

Second-Round Notes – Friday, March 25, 2022

Course Setup: The Country Club at Golden Nugget (Par 71 / 6,940 yards)

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Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
T1	Vince India	66-67—133 (-9)
	Braden Thornberry	66-67—133 (-9)
	George Cunningham	67-66—133 (-9)
	Trace Crowe	70-63—133 (-9)
T5	Two Tied	134 (-8)

Quick Links

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

Four players share lead after second round of Lake Charles Championship

LAKE CHARLES, Louisiana – Vince India, Braden Thornberry, George Cunningham and Trace Crowe are tied atop the leaderboard at 9-under par after two rounds of the inaugural Lake Charles Championship. For Thornberry, Cunningham and Crowe, Friday marked the first time they earned at least a share of the 36-hole lead in a Korn Ferry Tour event.

India carded a bogey-free 4-under 67 Friday at The County Club at Golden Nugget. India birdied two of his first three holes, the par-4 first and par-5 third, and added two more at the par-5 14th and par-4 18th. The 32-year-old Deerfield, Illinois native who plays from Chicago closed his second round with an 11-foot birdie putt.

“I thought my game around the greens was super solid,” India said. “I put a little bit of work in early on this week. I’m pitching it and chipping it pretty nicely, so when I hit a squirrely shot with an iron, I let it roll off the shoulder and say, ‘Well, I can go get this up and down.’ That’s been the key this week so far.”

This is India’s eighth consecutive season as a Korn Ferry Tour member, but it is his first with fully exempt status. By virtue of being in the top 75 of the 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour Regular Season Points List (he was No. 43), India avoided every stage of the Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament for the first time in his career, [snapping a streak of appearances which dated back to 2013](#). On the plus side, India made Final Stage of all seven of those Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournaments from 2013-19, regaining membership on every occasion.

“It just makes for a little less stressful offseason,” India said. “You can stay home and sit on the couch and watch football as long as you want, and you won’t have to worry about going to Mobile, Alabama for Second Stage. If anything, peace of mind, honestly. That helps going into this year.”

Thornberry only posted three pars on his front nine but made four birdies (Nos. 3, 4, 6 and 9) and two bogeys (Nos. 2 and 5). After another bogey at the par-4 10th, Thornberry birdied the par-4 12th, par-5 14th, and closed the round with another at the par-4 18th for a 4-under 67.

Thornberry is in his third season on the Korn Ferry Tour and second consecutive season as a fully exempt member. The Olive Branch, Mississippi resident was co-medalist at Final Stage of the 2019 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament for fully exempt status last season, and finished 57th on the 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour Regular Season Points List for fully exempt status this season.

A former star-studded collegian, Thornberry [turned professional](#) and forwent the second half of his senior season at University of Mississippi after he played Final Stage of the 2018 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament as an amateur and finished T74, good enough for conditional membership. In three and a half seasons at Ole Miss, Thornberry tallied a school-record 11 victories, with the crown jewel being the individual national title at the 2017 NCAA Division I Championships his sophomore season. Thornberry also earned the 2017 Fred Haskins Award, one of three collegiate national player of the year awards, and spent numerous weeks at No. 1 in the World Amateur Golf Ranking.

“I think I did a really good job of that in college,” Thornberry said of being comfortable playing atop the leaderboard. “I feel like as a pro I just haven’t played great a lot in general. I haven’t been up near the lead a lot since I’ve been on the Korn Ferry Tour. Today I was more comfortable than I was last week.

“You hear people talking about the more you put yourself in that position, and maybe it doesn’t go well this week,” continued Thornberry, who stood solo second after 36 holes of last week’s Chitimacha Louisiana Open presented by MISTRAS. “But hopefully I can keep doing that, keep putting myself in position, and I’ll keep doing better.”

Cunningham, a 26-year-old University of Arizona alum, came out swinging with four birdies in a row and added another at the par-5 ninth. Playing out of Allen, Texas, Cunningham’s birdie at the par-4 10th was negated by a bogey at the par-4 11th. Cunningham closed with seven consecutive pars for a 5-under 66.

“It feels awesome. I think it’s my first 36-hole tie for the lead,” Cunningham said. “I’m pretty excited about it. My ball striking this whole year has been really good. The putting has what’s been the big difference this week compared to the last few weeks.”

Cunningham is in his third season on the Korn Ferry Tour and making his 71st start this week. Despite more missed cuts (26) than weekends played (16) last season, Cunningham logged six top-10s, including a pair of T3s, and finished No. 58 on the regular season points list for fully exempt status this season.

For Crowe, an Auburn University alum, this week marks his third career start in a PGA TOUR-sanctioned event. Crowe previously Monday qualified into a PGA TOUR Canada event last August, and finished T48 earlier this season at the Astara Golf Championship presented by Mastercard.

