

Third-Round Notes – Saturday, March 26, 2022

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

Media Contacts: Hagan Parkman, 817-983-3251, HaganParkman@pgatourhq.com; Zach Dirlam, 517-262-5109, ZachDirlam@pgatourq.com

Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Seonghyeon Kim	68-66-64—198 (-15)
2	George Cunningham	67-66-66—199 (-14)
T3	Brandon Matthews	69-68-63—200 (-13)
T3	Corey Pereira	67-67-66—200 (-13)
T5	Three Tied	202 (-11)

Quick Links

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

Seonghyeon Kim takes 54-hole lead with back-nine 29 at Lake Charles Championship

LAKE CHARLES, Louisiana – In his seventh Korn Ferry Tour start, Seonghyeon Kim moved to the top of the leaderboard Saturday at the inaugural Lake Charles Championship, as he took the outright 54-hole lead with a 7-under 64 at The Country Club at Golden Nugget. Kim reached 15-under par for the week and moved one stroke ahead of George Cunningham, one of four co-leaders after the second round.

Kim entered the third round one stroke off the 36-hole lead, but recorded the best back nine of the week, a 6-under 29, en route to his first lead in a Korn Ferry Tour event.

The 23-year-old from Changwon, South Korea carded eight birdies and one bogey in his third round. Kim opened with a birdie at the drivable par-4 first and added another at the par-4 fourth. A bogey at the par-4 seventh was entirely washed away by six birdies on the back nine. Kim made five birdies in his first six holes on the back (Nos. 10, 11, 12, 14, 15) and finished the day with a tight approach into the par-4 18th green for a closing birdie.

“The front nine did not go as well as I planned,” Kim said. “I struggled a little bit. But as I turned to the back nine, I gained some confidence. The putts started to drop, I got into a good rhythm, which ended up in a good score. I’m satisfied with my round today.”

Since turning professional in 2017, Kim predominantly played the Korean Tour and Japan Golf Tour as he worked his way toward the Korn Ferry Tour.

Kim won the 2020 KPGA Championship, becoming the first player in the history of the Korean Tour to [win an event as a Monday Qualifier](#). The victory awarded him a five-year exemption for the Korean Tour,

as well as an exemption for his PGA TOUR debut at the 2020 CJ CUP @ SHADOW CREEK. The following July, Kim won the 2021 Japan PGA Championship on the Japan Golf Tour. Three months later, Kim shot a 9-under 63 in the second round of the 2021 CJ CUP @ SUMMIT and entered the weekend in T2 position; he finished the week T32. With an eye toward the PGA TOUR, Kim made his way to Final Stage of the 2021 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament last November and birdied his 71st hole for a T39 finish – which was the cut line for guaranteed starts in the first eight events of the 2022 season.

“Ever since I started golf, as with many other players, my ultimate goal was to reach the PGA TOUR one day,” Kim said. “My dream has always been the PGA TOUR and I knew I had to come through the Korn Ferry Tour and succeed here in order to get that.”

Through six events this year, Kim played his way into contention on two previous occasions, finishing T2 at last month’s LECOM Suncoast Classic, and solo third in January’s The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club. With three top-25s, Kim entered the week ranked No. 8 on the Korn Ferry Tour Regular Season Points List and No. 178 in the Official World Golf Ranking.

“I’ve always tried to stay composed,” Kim said. “Being a Tour player, I always come here to win. There are a lot of tournaments left in the season, and I’m confident a chance will come to me. I’m just going to keep grinding.”

Final-round tee times will run from 9:15 a.m. through 11:25 a.m. local time off the first and 10th tees.

Third-Round Notes

- Through the first six events of the Korn Ferry Tour season, no player who has led or co-led after 18, 36, or 54 holes has gone on to win
- Prior to Saturday, **Seonghyeon Kim**’s (1st / -15) career-low round on the Korn Ferry Tour in six previous starts was a 7-under 65 in the second round of The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club, and a 6-under 65 in the second round of last week’s Chitimacha Louisiana Open presented by MISTRAS
- Kim’s career-high 54-hole position in six previous Korn Ferry Tour starts was T11 at The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club, where he finished solo third
- In Kim’s top-three finishes this season, he posted final rounds of 6-under 66 (The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club, where he finished solo third) and 5-under 66 (LECOM Suncoast Classic, where he finished T2)
- Prior to this week, **George Cunningham**’s (2nd / -14) best 54-hole position this season was T46 at the LECOM Suncoast Classic, and solo second matched his career-high 54-hole position in a Korn Ferry Tour event
 - 2020 The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic at Sandals Emerald Bay – T2 after 54 holes (finished T4)
 - 2020 Orange Country National Championship presented by Knight 39 - T2 after 54 holes (finished T6)
- In his 53rd start and 151st round on the Korn Ferry Tour, **Brandon Matthews** (T3 / -13) beat his career-low round by two strokes with an 8-under 63, tied for the lowest round of the day
 - Matthews’ 63 also tied his second-lowest round in PGA TOUR-sanctioned play, as he shot a 9-under 62 in the first round of the 2017 70 Avianca Colombia Open on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica

- Mathews also shot an 8-under 63 and 9-under 63 in two different PGA TOUR Latinoamérica events last season
- Matthews matched his career-high 54-hole position in a Korn Ferry Tour event and sits inside the top five for the third time this season
 - 2022 Astara Golf Championship presented by Mastercard – T3 after 54 holes (won)
 - 2022 The Panama Championship – T5 after 54 holes (finished T2)
- In his 25th start and 70th round on the Korn Ferry Tour, **Corey Pereira** (T3 / -13) matched his career-low round with a 5-under 66; he shot 66 on six previous occasions, with the most recent being a 5-under 66 in the second round of last month's LECOM Suncoast Classic
- In his 24 previous starts, Pereira's highest 54-hole position was T18 at the 2019 Dormie Network Classic at Briggs Ranch
- Louisiana State University alum **Luis Gagne** (T8 / -10), staged a Friday rally and made the 36-hole cut on the number, equaled the lowest round Saturday with an 8-under 63
 - Gagne eclipsed his career-low round in PGA TOUR-sanctioned play for the second day in a row, as he followed Friday's career-low 6-under 65 with Saturday's 8-under 63
- 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** (T24 / -8) enters the final round in position for a top-25, which would grant him entry into next week's Club Car Championship at The Landings Club
 - This week is Wood's first made cut in PGA TOUR-sanctioned play
 - 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
- **Matthew Picanso** (T43 / -6) leads the three Monday qualifiers who survived the 36-hole 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

Third-Round Course Statistics

- Scoring Average (Total): 68.263 [-2.737]
 - Lowest scoring average in any round of 2022 season
- Scoring Average (Front Nine – Par 36): 33.895 [-2.105]
- Scoring Average (Back Nine – Par 35): 34.368 [-0.632]
- Toughest Hole: No. 10, Par 4, 500 yards – 4.395 [+0.395]
- Easiest Hole: No. 3, Par 5, 524 yards – 4.237 [-0.763]