



FORTINET[®] CUP CHAMPIONSHIP

First-Round Leaderboard

Fortinet Cup Championship

Country Hills Golf Club - Talons

September 7, 2023

Full [Leaderboard](#)

[PGA TOUR Canada Media Center](#)

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Pos.	Name	Scores	Current Fortinet Cup Position	Projected Fortinet Cup Position
1	Corey Shaun (United States)	30-33—63 (8-under)	46	5
2	Eric Lilleboe (United States)	35-29—64 (7-under)	37	14
T3	Alex Scott (United States)	33-32—65 (6-under)	53	30
T3	Brian Richey (United States)	34-31—65 (6-under)	13	13
T5	Carr Vernon (United States)	32-34—66 (5-under)	42	35
T5	Sudarshan Yellamaraju (Canada)	32-34—66 (5-under)	29	18
T5	Jason Hong (Australia)	32-34—66 (5-under)	22	16
T5	Yi Cao (China)	35-31—66 (5-under)	9	6
T5	Hayden Springer (United States)	35-31—66 (5-under)	4	4

Shaun takes first-round lead at Fortinet Cup Championship

CALGARY, Alberta – It was a little chilly when Corey Shaun began his warmup routine on Thursday before the first round. But the cool morning temperatures and added layers of clothing didn't affect his golf game at all.

Shaun eagled his second hole and went on to post an 8-under 63 at the Country Hills Golf Club's Talons Course to take the first-round lead at Fortinet Cup Championship, the final event on PGA TOUR Canada's schedule.

"I got off to a really good start," Shaun said. "I hit it close on No. 2 to make eagle and then I had a tap in for birdie at No. 3. Before you know it you're 3-under, and from there you feel like once you get a hot start, you don't worry about what to do next. You're trying to just get in your flow and keep it going."

The stakes are high this week as players try to accumulate enough points to finish among the top five on the Fortinet Cup standings, which would earn them an exemption on the 2024 Korn Ferry Tour. If that's not going to happen, they are aiming for at least the top 25, which is worth an exemption into the second round of PGA TOUR Q-School presented by Korn Ferry.

Shaun, who entered the tournament No. 46 on the points list, would vault all the way to No. 5 with a victory.

"Going into today I was relatively relaxed because there's no cutline," Shaun said. "Concentrate on doing the right things and a good round might change what you're hoping for a little but, but I feel like being here and having a chance for a good finish, it's all icing."

Shaun holds a one-shot lead over Eric Lilliboe, who shot 64, and two ahead of Alex Scott and Brian Richey, who shot 65. Tied for fifth at 66 are Carr Vernon, Jason Hong, Hayden Springer, Sudarshan Yellamaraju and Yi Cao, who won last week's CRMC Championship.

Lilliboe's round was powered by shooting a 29 on the back nine – the first of his career. The hot stretch included five-consecutive birdies starting with the 13th hole.

"It was nice to have some pretty flat looks at bird inside of 20 feet," Lilliboe said. "They just happened to all fall and it felt really good. It's always good to have golf feel good, even if it is just for a short period of time."

Lilliboe entered the week at No. 37 on the points list and needs a strong finish to move inside the top 25.

"My goal coming in here is to win," Lilliboe said. "That's the No. 1 goal. I'm not exactly sure what place I have to take to get inside the top 25, but it's probably at least top five or six. I just keep giving myself looks, some bogey avoidance and hopefully I find myself there on Sunday."

Scott's round included an eagle at No. 7, aided by a nice bounce off the hill, and a chip-in birdie at No. 15 after he flew the green by five yards.

"And I made an extremely long putt on No. 11," Scott said. "So there was some luck involved. I guess I had a couple things go my way, but at the end of the day I shot 65 and I don't have to tell anybody about getting lucky."

Richey made his only bogey on the first hole. He wound up with seven birdies and finished his round by making a 20-footer from the fringe for a birdie on the final hole.

Richey said, "No matter what, I play the same game. Even if I'm in a Monday qualifier, I try to always put the ball in play and attack the flag. I have nothing to lose this week. I need a good week to get in the top 10 for a bonus and I need a great week to get in the top five. I want to cap off the end of the season with a good event. That's really all I'm looking for."

The top four on the Fortinet Cup standings retained their position through the first round. No. 1 Sam Choi and No. 2 Davis Lamb, paired together in the final group, both opened with 71s. No. 3 Etienne

Papineau shot 68 and is tied for 15th. No. 4 Hayden Springer shot 66 and is tied for fifth. But No. 5 Stuart Macdonald shot 71 and dropped to No. 7 on the projected standings.

Did you know that if Corey Shaun goes on to win the Fortinet Cup Championship, he'd be the only first-round leader to win a tournament this season?

Key Information

Fortinet Cup Standings

(Through CRMC Championship presented by Gertens)

Pos.	Player	Points	Projected Rank
1	Sam Choi (United States)	1,228	1
2	Davis Lamb (United States)	1,134	2
3	Étienne Papineau (Canada)	944	3
4	Hayden Springer (United States)	711	4
5	Stuart Macdonald (Canada)	707	7
6	John Pak (United States)	700	8
7	Davis Shore (United States)	647	9
8	Devon Bling (United States)	639	10
9	Yi Cao (China)	633	6
10	Chris Korte (United States)	593	11

How the Canadians fared

Of the 11 Canadians in the tournament, Sudarshan Yellamaraju and Jared du Toit are the only Canadians who finished the first round among the top 10. Here are where all 11 stand through 18 holes:

Pos.	Player	Score
T5	Sudarshan Yellamaraju	32-34—66 (5-under)
T10	Jared du Toit	34-33—67 (4-under)
T15	Etienne Papineau	35-33—68 (3-under)
T20	Myles Creighton	34-35—69 (2-under)
T32	Brendan MacDougall	33-37—70 (1-under)
T32	Matthew Anderson	36-34—70 (1-under)
T44	Jimmy Jones	36-35—71 (even-par)
T44	Joey Savoie	35-36—71 (even-par)
T44	Stuart Macdonald	38-33—71 (even-par)
T54	Lawren Rowe	35-37—72 (1-over)

Eric Lilliboe's 29 was the first of his career and the 16th on PGA TOUR Canada this season. **Stuart Macdonald** and **Taylor Funk** both had 28s this season.

Yi Cao, last week's winner at the CRMC Championship presented by Gertens, continues to have the hot hand with an opening 66. He has gone 83 holes without a bogey, the last one coming on the seventh hole of the first round of the CRMC Championship.

Tyler Strafaci was almost unable to play this week because of a rib injury he sustained last week. His family didn't want him to play, but Strafaci said, "One of my main goals is to keep my card and I really wanted to be here and play this course. The injury sucks but there's no reason why I can't get in contention if I play well." Strafaci, the 2020 U.S. Amateur champion, had two eagles on Thursday and shot 69.

First-Round Weather: Partly sunny and cool early on, warming to a high of 31°C. Winds variable 7-15 km/h.