

Third-Round Notes – Saturday, May 7, 2022

Course Setup: The Grove (Par 72 / 7,368 yards)

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Leaderboard

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	Kevin Yu	67-68-67—202 (-14)
T2	Zecheng Dou	69-66-68—203 (-13)
	Brent Grant	69-65-69—203 (-13)
T4	Four Tied	204 (-12)

Quick Links

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

Kevin Yu secures second career 54-hole lead at the Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation

COLLEGE GROVE, Tennessee – In his 16th Korn Ferry Tour start, Kevin Yu moved to the top of the leaderboard Saturday at the Simmons Bank open for the Snedeker Foundation, taking the outright 54-hole lead with a 5-under 67 at The Grove. With a kick-in birdie at the par-5 18th, Yu reached 14-under par for the week and moved one stroke ahead of Zecheng Dou and Brent Grant.

Yu, who played the final eight regular season events of the 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour schedule via PGA TOUR University presented by Velocity Global, has his second 54-hole lead. Yu previously led the 2021 Wichita Open Benefitting KU Wichita Pediatrics, his second career start on the Korn Ferry Tour, by two strokes; he ended the week T5.

The 23-year-old from Chinese Taipei began the day three strokes off the 36-hole lead and carded six birdies against one bogey in the third round.

Yu's bogey at the par-4 first was entirely washed away by back-to-back birdies at the par-4 fourth and par-3 fifth. Yu birdied two of the first three holes on the back nine (Nos. 10 and 12), poured in another at the par-3 15th, and knocked a short pitch to 2 feet at the par-5 18th for his field-leading 19th birdie of the week.

"I've been feeling good," Yu said. "Been playing good, too. I missed a few cuts before this one, but I feel like my game has been feeling pretty good. This week I just keep doing what I'm doing on the course, and so far it's worked out pretty good."

Yu first announced his presence to the golf world with a win at the 2015 Western Junior, the oldest national junior golf tournament in the United States. The event's list of past champions includes accomplished PGA TOUR players Collin Morikawa (2013), Rickie Fowler (2005), and Jim Furyk (1987).

The Arizona State University alumni made his way to the Korn Ferry Tour via the newly-established [PGA TOUR University](#) presented by Velocity Global. The mission of PGA TOUR University is to elevate the path to the PGA TOUR for college golf's top seniors. It also incentivizes players to stay in school longer and continue to work toward a degree. The top-five players in the inaugural [PGA TOUR University Class of 2021](#) earned Korn Ferry Tour status and an exemption into Final Stage of the Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament. Nos. 6-15 earned PGA TOUR Canada status and an exemption into Second Stage of the Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament.

Yu finished No. 4 in the inaugural class and earned starts for the final eight events of the 2020-21 Korn Ferry Tour season.

"Last year, I played eight events right after college," Yu said. "I think that's one of the best things to happen to me. A lot of guys get out of college and got nowhere to play. I had the Korn Ferry (Tour) to play for eight events and get to know all the courses and all the guys. The tournaments are a little different compared to college, so it got me mentally ready, too."

Yu took full advantage of those opportunities, first contending at both the Wichita Open Benefitting KU Wichita Pediatrics, and again at The Ascendant presented by Blue, where he briefly held the outright lead in the final round but ultimately fell into a three-man sudden-death playoff and settled for a T2 finish. Yu added three more top-25s, giving him five across his eight starts.

"I was leading (at) Wichita... I wasn't really comfortable," Yu said. "I felt good, but I just felt kind of weird. My game was feeling good, but my mental... I just felt kind of weird, and then didn't play my best golf out there. Just being comfortable out there is really important. I just got to trust my game and do what I do out there the last few days."

Between the end of last season and this past March, Yu Monday qualified into the 2021 RSM Classic and received sponsor exemptions for four more PGA TOUR events. His best finish was a T7 at the 2022 Puerto Rico Open, which gave him an automatic exemption into the Valspar Championship the following week.

A T63 finish at Final Stage of the 2021 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament last November, however, left Yu on the outside the fields for the 2022 season-opening events in The Bahamas.

