



**2023 Nationwide Children’s Hospital Championship**  
*(25th of 26 events on 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Schedule)*

[Tournament Media Site](#) | [Interview Transcripts](#)

**Columbus, Ohio**  
**Ohio State University Golf Club**  
**(Scarlet Course)**

**September 21-24, 2023**  
**Par / Yards: 71 / 7,444**

**Points: 600 (winner)**  
**Purse: \$1,500,000 / \$270,000 (winner)**

**Final-Round Notes – Sunday, September 24, 2023**

**[Final Leaderboard](#)**

Norman Xiong	69-67-71-67—274 (-10)
Curtis Luck	72-70-70-66—278 (-6)
Joe Highsmith	72-67-70-69—278 (-6)
Chris Petefish	67-70-71-70—278 (-6)
Jake Knapp	67-73-71-68—279 (-5)

**Charting the Champion (stats updated through tournament)**

Category	Norman Xiong
Age	24 (November 9, 1998)
2023 Korn Ferry Tour Points List	No. 12
Korn Ferry Tour Starts – Wins – Top-10s (2023)	20-1-2
Korn Ferry Tour Starts – Wins – Top-10s (Career)	51-2-3

**Norman Xiong earns first PGA TOUR card with runaway victory at Nationwide Children’s Hospital Championship**

**COLUMBUS, Ohio** – The Book of Norman Xiong has a new chapter.

Much like the preceding entry, this new chapter concludes with a dominant victory. Norman Xiong’s latest win, though, comes with a special bonus: a PGA TOUR card.

Playing in the final pairing of Sunday’s final round, the 24-year-old Xiong made five birdies and one bogey en route to a 4-under 67 at the Ohio State University Golf Club’s Scarlet Course. Only two other players matched Xiong’s closing 67 Sunday (past champion Curtis Luck, who rallied to a three-way T2 via a 5-under 66, and Kaito Onishi, whose own 67 culminated in a T24 and a No. 100 finish on the 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Points List).

Xiong and final-round playing partner Chandler Phillips shared the 54-hole lead at 6-under par, but Xiong separated early and ran away with a four-stroke victory at the 2023 Nationwide Children’s Hospital Championship, tying the season’s largest margin of victory.

The win catapulted Xiong from No. 59 to No. 12 on the 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Points List, making him the 16th player officially declared #TOURBound and assured of PGA TOUR membership for 2024.

“I’m just happy to play golf again,” Xiong said. “I think once I turned pro it became not just hitting it and seeing it and visualizing it. I’m just so happy to feel like myself again and be out there having fun on the course, staying in the present, and loving it again.”

Xiong's methodical final round produced two notable highlights: a near-ace at the par-3 eighth for his third birdie of the day, and a bomb of a birdie putt at the par-4 16th which stretched his lead to five strokes. Prior to a closing bogey at the par-4 18th, Xiong was the only player in the field without a bogey in the final round.

Roughly 15 months ago, Xiong Monday qualified into the Korn Ferry Tour's annual event in Wichita, Kansas without status on any PGA TOUR-sanctioned circuit. Xiong was [dominant in victory](#) at the 2022 Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Kansas Wichita Open Benefitting KU Wichita Pediatrics, winning by five strokes and posting the second-lowest 72-hole total in Korn Ferry Tour history (26-under 254).

"I guess this concludes Chapter 1," Xiong said after the completely-out-of-nowhere win in Wichita, [alluding to July 2021 story on Golf.com](#). Xiong, who turned pro in summer 2018 as a 19-year-old collegiate superstar, felt as though he "could write a book" about the earliest years of his journey through professional golf and everything which changed along the way.

Originally from Tamuning, Guam, Xiong moved to San Diego, California with his mother, Jing, and uncle, James Xiong, at age 6.

Xiong was a dedicated participant at First Tee of San Diego and blossomed into a decorated junior golfer, garnering AJGA All-America Second Team honors in 2014 and 2015, followed by a first-team laurel in 2016.

Xiong graduated high school a semester early and made his way to Oregon, joining the team midway through the 2016-17 season and debuting in January 2017. Despite only playing the second half of the collegiate season, Xiong was named the 2016-17 NCAA Division I National Freshman of the Year.

Xiong and teammate Wyndham Clark, now a two-time PGA TOUR winner and the reigning U.S. Open champion, helped Oregon win the 2017 Pac-12 Championship, the program's first outright conference title since 1959. Later that summer, Xiong defeated Doc Redman in the title match of the 2017 Western Amateur Championship, joining a list of past champions headlined by Tiger Woods. Xiong also played on the 2017 Walker Cup and Arnold Palmer Cup teams, competing alongside the likes of Sam Burns, Collin Morikawa, Scottie Scheffler, and Will Zalatoris.

