021 to 2022