

2023 Astara Chile Classic
(6th of 26 events on 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Schedule)
[Tournament Media Site](#) | [Interview Transcripts](#)

Santiago, Chile
Prince of Wales Country Club

March 30 – April 2, 2023
Par / Yards: 36-36—72 / 6,904

Points: 500 (winner)
Purse: \$1,000,000 / \$180,000 (winner)

Final-Round Notes – Sunday, April 2, 2023

Weather: Mostly sunny and hazy with a high of 83. Wind variable at 3-12 mph.

Final Leaderboard

Ben Kohles * 68-66-66-67–267 (-21)
Dimi Papadatos 66-69-67-65–267 (-21)
Tim Widing 71-64-66-68–269 (-19)
Rico Hoey 70-65-64-70–269 (-19)
Brandon Hagy 68-68-68-66–270 (-18)
Brandon Harkins 70-65-68-67–270 (-18)

* - Won with birdie on second hole (No. 18) of sudden-death playoff

Charting the Champion (stats updated through tournament)

| Category | Ben Kohles |
|---|------------------------|
| Age | 33 (Febraury 24, 1990) |
| 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Points List | No. 1 |
| Starts – wins – top-10s on Korn Ferry Tour (2023) | 6-1-3 |
| Starts – wins – top-10s on Korn Ferry Tour (Career) | 187-3-22 |
| Starts – wins – top-10s at Astara Chile Classic | 2-1-1 |

Ben Kohles holds off newcomer Dimi Papadatos, earns first win since 2012 at Astara Chile Classic

SANTIAGO, Chile – Shortly after turning professional out of the University of Virginia in the summer of 2012, Ben Kohles won his first two starts on the Korn Ferry Tour. To this day, Kohles is the only player in Korn Ferry Tour history to win each of his first two starts. There were 10 years, 7 months, and 28 days between Kohles’ historic victories and Sunday’s final round at the Astara Chile Classic, where he defeated Dimi Papadatos, an Australian bidding to win his Korn Ferry Tour debut, with a birdie on the second hole of a sudden-death playoff.

Kohles entered the final round two strokes off the lead but flew up the leaderboard with birdies on four of his first five holes. Eight pars followed for Kohles, who birdied the par-5 14th and became the first player in the field at 21-under par.

Papadatos got off to a hot start as well, opening with back-to-back birdies and an eagle at the par-5 third. The 31-year-old Aussie later birdied the par-4 17th and, coupled with Kohles’ bogey on the same hole roughly 20 minutes later, took a one-stroke lead at 21-under par. With a par on the 72nd hole, Papadatos finalized a 7-under 65, tied for the low round of the day.

Kohles rebounded and birdied the final hole of regulation, the par-5 18th, forcing a playoff with Papadatos. The two played the 18th hole twice more in a sudden-death ploaoff, with both making birdie the first time around,

and Kohles making an up-and-down birdie from behind the green to win the next time around. Papadatos' birdie putt to force a third playoff hole grazed the edge of the cup but stayed above ground.

"It was just great to feel the nerves again, really be in the thick of things," Kohles said. "I was really nervous on every putt I hit on (No. 18) green. I just tried to breathe and tell myself I've done it a million times and just picture myself on the practice green with nobody here, and just hit a good putt. That's all you can do. Glad it went in."

Kohles emerged from Virginia as a rising star. In four seasons in Charlottesville, Kohles won seven times, tying a school record, and was the 2010 and 2011 Atlantic Coast Conference Player of the Year, joining David Duval (1992-93), Bryce Molder (1999-2001), Bill Haas (2003-04), and Ryan Blaum (2005-06) as the only two-time winners of the award (Brooks Koepka and Ollie Schniederjans later accomplished the feat as well).

Kohles also garnered All-America honors in 2011 and 2012, with the latter making him one of 10 players who earned an exemption for the 2012 Nationwide Children's Hospital Championship as either a collegiate All-American or member of the 2011 Walker Cup team. Other players who received the same exemption for the event included Jordan Spieth and Patrick Rodgers, both amateurs at the time.

At the Ohio State University Golf Club in Columbus, Ohio, Kohles held the 54-hole lead and defeated Luke Guthrie in a playoff to win his Korn Ferry Tour debut. Kohles accepted full membership and entered the Cox Classic the following week in Omaha, Nebraska. Two strokes off the 54-hole lead, Kohles closed with a 9-under 62 and won by three strokes.

"I got a lot more scar tissue than I did then," Kohles said. "There was just freewheeling the first two events. I didn't really have any expectations. I just went out and played and, sure enough, ended up being there at the end."

Largest Gap Between Wins in Korn Ferry Tour History

| Winner | Time Between Wins | Tournaments |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| Tag Ridings | 18 years, 10 months, 16 days | 2002 Permian Basin Open/2021 The Ascendant presented by Blue |
| Eric Axley | 12 years, 11 months, 14 days | 2005 UNC Health Championship presented by STITCH/2018 North Mississippi Classic |
| Omar Uresti | 12 years, 11 months, 8 days | 1994 Shreveport Open/2007 Livermore Valley Wine Country Championship |
| Skip Kendall | 12 years, 8 months, 27 days | 1994 UNC Health Championship presented by STITCH/2007 Chitimacha Louisiana Open |
| James Driscoll | 11 years, 9 months, 7 days | 2004 Virginia Beach Open/2016 Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation |
| Frank Langham | 10 years, 8 months, 17 days | 1993 Permian Basin Open/2004 Rheem Classic |
| <i>Ben Kohles</i> | <i>10 years, 7 months, 28 days</i> | <i>2012 Cox Classic/2023 Astara Chile Classic</i> |
| Paul Haley II | 10 years, 4 months, 6 days | 2012 Astara Chile Classic/2022 Memorial Health Championship presented by LRS |
| Scott Gump | 10 years, 3 months, 27 days | 1994 BMW Charity Pro-Am presented by TD SYNEX/2004 Albertsons Boise Open presented by Chevron |
| Shane Bertsch | 10 years, 1 month, 13 days | 2005 BMW Charity Pro-Am presented by TD SYNEX/2015 Rust-Oleum Championship |

Between his second and third victories, Kohles accomplished plenty; he just had not returned to the winner's circle.

