

## Pre-Tournament Notes – The Panamá Championship

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**Dates:** February 2-5, 2022

**Where:** Panamá City, Panamá

**Course:** Panamá Golf Club (Par 70 / 7,534 yards)

**Course Designer:** Jay Riviere

**Field:** 144 players

**Defending Champion:** Carson Young

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

**Format:** 72-hole stroke play

### Quick Links

- [Tournament Media Site](#)
- [Five Things to Know: 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Season](#)
- [Sponsor Exemption Ben Silverman Earns Second Korn Ferry Tour Win](#)
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### Things to Know

- The Panamá Championship, hosted by Panamá Golf Club and being played for the 19th time, is the third tournament of the 26-event 2023 Korn Ferry Tour schedule
- Six of the top eight finishers from the 2022 The Panamá Championship earned PGA TOUR cards at season's end – Carson Young (Winner), Brandon Matthews (T2), Carl Yuan (T2), Erik Barnes (T5), Zecheng Dou (T5), Ben Taylor (T5)
- Jimmy Walker, the 2016 PGA Championship winner and a six-time PGA TOUR winner, won the inaugural playing of The Panamá Championship in 2004
- The top five finishers from the PGA TOUR Latinoamérica 2021-22 Totalplay Cup are all exempt into the field for this week's event, as well as next week's Astara Golf Championship presented by Mastercard
  - No. 1 **Mitchell Meissner** (United States) [also fully exempt for 2023 Korn Ferry Tour season]
  - No. 2 **Cristobal Del Solar** (Chile)
  - No. 3 **Jorge Fernández Valdés** (Argentina)
  - No. 4 **Kevin Velo** (United States)
  - No. 5 **Alejandro Tosti** (Argentina)
- This week's field includes 14 players from five different Latin American countries or territories:
  - Argentina (7) – **Martin Contini, Julián Etulain, Jorge Fernández Valdés, Abel Gallegos, Nelson Ledesma, Alejandro Tosti, Alan Wagner**
  - Mexico (3) – **Roberto Díaz, Emilio González, José de Jesús Rodríguez**
  - Panama (2) – Jean Paul Ducret (amateur), Samuel Durán (amateur)
  - Chile (1) – **Cristobal Del Solar**
  - Puerto Rico (1) – **Rafael Campos**
- Three members of the PGA TOUR University presented by Velocity Global Class of 2022 – all of whom are also Korn Ferry Tour members for 2023 – are playing this week via sponsor exemptions: **Parker Coody** (No. 13), **Cole Hammer** (No. 5), **Jackson Suber** (No. 9)
- A number of changes to the Korn Ferry Tour [announced this past June](#) will be implemented for the first time this season, with the most notable changes being:
  - **Increase from 25 to 30 PGA TOUR cards** annually awarded via the Korn Ferry Tour Points List
  - Reimagining of the Korn Ferry Tour Finals
    - *Previous Finals System:* Three-event competition for 25 PGA TOUR cards between the top 75 from the Korn Ferry Tour Points List and Nos. 126-200 on the FedExCup standings
    - **2023 and Beyond Finals System:** Final four events of the season where members will compete for increased purses and points (600 points for winning one of the four Finals)

events, compared to 500 for winning one of the 22 preceding events) to determine the season-long points race, in addition to a progressive reduction in field sizes

- Albertsons Boise Open presented by Chevron (August 24-27) – 156 players
- Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation (September 14-17) – 144 players
- Nationwide Children's Hospital Championship (September 21-24) – 120 players
- Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by United Leasing & Finance (October 5-8) – 75 players [no cut]
- **One season-long Korn Ferry Tour Points List** as opposed to separate points lists for the regular season and Korn Ferry Tour Finals
- **Purses increasing** to \$1.5 million for the four Korn Ferry Tour Finals events and \$1 million for the 22 preceding events, with the \$28 million season purse representing the highest single-season total in Korn Ferry Tour history

#### Field Notes (as of 1/31/23)

- Field includes 41 past Korn Ferry Tour winners with 52 total wins, including 2023 winner **Chandler Phillips**, as well as seven winners from the 2022 season: **Akshay Bhatia**, **Pierceson Coody**, **Brandon Harkins**, **David Kocher**, **Andrew Kozen**, **T.J. Vogel** and **Norman Xiong**
- Field includes three past PGA TOUR winners with nine total victories, led by **Mark Wilson** with five
- Field includes four players currently inside the top 200 of the Official World Golf Ranking: **Yuto Katsuragawa** (No. 123), **Kaito Onishi** (No. 159), **Chan Kim** (No. 163) and **Sean Crocker** (No. 191)

