



FORTINET®
CUP



CRMC Championship presented by Gertens

Cragun's Dutch Legacy Championship Course | Brainerd, Minnesota | August 31-September 3, 2023

Contact: Sara Wright, PGA TOUR Canada Communications, 719-310-2606, sarawright@pgatourhq.com

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Players put it all on the line at the CRMC Championship presented by Gertens

BRAINERD, Minnesota – When players begin competition in this week's CRMC Championship presented by Gertens, they will be entering the final full-field event in the PGA TOUR Canada season. Time and opportunities are running out for them to push their way into the top five of the Fortinet Cup standings that guarantees status on the 2024 Korn Ferry Tour.

The sense of urgency will be felt throughout the field this week when PGA TOUR Canada plays its only event in the United States at Cragun's Dutch Legacy Championship Course. Only this week's CRMC Championship and next week's Fortinet Cup Championship, limited to the top 60 players on the points list, remain on the schedule.

"There's only two tournaments left and everybody's gunning for that top five because that can secure what goes on for next year," said Hayden Springer, who won last week's CentrePort Canada Rail Park Manitoba Open and moved into seventh place. "That's the goal, to finish out these last two tournaments strong."

Sam Choi moved into first place in the Fortinet Cup race last week when he placed third in Manitoba. Davis Lamb, a two-time winner, dropped into second place after missing the cut. Choi holds a 93-point advantage over Lamb.

Canadian Etienne Papineau, runner-up last week moved up two spots into third place. Stuart Macdonald, who skipped last week because his wife was delivering their first child, and John Pak, who missed the cut last week, are No. 4 and No. 5.

"Knowing that I'm a good amount of points ahead of third, fourth and fifth, that kind of frees me up," Choi said. "But I'm still going to attack the ball."

A victory, which is worth 500 points this week, would propel any player into contention for the top five. That's what happened last week for Springer, who moved up 44 points in the standings with his victory in Manitoba. A win by anyone currently in the top 35 would likely move them into the top five.

That would be the case for friends and Wisconsin natives George Kneiser, who is No. 16 on the points list, and Thomas Longbella, who is No. 22. Both players missed the cut in the event last year, but were on the grounds Monday to check out the course. They agreed that, while the stakes are high, they must avoid thinking too far ahead and focus on simply playing good golf.

Kneiser said, "It's the same pressure as the other events. It just happens to be the last one. Good golf is good golf."

Longbella agreed adding, "You try to not put that extra pressure on yourself. You play good golf. Don't worry about anything else."

Both men have played well this season. Kneiser, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was runner-up at the season-opening Royal Beach Victoria Open. Longbella, of Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, is riding a streak of three consecutive top-20 finishes. Longbella tied for 11th at last week's Manitoba Open.

This year's tournament will be conducted on the Dutch 18 course, redesigned by Tom Lehman, a Minnesota native and winner of the 1996 Open Championship. One of the nines is completely new to the event. Players will find the par-3s and par-5s play a bit longer and Lehman estimates the course could play as many as two strokes tougher.

"The course is a way better golf course than it used to be," Lehman said. "These guys are so good. Maybe the scores will be a little more honest, but overall they'll probably shoot some really low scores."

The final three holes – two reachable par-5s sandwiched around a short par-3 – could lead to a shootout on the final day – and even more late movement on the points list.

"On one hand you would like to have a more difficult finish, but on the other hand it makes for a lot of excitement," Lehman said. "If you're coming down to the wire with a whole bunch of guys with a chance, it's going to be really fun to see who can create the most fireworks."

At this event last year, Jake Knapp was one of those players who used the final three holes to his advantage. The eventual 2022 CRMC Championship winner, Knapp was a combined 13-under on Nos. 16, 17 and 18 through his four rounds and it's those holes that played a significant role in securing his 26-under victory at Cragun's Legacy Courses. Knapp is playing the Korn Ferry Tour this season and ranks 13th on the points list, with eight top-10 finishes.