Kohles earned a PGA TOUR card following the 2012 season. Although he fell back to the Korn Ferry Tour after the 2013 season and struggled mightily for the next three seasons, only making 16 cuts in 50 starts, Kohles returned to form and recorded three runner-up finishes across the 2019 and 2020-21 seasons. Two of them came in the 2020-21 season, propelling Kohles to No. 23 on the Korn Ferry Tour Points List and back to the PGA TOUR.

"It's pretty sweet to see all the hard work pay off," said Kohles, who finished 161st on the 2021-22 FedExCup Playoffs and Eligibility Points List. "I know I can play out on the PGA TOUR and compete, and this proves to myself that I definitely can do it, especially coming down the stretch.

"It's great to play well under the pressure."

Kohles was not the only winner Sunday in Chile. Alejandro Tosti, a 26-year-old Argentinian, recorded a top-10 and accrued the highest point by a Latin American player across the three Korn Ferry Tour events contested in Latin America this season, earning him an exemption for the PGA TOUR's Mexico Open at Vidanta. Tosti finished T7 Sunday, enough for a 1.067-point cushion over fellow Argentinian Nelson Ledesma.

Final-Round Notes

- **Ben Kohles** (1st/-21) and **Dimi Papadatos** (2nd/-21) both finished the week with four over-par holes (four bogeys for Kohles, three bogeys and one double bogey for Papadatos), tied for the lowest in the field with **Kaito Onishi** (T7/-17 – three bogeys, one double bogey) and **Paul Peterson** (T10/-16 – four bogeys)
- Papadatos posts a runner-up finish in his first career Korn Ferry Tour start; he earned conditional membership with a T59 finish at Final Stage of the 2022 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament
- Prior to earning Korn Ferry Tour membership, Papadatos was a four-time winner on PGA Tour of Australasia (one in 2014, two in 2017, one in 2022) and won on the Challenge Tour in 2018
- Rookie **Tim Widing** (T3/-19) birdies three of the final five holes (Nos. 14, 17, 18) and rises to a career-high finish in his sixth Korn Ferry Tour start, as well as his second consecutive top-10 (T8 at last week's Club Car Championship at The Landings Golf & Athletic Club)
- Widing led the field with 29 total birdies (28 birdies, one eagle)
- **Rico Hoey** (T3/-19), now in his fourth season as a Korn Ferry Tour member, posts a career-high finish and his third top-10 in the last four events (T8/The Panama Championship; T7/Astara Golf Championship presented by Mastercard)
- Hoey's previous career-high finish in 77 starts on Tour was a T4 at the 2018 Ellie Mae Classic, and prior to the 2023 season he had four top-10s in 72 starts on Tour (two T9s and one T4 in 2018, along with one T9 in 2020)
- **Brandon Hagy** (T5/-18), who has played primarily on the PGA TOUR since the start of the 2018-9 season, posts his first top-10 in PGA TOUR-sanctioned play since a solo-fifth at the 2021 Barracuda Championship, and his first top-10 on the Korn Ferry Tour since back-to-back top-10s at the 2019 Nationwide Children's Hospital Championship (T5) and 2019 Albertsons Boise Open presented by Chevron (T2)
- **Brandon Harkins** (T5/-18) posts his second top-five finish of the season; his only previous seasons on Tour with two top-five finishes were 2017 and 2020-21 (two apiece)
- 54-hole co-leaders **Mason Andersen** (T7-17) and **Pontus Nyholm** (T18/-14) card final rounds of 1-over 73 and 4-over 76, respectively
- Andersen, a rookie who turned professional out of Arizona State University last summer, records his first top-10 in his sixth career start on the Korn Ferry Tour
- Rookie **Kaito Onishi** (T7/-17) ties Papadatos and **Brad Hopfinger** (T25/-13) for the low round of the day with a 7-under 65 and logs his first top-10 (and first made cut) in his fifth start of the 2023 season

- Conditional members who follow their first made cut of the season with an official finish and points toward the next reshuffle (occurs following conclusion of LECOM Suncoast Classic) are: **Wade Binfield** (T25/-13), **José Toledo** (T36/-12), **Danny Walker** (T48/-10), **Spencer Levin** (T50/-9), **Jeffrey Kang** (T61/-6), **Manavh Shah** (T64/-5), **Tripp Kinney** (T67/-1)
- Binfield, who was the 152nd player on the priority ranking in the 156-player field this week, Papadatos, **Jackson Suber** (T15/-15), **Michael Feagles** (T25/-13), **Brad Hopfinger** (T25/-13), **Dalton Ward** (T25/-13), and open qualifier Chase Johnson (T25/-13) all ensured themselves a spot in the next event, the Veritex Bank Championship, with their top-25 finishes this week
- Hopfinger open qualified into last week's Club Car Championship at The Landings Golf & Athletic Club and top-25'd into the Astara Chile Classic