#### 2022 The Panamá Championship Recap (February 3-6)

Pos.	Player	R1	R2	R3	R4	Total
1	Carson Young	68	65	71	68	272 (-8)
T2	Brandon Matthews	68	67	69	69	273 (-7)
	Jimmy Stanger	64	69	70	70	273 (-7)
	Carl Yuan	65	69	71	68	273 (-7)

- Carson Young earned his first Korn Ferry Tour victory in his 10th career start on Tour and third as a member; he played bogey-free golf and made three birdies across his final 17 holes for a one-stroke win
- Although 15 players recorded more total birdies than Young (14), his six bogeys were tied for the fewest number of bogeys or worse recorded by anyone in the field
- Young's previous career-high finish in a Korn Ferry Tour event was T50 at the 2019 Visit Knoxville Open
- Young earned his PGA TOUR card via the Korn Ferry Tour Finals at season's end
- Brandon Matthews posted a career-high finish and was the only player in the field who recorded sub-par rounds both Saturday and Sunday; he won the following week in Colombia and earned a PGA TOUR card at season's end
- Carl Yuan recorded the second of his five top-three finishes, which included a win at the Chitimacha Louisiana Open in March, from last season; he eventually finished No. 2 in the season-long points race and earned a PGA TOUR card
- **Jimmy Stanger** matched his career-high finish, equaling a T2 from the 2020 NV5 Invitational presented by Old National Bank
- **Zack Fischer** (T5) logged the fifth top-five finish of his Korn Ferry Tour career and first since a solo third at the 2016 WinCo Foods Portland Open; he later added three finishes of T7 or higher and ended the season at No. 36 on the Korn Ferry Tour Points List for fully exempt status in 2023

#### Past Champions

Year	Player	R1	R2	R3	R4	Total	Margin
2022	Carson Young	68	65	71	68	272 (-8)	1
2020	Davis Riley	67	70	64	69	270 (-10)	1
2019	Michael Gligic	70	70	67	65	272 (-8)	1
2018	Scott Langley	71	68	69	65	273 (-7)	2

2017	Andrew Putnam*	64	68	67	68	267 (-13)	Playoff
2016	Ryan Armour	70	69	65	64	268 (-12)	3
2015	Mathew Goggin	67	65	70	67	269 (-11)	4
2014	Carlos Ortiz	70	68	66	64	268 (-12)	4
2013	Kevin Foley	66	69	70	67	272 (-8)	1
2012	Edward Loar	66	68	68	74	276 (-4)	1
2011	Matthew Goggin	68	66	67	68	269 (-11)	2
2010	Fran Quinn	66	66	62	71	265 (-15)	2
2009	Vance Veazey*	67	69	68	69	273 (-7)	Playoff
2008	Scott Dunlap	65	68	73	71	277 (-3)	1
2007	Miguel Angel Carballo	69	67	73	65	274 (-6)	2
2006	Tripp Isenhour	63	67	70	69	269 (-11)	3
2005	Vance Veazey	65	71	66	70	272 (-8)	1
2004	Jimmy Walker	65	69	70	69	273 (-7)	5

\*Playoff Victory

#### Course Information – Panamá Golf Club

- Years Hosted: 2004-Present
- Panamá Golf Club is traditionally one of the most difficult courses on the Korn Ferry Tour, having finished with one of the five highest scoring averages relative to par in 15 of its 18 previous seasons on Tour
  - The course ranked as the No. 1 toughest course on Tour four times (2004, 2008, 2009, 2019) and ranked No. 2 last season
- Scoring Average (2022): 70.832 / +0.832
- Toughest Hole (2022): No. 7, Par 4, 454 yards – 4.322 / +0.322
- Easiest Hole (2022): No. 12, Par 5, 613 yards – 4.822 / -0.178

#### Tournament Scoring Records

- Low 18-Hole Score: 61, Ryan Armour (2011, Round 2)
- Low 36-Hole Score: 130, Tripp Isenhour (2006) and **Curtis Thompson** (2016)
- Low 54-Hole Score: 194, Fran Quinn (2010)
- Low 72-Hole Score: 265, Fran Quinn (2010)
- Largest Margin of Victory: 5, Jimmy Walker (2004)
- Playoffs: 2, last in 2017 (Andrew Putnam defeated **Chris Baker**)

