



First-Round Results

Fortinet Cup Championship

Deer Ridge Golf Club

Kitchener, Ontario

September 15, 2022

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Pos.	Player	Scores	Fortinet Cup Pos.	Fortinet Cup Projected Pos.
1	Trent Phillips (U.S.)	32-33—65 (5-under)	12	3
T2	Scott Stevens (U.S.)	34-32—66 (4-under)	4	1
T2	Joey Vrzich (U.S.)	32-34—66 (4-under)	47	21
T2	Thomas Walsh (U.S.)	32-34—66 (4-under)	8	7
T5	Joe Highsmith (U.S.)	35-32—67 (3-under)	10	9
T5	Harrison Ott (U.S.)	33-34—67 (3-under)	21	17
T5	Cameron Sisk (U.S.)	33-34—67 (3-under)	14	13
T5	Jacob Solomon (U.S.)	33-34—67 (3-under)	36	29
T5	Jorge Villar (Mexico)	33-34—67 (3-under)	27	22
T5	Brian Carlson (U.S.)	32-35—67 (3 under)	7	8
T11	Justin Doeden (U.S.)	35-33—68 (2-under)	41	37
T11	Ryan Gerard (U.S.)	34-34—68 (2-under)	5	6
T11	Austin Hitt (U.S.)	35-33—68 (2-under)	33	31
T11	Eric Lilleboe (U.S.)	34-34—68 (2-under)	26	25

Under-the-weather Phillips takes lead in Fortinet Cup Championship

KITCHENER, Ontario—Trent Phillips approached the start of the Fortinet Cup Championship without any expectations. Battling sickness, he hasn't felt well at all since arriving at PGA TOUR Canada's season finale. Outside of playing in the pro-am, he hasn't done that much this week to prepare for the tournament.

Phillips didn't check out the Deer Ridge Golf Club until Wednesday's pro-am and hit the driving range for the first time Thursday morning prior to his tee time.

“Sometimes less is more,” said Phillips, who is the first-round leader, at 5-under, a stroke ahead of a trio of players—Scott Stevens, Joey Vrzich and Thomas Walsh. “Everything felt fine today. I just kind of went out there and didn’t really have any expectations, and I played some good golf.”

His “good golf” came two days after the 22-year-old University of Georgia product had had a night where he slept for an hour followed by the next when he slept for 11, thanks to some over-the-counter medicine that knocked him out. Despite the health challenges, Phillips insisted he wasn’t fatigued over the first 18 holes.

“I’m a competitor, so not really. I was fine,” Phillips said. “I just went out there and played golf. I didn’t really think about it. I felt like I didn’t get as mad as I normally would about little things maybe because I didn’t feel as good. I like the way I reacted when I didn’t have my best stuff out there today. I might try to act like I’m sick more often. It might help out.”

Phillips, who netted six birdies in the round, said he’s ready to go as the tournament moves to the second round on Friday. He made four birdies in succession and was 5-under through 11 before cooling down over his final seven holes. His final birdie putt of the day, on No. 16 was the difference, giving him the one stroke advantage going into the second round.

“It was a straight putt. My brother (caddie, Trevor) and I were looking at it. It went straight in the middle. It’s always good the way it happens how you see it,” he said.

On his final hole of the day, a drive that just left the fairway left him with a decision: putting the ball back onto the fairway or go for the green fronted by a hazard. “I actually thought about punching it out, and my brother said, ‘Dude, you can hit this shot.’ I said, ‘You’re probably right, so I just went ahead and tried it, it worked out and I put it in a good spot.’”

“I’m ready to go. No matter how it ends up, I’ve enjoyed playing up here,” added Phillips.

A large group at 3-under, Brian Carlson, Joe Highsmith, Harrison Ott, Cameron Sisk, Jacob Solomon and Jorge Villar, are only two strokes behind Phillips.

“The goal is to hopefully win the tournament and be No.1 on the Fortinet Cup points list,” said Stevens, who began the week No. 4 on the standings. The overall points winner wins the Fortinet Cup, earns Player of the Year honors, receives membership to the 2023 Korn Ferry Tour and picks up a \$25,000 bonus, courtesy of Fortinet, along with a berth in the PGA TOUR’s RBC Canadian Open next season.

This week the tournament champ receives 600 Fortinet Cup points and \$40,500.

Did you know for the 14th consecutive round, Joe Highsmith shot a round in the 60s after his opening 4-under 67 Thursday at Deer Ridge Golf Club? The former Pepperdine standout’s last score in the 70s came in the second round of the Sotheby’s International Realty Canada Ontario Open on July 30. Of his 29 rounds this season, Highsmith, No. 10 on the Fortinet Cup rankings and tied for fifth through 18 holes, has three over-par rounds, with 24 of his 26 under-par scores in the 60s. Highsmith’s stroke average over his last 14 rounds is 66.714.