Key Information

Fortinet Cup Standings

(Through CentrePort Canada Rail Park Manitoba Open)

Pos.	Player	Points
1	Sam Choi (United States)	1,210
2	Davis Lamb (United States)	1,117
3	Étienne Papineau (Canada)	944

4	Stuart Macdonald (Canada)	707
5	John Pak (United States)	690
6	Devon Bling (United States)	639
7	Hayden Springer (United States)	630
8	Chris Korte (United States)	593
9	Davis Shore (United States)	567
10	David Kim (United States)	443

This is the final week that players can move their way into the top 60 on the points list and qualify for next week's Fortinet Cup Championship. Canadian **Chris R. Wilson** is currently at No. 60 with 122.65 points, just ahead of **Wilson Andress** with 122.5 points.

David Bradshaw won the Monday qualifier. He shot 64 at the Preserve Golf Course at Grand View Lodge to lead the eight who played their way into the field. Other qualifiers were **Tyler Leach, Cristian DiMarco, J.D. Hughes, Clayton Tribus, Kade Johnson, Tommi Avant** and **Samuel Anderson**. Johnson, Avant and Anderson survived a seven-for-three playoff after they tied at 5-under. This is the fourth time that DiMarco has Monday qualified this season.

An NHL player is in the field for the second-straight week. **Matt Boldy**, a left wing for the Minnesota Wild, is playing on a sponsor exemption. Boldy has a plus-1.5 handicap and plays at Olympic Hills Golf Club in Eden Prairie. "It'll be a good time. I'm excited," Boldy said. "You want to win no matter what you do, but it's definitely an unplug for me. It's less stakes. I'm out there to have fun and have a good time."

Caleb VanArragon earned a sponsor exemption this week after winning the 106th Minnesota State Open. VanArragon won three times during his college career at Valparaiso University. He won the Minnesota Open by nine shots and is a two-time Minnesota Golf Association player of the year.

Thomas Lehman, son of former World No. 1 and 1996 Open Championship winner **Tom Lehman**, is in the field on a sponsor exemption for the second time. He made the cut last year and finished 65th. The younger Lehman didn't start taking golf seriously until he was finished with high school, but was able to walk-on at Texas Christian University and finish his college career at Cal Poly.

Tournament Rundown

Dates: August 31-September 3, 2023

Tournament Name: CRMC Championship presented by Gertens, the ninth of 10 official Fortinet Cup events

Social Media: Twitter/Instagram/Facebook: @PGATOURCanada and @CRMCchamp

Hashtags: #FortinetCup

Host Course: Cragun's Dutch Legacy Championship Course

Par/Yardage: 70 (35-35), 7,001

Field: 156 players from 10 countries and territories

Countries: Argentina (3), Australia (3), Canada (30), China (2), Costa Rica (1), England (1), France (1), Japan (2), Switzerland (1), United States (112)

Fortinet Cup Points: Winner earns 500

Purse: \$225,000, with the winner earning \$40,500

Cut: Top-60 professionals, and ties, after 36 holes plus any amateurs inside the top-60

Benefiting Charity: The CRMC Championship presented by Gertens will benefit the CRMC Foundation. The CRMC Foundation supports three key initiatives, the Courage Cabinet which offers financial assistance to cancer patients; Because of Brandon that provides support to diabetes patients; and Hospice, which supports end-of-life care.

PGA TOUR Americas: Following the completion of the 2023 PGA TOUR Canada season, the PGA TOUR Latinoamérica and PGA TOUR Canada will merge into a singular Tour to form PGA TOUR Americas, which will begin play in February 2024. PGA TOUR Americas will consist of 16 events contested across Latin America, Canada and the United States, from February through September. The top-10 finishers on the season-long points list will earn Korn Ferry Tour membership for the following season.

Fortinet Cup: The season-long points chase mirrors the competitive structure of the points-based competitions on the PGA TOUR, PGA TOUR Champions and PGA TOUR Latinoamérica. Through the sponsorship, the Fortinet Cup offers a \$100,000 player bonus pool—with \$25,000 to the winner—to the top Fortinet Cup points-winners. The top Fortinet Cup points-earner gains membership to the full 2024 Korn Ferry Tour season, while the second-through-fifth finishers earn conditional 2024 membership. All top-five finishers are also exempt into the final stage of 2023 PGA TOUR Qualifying Tournament, and those finishing sixth through 25th are exempt into the second stage. In addition, the Fortinet Cup winner will also receive an exemption into the PGA TOUR's 2023 Fortinet Championship in California. Finally, the top-60 players on the points list will earn membership on the 2024 PGA TOUR Americas through the Latin American swing.