#### Last Week on Tour – The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club (January 22-25)

Pos.	Player	R1	R2	R3	R4	Total
1	Ben Silverman *	71	65	67	70	273 (-15)
2	Cody Blick	69	66	72	66	273 (-15)
T3	Shad Tuten	69	70	71	66	276 (-12)
	Matt McCarty	73	68	68	67	276 (-12)
	Fabian Gomez	76	66	66	68	276 (-12)
	Tom Whitney	72	65	70	69	276 (-12)

\* won with par on first hole (No. 18) of sudden-death playoff

- **Cody Blick** entered 2023 with a career-high finish of T27 (2022 Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation) in 26 Korn Ferry Tour starts; he has runner-up finishes in the first two events this season
  - Blick, a conditional member last season, earned guaranteed starts for the first eight events in 2023 with a T17 at Final Stage of the 2022 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament
- **Shad Tuten** entered the 2023 season with three top-five finishes across 64 career starts on the Korn Ferry Tour; he has two in as many events this season (T4 at The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic at Sandals Emerald Bay, T3 at The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club)
- Second-year member **Matt McCarty** recorded a career-high finish in his 27th Korn Ferry Tour start; his best previous finish was T5 at the 2022 Chitimacha Louisiana Open

- **Tom Whitney** matched his career-high finish (solo third, 2021 Chitimacha Louisiana Open) and recorded his first top-10 since last June (T10 at 2022 Live and Work in Maine Open)
- Whitney led the field with 24 total birdies for the tournament
- Two-time PGA TOUR winner and past Korn Ferry Tour winner **Fabián Gómez** recorded his first top-10 in PGA TOUR-sanctioned play since a T3 at last June's Live and Work in Maine Open

#### Players to Watch in 2023

1. [Chris Gotterup](#) – 2022 Haskins and Jack Nicklaus Award winner with 12 PGA TOUR starts (nine made cuts) since March 2022; he finished No. 7 in the 2022 PGA TOUR University Velocity Global Ranking, but earned enough non-member FedExCup points to compete in the 2022 Korn Ferry Tour Finals and finished T3 at Final Stage of Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament for guaranteed starts in the first 12 events of 2023
2. [Pierceson Coody](#) – Joined the Korn Ferry Tour after a No. 1 finish in the 2022 PGA TOUR University Velocity Global Ranking, won his third start, and finished No. 32 on the points list despite only playing eight events prior to the Korn Ferry Tour Finals
3. [Akshay Bhatia](#) – Won the season-opening event but went without a top-10 the rest of the season and finished No. 30 on last year's points list; he made two PGA TOUR starts in the fall, making both cuts and finishing T17 at the Butterfield Bermuda Championship
4. [Norman Xiong](#) – Captured his first Korn Ferry Tour win last year despite not having membership, as he open qualified into the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Kansas Wichita Open Benefiting KU Wichita Pediatrics and posted the second-lowest 72-hole score in Tour history (26-under 254) for a five-shot win
5. [Mitchell Meissner](#) – No. 1 finisher in the 2021-22 PGA TOUR Latinoamérica Totalplay Cup, awarding him fully exempt status for the 2023 Korn Ferry Tour season; he recorded three runner-ups and a pair of T3s in 12 starts last season on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica
6. [Wil Bateman](#) – No. 1 finisher in the 2022 PGA TOUR Canada Fortinet Cup off the strength of two victories, earning fully exempt status for the 2023 Korn Ferry Tour season
7. [Frankie Capan III](#) – Turned professional out of Florida Gulf Coast University last summer and advanced through every stage of the 2022 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament, including pre-qualifying, and earned 12 guaranteed starts with a top-10 finish at Final Stage
8. [Willie Mack III](#) – Overcame a number of unfortunate events while playing his way through the mini-tours and APGA Tour, finally breaking through at Final Stage of the 2022 Korn Ferry Tour Qualifying Tournament (finished T12) to earn guaranteed starts in the first eight events of 2023
9. [Kevin Dougherty](#) – Finished in the top 75 on the Korn Ferry Tour Points List for a fourth consecutive season in 2022 with four top-10s, retaining fully exempt status for 2023
10. [Jeremy Paul](#) – Earned fully exempt status for the first time with a No. 37 finish on last season's Korn Ferry Tour Points List; his twin brother, Yannik, won on the DP World Tour this past October