Key Information

How the Canadians fared

Of the nine Canadians in the tournament, only **Étienne Papineau** and **Joey Savoie** posted first-round scores under par. Here are where all nine stand through 18 holes:

Pos.	Player	Score
T15	Étienne Papineau	33-36—69 (1-under)
T15	Joey Savoie	35-34—69 (1-under)
T24	Wil Bateman	35-35—70 (even)
T24	Myles Creighton	36-34—70 (even)
T30	Chris Crisologo	36-35—71 (1-over)
T30	Brendan MacDougall	36-35—71 (1-over)
T30	Chris R. Wilson	35-36—71 (1-over)
T41	Sudarshan Yellamaraju	36-36—72 (2-over)
T46	Jared du Toit	36-37—73 (3-over)

Fortinet Cup Standings

(Through the GolfBC Championship)

Rank	Player	Points	Current Tournament Pos.	Projected Points Pos.
1	Jake Knapp (U.S.)	1,094	T30	2
T2	Wil Bateman (Canada)	1,054	T24	4
T2	Noah Goodwin (U.S.)	1,054	T46	5
4	Scott Stevens (U.S.)	972	T2	1
5	Ryan Gerard (U.S.)	845	T11	6
6	Danny Walker (U.S.)	743	T41	10
7	Brian Carlson (U.S.)	679	T5	8
8	Thomas Walsh (U.S.)	669	T2	7
9	Ian Holt (U.S.)	666	T15	11
10	Joe Highsmith (U.S.)	663	T5	9

First-round leader **Trent Phillips** noted how much he appreciates having his older brother, **Trevor**, on the bag, not only this week, but all season. Trent had six birdies Thursday. “It’s nice to have someone who knows my abilities, who knows my game to where I can bounce things off of him and help me out with my decision,” Trent Phillips said.

Jorge Villar moved to 5-under for the day after he birdied the par-4 14th hole. That was the last birdie of his round, but to hold together what eventually became a 3-under 67, Villar made a “good bogey” at No. 15 with a two-putt from one side of the green to the other. He then escaped with a bogey at No. 17 after his drive landed in a divot and faced more adventures on his closing hole, where he made par in unlikely fashion. Villar, No. 27 in the Fortinet Cup standings, watched as his third-shot chip appeared that it would coast well past the hole until the ball hit the pin and stopped, giving him a par tap-in. “I hit a really bad second shot. I was on the short side of the green. There was probably a little bit of good luck there at 18 and bad luck on 17,” he said.

This week, **Jorge Villar**’s caddie is a childhood friend from Mexico, Jose Luis Ramirez. “It was a great round. We had fun. We don’t talk about golf during the round. It’s better like that,” Villar said.

There's a lot of different benefits on the line this week, even for those players no longer in mathematical contention for the season-long Fortinet Cup title. **Joey Vrzich**, who is 47th overall, had five birdies and shot a 68 Thursday, leaving him tied for second. "Nothing to lose," Vrzich said. "Just go out there and see what game you're going to have for the next couple of weeks at (Korn Ferry Tour) Q-school. It's a good warm-up."

Of the five eagles recorded Thursday, four came at the par-5 third hole, with the other at the par-5 12th—and four of them were by Canadians. Those who made eagle at No. 3 were Canadians **Étienne Papineau**, **Chris Crisologo** and **Sudarshan Yellamaraju**, with American **Harrison Ott** recording the other. Canada's **Jared du Toit** posted the lone eagle at the 12th.

Ryan Gerard fought back nicely after opening the tournament with a double bogey-6. It only took him to the third hole to get it back to even-par, with birdies on Nos. 2 and 3. Gerard added a birdie at No. 8 and another at the 11th, with pars on his other 13 holes, to finish at 2-under 68, good for a tie for 11th.

Overall Fortinet Cup points leader **Jake Knapp** shot an opening 1-over 71, and he sits in a tie for 30th after the first day. **Wil Bateman** (even-par 70) and **Noah Goodwin** (3-over 73), tied for second in the standings, 40 points behind Knapp, are tied for 24th and 46th, respectively, through 18 holes.

The first and 18th holes, par-5s for the Deer Ridge members but par-4s this week, proved difficult for Canada's **Joey Savoie**. He made a double bogey to start his day and a bogey to finish. Over his other 16 holes, he was 4-under. Savoie is tied for 15th, at 1-under.

The first hole played as the most difficult of Deer Ridge's 18 holes in the opening round. The par-4's stroke average was 4.569, with only three birdies there against 15 bogeys, nine double bogeys and a triple bogey. The par-5 third hole was the easiest Thursday, at 4.362.

Quotable

"I like sometimes underpreparing. I know that sounds weird. It helps with expectations, and it's just more of who I am. I love golf, but I don't like being at the golf course every day of my life. I like to do other things and, yeah, it worked out." — **Trent Phillips on his illness that prohibited him from his normal preparation**

"I went out there with no expectations. I haven't done much this week to prepare. — **Trent Phillips**

"I hit it close enough. I was making some seven-, eight-footers." — **Trent Phillips** on his approach shots and putting

"I hit the driver a lot, trying to push it up there as far as I can. This is the last week, so I'm trying to make as many birdies as I can." — **Trent Phillips**

"It tests every aspect of your game. If you're not confident in one (shot), it shows. — **Thomas Walsh on Deer Ridge Golf Club**

"I didn't have my best stuff today, but I'm still close to the lead. So, hopefully I can iron a few things out on the range and play a little more consistent and a little less stress-free. It was pretty stressful out there today." — **Scott Stevens**

“I would say it’s probably one of the toughest courses we play. Those are pretty long par-3s that are really tough. It’s pretty demanding off the tee. You have to hit a lot of good shots.” — **Scott Stevens**

“Nothing wrong with that. I’ll take it, I’ll take it. I’m putting pretty well. I’m hitting the ball pretty solid, too, and hitting the driver great.” — **Jorge Villar on his 3-under 67**

“Keeping it in the fairway and keep an eye on the greens. It’s cliché to say, it’s every course. But this course, especially, you’ve got to keep it in front of you.” — **Joey Vrzich**

First-Round Weather: Cool in the morning giving way to sunshine and mild temperatures. High of 20 with wind S at 4-7 kph.