



Second-Round Leaderboard

Royal Beach Victoria Open presented by Times Colonist

Uplands Golf Club

Victoria, British Columbia

June 16, 2023

Full [Leaderboard](#)

[PGA TOUR Media Site](#)

Contact: Jay Fowler, PGA TOUR Canada Communications, 519-817-7336, jayfowler@pgatourintl.ca
Sara Wright, PGA TOUR Canada Communications, 719-310-2606, sarawright@pgatourhq.com

Pos.	Name	Scores
1	George Kneiser (United States)	62-66—128 (12-under)
T2	Chris Korte (United States)	64-65—129 (11-under)
T2	Étienne Papineau (Canada)	64-65—129 (11-under)
T4	Chris Francoeur (United States)	63-68—131 (9-under)
T4	Jason Hong (Australia)	67-64—131 (9-under)
T4	Stephen Franken (United States)	69-62—131 (9-under)
T7	Brian Carlson (United States)	66-66—132 (8-under)
T7	Hayden Shieh (United States)	66-66—132 (8-under)
T7	Brendan Leonard (Canada)	66-66—132 (8-under)

Kneiser stays hot, maintains lead in Victoria

VICTORIA, British Columbia—First-round leader George Kneiser retained his hot hand Friday, posting a 4-under 66 to hold a one-shot advantage at the midway point of the Royal Beach Victoria Open presented by Times Colonist.

Kneiser, who opened with a career-low 62 on the Uplands Golf Club on Thursday, is at 12-under in the opening event of PGA TOUR Canada's 10-week season. He has a one-stroke advantage over Canadian Étienne Papineau and Chris Korte, who both shot second-round 5-under 65s and stand at 129 in their season-long pursuit of the Fortinet Cup.

Kneiser's 128 total is his career-best 36-hole score and marks the first time he has held the lead entering the weekend.

"It feels solid," Kneiser said. "Today was a tougher day on the golf course compared to the morning wave [Thursday]. I feel like I played probably just as well or close to it. So, it feels good."

Kneiser, of Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, made his first bogey of the week on the second hole but answered with a birdie. He added four additional birdies en route to his 66.

"It feels good that I'm playing well," Kneiser said. "I'd actually missed the cut in the last four or five sanctioned events that I played, and it just feels good to check that box and be playing on the weekend. I've got a shot at this one."

Papineau of Mercier, Quebec, began his round by making a 40-foot birdie putt on the first hole and enjoyed a relatively stress-free 65. He opened the tournament with a 64, matching his lowest score on PGA TOUR Canada, and his 129 total is the best 36-hole start of his career.

Papineau said, "I started with a 40-footer on the first hole, and after that I just tried to minimize my mistakes and take advantage of my opportunities." Papineau, who tied for fifth at the Royal Beach Victoria Open a year ago, finished 20th in the Fortinet Cup standings in 2022.

Korte, of Littleton, Colorado, was tied for the lead going into the final hole, but he three-putted for a bogey and dropped into second place. He has carried his own bag for the first two rounds and mentioned he will be looking for a caddie for the weekend.

"I think the driver is what set me apart today and [Thursday]," Korte said. "A couple drivable par-4s I hit up there pretty close and made one of them today for eagle, so that was a big bonus."

Three players are tied for fourth, at 9-under 131—Stephen Franken, Jason Hong and Chris Francoeur.

Franken, who opened with a 69, started on the second nine and made the turn in 30. The highlight came at No. 16, his seventh hole, when he nearly holed out from a greenside bunker for an eagle. He made three more birdies on the final nine to shoot 62—his best round in 13 PGA TOUR Canada starts—and moves up 52 leaderboard spots.

The former North Carolina State standout and Dothan, Alabama, Qualifying Tournament medalist, said the recent work on his distance control is starting to pay off this week. "Seems like [Thursday] was pretty solid and today (I) seemed to get a lot of my (yardage) numbers right," Franken said.

Hong, the winner of the Qualifying Tournament in Arizona, is making the most of his professional debut. The native of Australia and graduate of Lipscomb University added a 64 to his first-round 67.

"It feels good," Hong said. "It's my first time on PGA TOUR Canada, so just to know that I can compete with these guys gives me confidence."

Francoeur, a Massachusetts native, followed his first-round 63 with a 68, his card bespotted with three bogeys that stopped his momentum.

"Hard to back up a 63, and I thought it was playing a little tougher today, a little windier, and I didn't play as well as I did [Thursday]," Francoeur said. "Got a few bad breaks as well, but that's just golf. Overall, pretty happy with how the day went."

Tied for seventh at 8-under 132 are Canadian Brendan Leonard of Cambridge, Ontario, Brian Carlson of Madison, Connecticut, and Hayden Shieh of Fremont, Calif., who each shot two rounds of 4-under 66.