Crowe birdied six of the final seven holes on the front nine (Nos. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 9) before his only bogey of the day at the par-4 10th. The Charlotte, North Carolina resident birdied the par-5 14th and the final two holes en route to an 8-under 63, the second-lowest round of the day.

“I made a couple putts you don’t usually make,” Crowe said. “I’m really excited to be in the lead in my second start out here. I was in the top 10 after my first two days in Bogota and then finished the last couple of days poorly. This time I’m planning on not getting ahead of myself and keep making birdies. Hopefully that’s enough.”

Zecheng Dou, who began the day in T151 position after a 6-over 77 in the first round, posted the lowest round Friday, carding a 10-under 61 and breaking the course record. Dou climbed all the way to T31 with his stellar second round, which matched his career-low round in PGA TOUR-sanctioned play.

Third-round pairings will run from 7:20 a.m. through 1:45 p.m. local time off the first tee.

Second-Round Notes

- The 36-hole cut was made at 2-under par with 76 players advancing to the weekend
- **Zecheng Dou's** (T31 / -4) course-record 10-under 61 tied his lowest round across his previous 475 PGA TOUR-sanctioned rounds, which was a 10-under 61 in the third round of the 2017 AdventHealth Championship, an event he eventually won by three strokes
- Dou's 11 birdies in his second round were the most by any Korn Ferry Tour player in a single round this season, eclipsing the 10 total birdies carded by Jonathan Brightwell in the second round of the LECOM Suncoast Classic last month
 - Dou's 11 total birdies were also the most by any Korn Ferry Tour player in a single round since Jimmy Stanger made 11 birdies in the second round of the 2021 Utah Championship presented by Zions Bank last August
- Making his seventh Korn Ferry Tour start, first-time member **Seonghyeon Kim** (T5 / -8), No. 178 in the Official World Golf Ranking and one of two players in the field ranked inside the top 200, moved into his highest 36-hole position
 - Kim was inside the top 10 after the second rounds of last week's Chitimacha Louisiana Open presented by MISTRAS (T7, finished T41) and January's The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club (T8, finished solo third)
 - Kim finished on the number (T39) for guaranteed starts in the first eight 2022 events at Final Stage of the Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament last November; he birdied his 71st hole to move to T39
 - Kim boasts international victories from the 2021 Japan PGA Championship on the Japan Golf Tour, as well as the 2020 KPGA Championship, where he became the first player in the history of the Korean Tour to [win an event as a Monday Qualifier](#)
- **Thomas Rosenmueller** (T14 / -6) posted back-to-back eagles at the par-5 third and par-4 fourth, making him the second player to do so in a Korn Ferry Tour event this season, with the being Albin Choi in the first round of last month's LECOM Suncoast Classic
 - Rosenmueller holed 60-degree wedges from 33 yards (No. 3) and 35 yards (No. 4)
- Louisiana State University alum **Luis Gagne** (T57 / -2) rallied to make the cut with a 6-under 65 Friday; he shot a 4-over 75 in Thursday's opening round
- Three (of eight) Monday qualifiers will survive the 36-hole cut – **Matthew Picanso** (T31 / -4), **Brandon Hoelzer** (T57 / -2), and **Philip Knowles** (T57 / -2)

- Picanso, a first-year member with conditional status, also Monday qualified into last week's Chitimacha Louisiana Open presented by MISTRAS, where he missed the cut
- Making his sixth PGA TOUR-sanctioned start (second on Korn Ferry Tour, four on PGA TOUR Canada) and playing via a sponsor exemption, **Hayden Wood** (T31 /-4) will record his first made cut
 - Hayden is the son of Willie Wood, a two-time PGA TOUR Champions winner, and champion of the PGA TOUR's 1996 Sanderson Farms Championship
- The field's two Louisianans – Covington resident **Michael Arnaud** (-1) and Shreveport native **Philip Barbaree** (+5) – both missed the cut
- [First announced in 2019](#), this week's inaugural Lake Charles Championship was originally scheduled for March 26-29 2020, but was postponed to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and postponed a second time in November 2020 as a result of damage suffered along the Louisiana coast from Hurricanes Laura and Delta
- The Lake Charles Championship is the seventh 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 is \$750,000, with \$135,000 going to the champion; the champion will also receive 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

Second-Round Course Statistics

- Scoring Average (Total): 69.561 [-1.439]
- Scoring Average (Front Nine – Par 36): 34.658 [-1.342]
- Scoring Average (Back Nine – Par 35): 34.903 [-0.097]
- Toughest Hole: No. 8, Par 4, 457 yards – 4.368 [+0.368]
- Easiest Hole: No. 3, Par 5, 524 yards – 4.445 [-0.555]