Yu's first starts of the season came at The Panama Championship (missed cut) and The Astara Golf Championship presented by Mastercard (T30), both of which he gained entry to via his priority ranking. A T65 at the LECOM Suncoast Classic as a sponsor exemption and T21 at the Lake Charles Championship (in the field on his number) provided enough points to climb the priority ranking following the April 3 reshuffle.

Leading up to the Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation, Yu missed three consecutive cuts and posted just one top-25 in seven starts this year, but feels hopeful heading into the final round.

"You can't give up on yourself," Yu said. "You definitely have to trust yourself. Last week I missed the cut, a little bit disappointed, but coming out this week I feel like a new man and everything has been working out pretty good."

“Tomorrow is another day and I'm just going to keep going and never look back.”

Final-round pairings will run from 7:04 a.m. through 12:45 p.m. local time off the first tee.

Third-Round Notes

- So long as **Seonghyeon Kim** (T59 / -1), currently No. 2 on the Regular Season Points List, completes the final round, he will become the second player to cross the 900-point threshold the Korn Ferry Tour is currently using as its fail-safe threshold for players to finish among The 25 and earn a PGA TOUR card at regular season's end
- **Kevin Yu** (1st / -14) has 19 birdies this week, two more than any player in the field
- **Zecheng Dou** (T2 / -13) made a field-leading seven birdies in the third round en route to a 4-under 68
- Making his 99th Korn Ferry Tour start, Dou stands T2 or higher through 54 holes for the fifth time in his career, though three of the previous four were outright leads; he is also in the top five through 54 holes for the third time this season
 - 2017 Digital Ally Open – Outright leader through 54 holes (Won)
 - 2019 The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic at Sandals Emerald Bay – Outright leader through 54 holes (Won)
 - 2021 Club Car Championship at The Landings Club – T2 through 54 holes (finished T7)
 - 2022 The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club – Outright leader (finished 2nd, lost in playoff)
 - 2022 LECOM Suncoast Classic – 5th through 54 holes (finished T28)
- **Brent Grant** (T2 / -13), who finished T5 and co-led after the third round of last year's Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation, has one bogey and one double bogey this week, tied with **Jeremy Paul** (T4 / -12 / two bogeys) for the fewest over-par holes this week
- Making his 45th Korn Ferry Tour start, Grant stands inside the top five through 54 holes for the fourth time in his career
 - 2021 LECOM Suncoast Classic – T4 through 54 holes (finished T5)
 - 2021 Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation – T1 through 54 holes (finished T5)
 - 2021 Wichita Open Benefitting KU Wichita Pediatrics – T4 through 54 holes (finished T10)
- Paul, a second-year member making his 23rd career start, has never stood higher than T14 through 54 holes of a Korn Ferry Tour event; his highest such position was T14 at this year's Lake Charles Championship
- **John VanDerLaan** (T4 / -12) recorded the only bogey-free scorecard of the third round with a 4-under 68; there were six bogey-free rounds in the second round, and 17 in the first round
- Two-time Korn Ferry Tour winner **Robby Shelton** (T8 / -11), who won the 2019 Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation and 2019 Visit Knoxville Open, fell out of the top five after a 2-under 70 in the third round
- Vanderbilt University alum **Will Gordon** (T12 / -9) continues to lead the players in the field with local ties
- The only Monday qualifier who survived the 36-hole cut was **Cody Blick** (T19 / -7), who has conditional status from a T96 finish at Final Stage of the 2021 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament, can secure another start next week with a top-25; he made six starts last season, but is making his first start of 2022
- The 36-hole cut was made at 3-under Saturday morning, with 67 players advancing

- The Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation is the 11th 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

Cumulative Course Statistics

- Scoring Average (Total - Par 72): 71.381 [-0.619]
- Scoring Average (Front Nine): 36.103 [+0.103]
- Scoring Average (Back Nine): 35.278 [-0.722]
- Toughest Hole: No. 6, Par 4, 453 yards – 4.235 [+0.235]
- Easiest Hole: No. 2, Par 5, 539 yards – 4.588 [-0.412]