Key Information

The cut came at 2-under 138 with 65 players advancing to the weekend.

Eleven Canadians made the cut, led by Étienne Papineau's 11-under 129. Here is how all the Canadians who will be playing this weekend sit through 36 holes.

Pos.	Player	Score
T2	Étienne Papineau	129 (11-under)
T7	Brendan Leonard	132 (8-under)
T10	Jared du Toit	133 (7-under)
T10	Lawren Rowe	133 (7-under)
T20	A.J. Ewart	135 (5-under)
T20	Jeevan Sihota	135 (5-under)
T20	Richard Jung	135 (5-under)
T30	Stuart Macdonald	136 (4-under)
T30	Henry Lee	136 (4-under)
T41	Brendan MacDougall	137 (3-under)
T51	Jimmy Jones	138 (2-under)

Corey Shaun, a UCLA product from Downers Grove, Illinois, followed his first-round 72 with a 7-under 63 in the morning wave and is tied for 20th. The effort enabled him to move up 98 spots on the leaderboard. Shaun has only one other career PGA TOUR Canada start. As a PGA TOUR Canada player in 2021, he played on the Forme Tour, posting three top-five finishes in six appearances, winning the Forme Open at TPC River's Bend in suburban Cincinnati. That season he finished first on the points list to earn 2022 Korn Ferry Tour membership.

Corey Shaun, of Chinese descent, played on PGA TOUR Series-China in both 2018 and 2019, seeing action in 21 tournaments with one top-10, a tie for 10th at the 2019 Haikou Championship.

Canadian resident **Richard Jung** remained in contention with a second-round 66, putting him in a tie for 20th. A native of South Korea, Jung is making his PGA TOUR Canada debut after winning twice on PGA TOUR Series-China.

Stephen Franken has Royal Beach member Pete Hartman serving as his caddie this week, and Franken gave Hartman credit for keeping the mood light. "We had a blast," Franken said. "We were just joking, walking down the fairways, most holes, and it was a good group."

Stephen Franken made lengthy putts on No. 9 and No. 18, and he said he's found something on the greens. "[Thursday] I didn't really make anything and then today got a couple of bonus putts. Those aren't the ones you're looking to make, but when they go in they're nice."

Chris Francoeur made a bogey on the par-5 12th hole. He had to take an unplayable lie behind a tree that forced him to chip out sideways. "The bogey there was fine, even though bogeys on par-5s aren't ideal, but I bounced back for the birdie on 13," he said.

Chris Korte drove the par-4 16th hole and made an eagle. "I want to say it was playing about 330 (yards). I just threaded it through the trees. It was drawing right at the pin, and it's one of those things where

you can't see the green, so you're walking up there just praying that it's somewhere decent. It ended up probably 15 feet (from the cup), and I buried the putt."

Sam Choi, the No. 11 player on the PGA TOUR University standings, made the cut and is tied for 10th, at 7-under 133. The Pepperdine University graduate shot 66-67 in his first two rounds of his professional debut.

The other big move on Friday came from **Ryann Ree** of Los Angeles, California. He shot 64 and moved up 46 spots into a tie for 10th, at 7-under 133.

The hardest hole was the par-4 11th, which played to an average of 4.449. Only 11 players birdied the 415-yard hole, which produced 51 bogeys, six double bogeys and five triple bogeys.

The easiest hole was the 476-yard, par-5 12th hole, which played to a 4.628 scoring average. It gave up three eagles, 69 birdies and only 15 bogeys and one double bogey.

Quotable

"I definitely work quickly, and I probably get quicker as I'm feeling more comfortable with my game. It's one of those things in golf that comes and goes." – **George Kneiser on his fast pace of play**

"I think I learned a lot about where my game was at last year, and it wasn't in a good spot. I have a better feel for things in my head and I have more experience, feeling more confident." – **George Kneiser on his second season on PGA TOUR Canada**

"At No. 7, I hit my second shot in the bunker and was on a downslope, not the best lie, and (I) just had to get forward on it, try to get it out and thankfully it landed right where I needed to." – **Stephen Franken on nearly holing a sand shot for an eagle**

"Just staying out of the trees. That's the name of the game out here is hitting the fairway and giving yourself chances," – **Chris Korte**

"I'm living the dream right now, loving what I do right now. It's crazy to think I'm playing golf as a professional. So, I'm just enjoying the moment and trying to make the most of it." – **James Hong**

"I'm just going to try to keep doing what I'm doing. I'm hitting the ball really well right now. Just got to make a few more putts." – **Chris Francoeur**

"(The course) just fits my eyes really well. It's kind of an old-style course ... not too long, pretty tight off the tee." – **Etienne Papineau**

Second-Round Weather: Mostly sunny and mild. High of 21. Wind W at 17-20 kph.