

### Third-Round Notes – Saturday, February 19, 2022

**Course Setup:** Lakewood National Golf Club – Commander (Par 71 / 7,113 yards)

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#### Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Michael Gellerman	65-66-65—196 (-17)
2	MJ Daffue	68-65-64—197 (-16)
T3	Ben Griffin	69-64-65—198 (-15)
	Byeong Hun An	65-66-67—198 (-15)
5	Zecheng Dou	64-64-71—199 (-14)

#### Quick Links

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

### Michael Gellerman takes over 54-hole lead at LECOM Suncoast Classic

**LAKEWOOD RANCH, Florida** – For the first time in 65 career starts on the Korn Ferry Tour, Michael Gellerman sits atop the leaderboard prior to the final round of a tournament, as he took the outright 54-hole lead with a 6-under 65 Saturday at the LECOM Suncoast Classic. Gellerman entered the third round three strokes behind 36-hole leader Zecheng Dou, but took the lead at 17-under par with a birdie at the difficult par-3 17th.

A University of Oklahoma alum, Gellerman started the day with three consecutive birdies at the par-4 first and second and par-3 third, though a bogey at the 298-yard par-4 fourth dropped him back to 2-under par.

“Those are three of the tougher holes on the course (Nos. 1-3), so you don't really expect to make three birdies in a row,” Gellerman said. “Obviously anytime you can start like that it's pretty big for your round.”

Gellerman rounded out his front nine with two more birdies at Nos. 8 and 9. On his back nine, Gellerman erased a bogey at the par-5 14th (a hole he eagled in the first round and made albatross at in the second round) with three birdies, including a deuce at No. 17, where only five birdies were recorded all day.

“I made a couple mistakes, but I just kind of kept it in play all day,” Gellerman said. “There's a lot of tee shots that you have to hit a fade, which is good for me. I've been successful on the greens here in years past. I don't know what it is about the course, but I feel comfortable.”

In 2019, Gellerman won the AdventHealth Championship three hours away from his hometown of Sterling, Kansas, for his first and only career victory on the Korn Ferry Tour. The win, coupled with a T3 and another top-25, was enough for 21st on the Korn Ferry Tour Regular Season Points Standings and a PGA TOUR card, which he received on his 27th birthday.

“That was really fun.” Gellerman said of the win. “I hadn't really had that great of a chance to win up until that point and I was fortunate to get it done. It was on Mother's Day, which was really cool, in the state that I grew up in, so that was really cool for me and my family.

“Hopefully I can kind of reflect on some of those times and some of those pressures that I felt a couple years ago and take them into tomorrow and, hopefully, do the same thing.”

Gellerman spent the 2019-20 and 2020-21 seasons on the PGA TOUR, but he finished outside the top 200 of the FedExCup Standings both times, and last season's final ranking of 203rd, after 11 missed cuts in his 19 starts and a single top-25, a T16 at the 2021 3M Open, left him without a spot in the field for the 2021 Korn Ferry Tour Finals.

“Unfortunately I just didn't play my best,” Gellerman said. “It was a good learning experience. I got beat up out there, and it was probably good for me to figure out how to get better and figure out what I needed to do to be a better me. Hopefully it will be a blessing in disguise. Obviously no one wants to lose their PGA TOUR card, but it is what it is and I'm here now.

“I've never held a 54-hole lead, so it will be interesting,” said Gellerman, whose previous career-high position after any of the first three rounds of a Korn Ferry Tour event was T2 after 36 holes of the 2019 AdventHealth Championship. “I guess I'll just go home and have a beer and go to sleep and figure it out tomorrow. It will be fun.”

Final-round pairings will run from 6:58 a.m. through 12:45 p.m. ET off the first tee.

### Third-Round Notes

- Through the first four 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
- **MJ Daffue** (2nd / -16) and **Peter Uihlein** (T6 / -13) both shot the lowest round of the day with matching 7-under 64s
  - Daffue's two bogeys are tied for the fewest scores of bogey or worse recorded through 54 holes this week
- Daffue, who finished T138 at Final Stage of the 2017 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament and did not make his first Tour start until 2019, Monday qualified into five of his 10 career Korn Ferry Tour starts prior to this season, and another three were via top-25s following a successful Monday qualifier
- This is **Ben Griffin**'s (T3 / -15) second consecutive week inside the top five after 54 holes; he was the 54 hole co-leader at the Astara Golf Championship presented by Mastercard last week and finished T2, lipping out a potential tying eagle on the 72nd hole
  - Prior to the last two weeks, Griffin's highest 54-hole position on the Korn Ferry Tour was T21 at the season-opening 2022 The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic at Sandals Emerald Bay

- Griffin, a 2018 winner on PGA TOUR Canada in his first year as a professional out of the University of North Carolina, [quit professional golf in April 2021](#) after a failed run on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica (four missed cuts in four starts for the 2020-21 season); he took a job as a mortgage loan officer in his hometown of Chapel Hill, North Carolina until he returned to professional golf and finished T29 at Final Stage of the Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament last November, earning guaranteed starts in the first eight events of 2022
- Playing predominately on the PGA TOUR prior to this season, **Byeong Hun An** (T3 / -11) made four consecutive FedExCup Playoffs appearances from 2017-2020; he's making his sixth career Korn Ferry Tour start and third of the season
  - An has two top-25s on the Korn Ferry Tour: a T20 at the 2021 Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by United Leasing & Finance, and a T22 at the 2022 The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at Sandals Emerald Bay
  - An moved from South Korea to the United States in 2005 to attend the David Leadbetter Golf Academy in Florida
- [Outright 36-hole leader Zecheng Dou](#) (5th / -14) fell four places with an even-par 71; he enters the final round in the top five for the second time this season, as he held the outright 54-hole lead last month at the 2022 The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club
- Playing the LECOM Suncoast Classic via a sponsor exemption for the third consecutive year, Bradenton, Florida native **Philip Knowles** (T31 / -9) fell 14 spots on the leaderboard after an even-par 71; this week marks his first made cut in three career Korn Ferry Tour starts
- **Scott Harrington** (T11 / -12) carded his second bogey-free round of the week and the only bogey-free round posted Saturday with a 4-under 67
  - There were 13 bogey-free rounds Friday and six posted Thursday
- **Chad Ramey** (T11 / -12), the only player without a bogey through the first 36 holes, three-putted his opening hole, the par-4 first, for his first bogey of the week
- The LECOM Suncoast Classic is the fifth 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