The following season, Xiong won six times individually en route to two of the three national player of the year honors, the 2018 Jack Nicklaus and Fred Haskins Awards.

After the 2018 NCAA Championship, Xiong turned professional and appeared as though he would quickly play his way onto the PGA TOUR.

Xiong co-led the 2018 Sanderson Farms Championship through 36 holes in his sixth PGA TOUR start as a professional, then earned Korn Ferry Tour membership for the 2019 season with a runner-up finish at Final Stage of the 2018 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament.

Everything spiraled downward shortly thereafter.

As a Korn Ferry Tour rookie in 2019, Xiong racked up 15 missed cuts and a withdrawal in 21 starts, leaving him well outside the top 100 on the Korn Ferry Tour Points List and sending him back to the Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament. Xiong failed to regain membership, as he finished T69 among the 72 players who finished all four rounds at his Second Stage site.

Xiong referred to that stretch of golf in 2019 as the low point of his young career.

Xiong briefly held PGA TOUR Canada status, recording a top-10 in three starts on the circuit in 2021, but he would not return to the spotlight until his remarkable victory in June 2022.

“I feel so much different than I did when I was out here last year, a few years ago,” Xiong said after his win in Wichita.

Despite playing roughly a third of the 2022 season, Xiong finished No. 48 on the Korn Ferry Tour Points List. A T14 at the 2022 Nationwide Children’s Hospital Championship put him in contention for a PGA TOUR card at the season-ending Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by United Leasing and Finance.

Although Xiong missed the cut and left Evansville, Indiana empty-handed, it was not the end of a chapter.

Rather than dwell on what could have been, Xiong focused on the horizon. And he earmarked the 2023 Nationwide Children’s Hospital Championship as something to look forward to.

“This is one of my favorite courses,” Xiong said. “It was kind of my goal in the back of my mind to give me that one year to be where I’m at now. I was able to finally go back to just being myself... unlearning and getting rid of a lot of stuff that I didn’t need, or that I thought I needed.

“It just feels good to be out on the course walking as myself again.”

### Final-Round Notes

- Four players were declared #TOURBound Sunday, signaling they are assured of finishing in the top 30 on the Korn Ferry Tour Points List and earning PGA TOUR membership for the 2024 season: **Xiong, Jake Knapp, Nicholas Lindheim, Chandler Phillips**
  - In eight starts this season, **Nicholas Lindheim** (T37/+3) tallied five top-10s, highlighted by his second career Korn Ferry Tour win at The Ascendant presented by Blue
  - **Chandler Phillips** (T7/-3), winner of the season-opening The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic, held a share of the 54-hole lead but settled for fourth top-10 of the season after a final-round 3-over 74
  - **Jake Knapp** (5th/-5) logged his ninth top-10 finish of the season, tied for the most by any player this year, and earned his first PGA TOUR card
- **Curtis Luck** (T2/-6) climbed the leaderboard Sunday with a 5-under 66, the low round of the day, featuring seven birdies – including three in a row at Nos. 15-17 – against two bogeys; he rose from No. 61 to No. 47 on the 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Points List
- **Chris Petefish** (T2/-6) recorded his second runner-up of 2023/Utah Championship presented by Zions Bank and rose from No. 44 to No. 55 on the Korn Ferry Tour Points List
- With a career-high T2 finish, rookie **Joe Highsmith** (T2/-6) climbed 21 spots on the Points List (48th to 27th) as he seeks his first PGA TOUR card
- **Joey Garber** (T7/-3) carded a final-round 3-under 68, including back-to-back birdies on his final two holes, and moved inside the top 75 on the Points List, earning fully exempt status on the Korn Ferry Tour in 2024 and access to the season-ending Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by United Leasing & Finance; he entered the week at No. 83 on the Points List and rose to No. 68 following this week’s top-10
- In his first season on Tour after finishing No. 8 in the PGA TOUR University Class of 2023, **Patrick Welch** (T24/+1) entered this week No. 79 on the Points List and moved up five spots to 74th, securing fully exempt Korn Ferry Tour membership for 2024 and access to the season-ending Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by United Leasing & Finance
- The Ohio State University Golf Club’s Scarlet Course ranked second toughest among the 25 events played on Tour this season with players averaging 1.195 strokes over par (72.195)
  - The toughest course relative to par thus far in 2023 is the Panama Golf Club, host of The Panama Championship, where players averaged 1.766 strokes over par (71.766)