



- Finished solo-fourth as an open qualifier at the 2023 Cognizant Classic in The Palm Beaches (stood T3 through 36 holes), followed by a T11 at the Puerto Rico Open, T71 at the Valspar Championship, and T56 at the Valero Texas Open en route to Special Temporary Membership
- Added a second top-10 on TOUR at the 2023 Barracuda Championship (5th)
- Finished No. 5 in the 2022 Fortinet Cup Standings on PGA TOUR Canada with a victory and two additional top-four finishes
- Turned professional in 2022 after five seasons at the University of North Carolina (2017-22), where he won one collegiate event, garnered 2022 All-America Second Team recognition, and finished as the program's career scoring average leader (71.65), breaking the school record previously established by Ben Griffin (72.02)

### Quotables

**Ryan Gerard** on his career-low 9-under 62... "I just hit it really, really good all day. I never put myself out of position except on No. 18, I made bogey there. I hit it awesome all day. I've been hitting it good and just kind of made it an easy round so I was never really struggling for anything. Got a couple of bonus putts to drop there at the last and then one or two earlier in the round. Just hit it really solid all day."

**Gerard** on playing seven tournaments in seven weeks... "I've been fortunate enough to play a lot of weekends and a lot of them have been late on Saturdays and Sundays, so just the body gets tired, mentally you get fatigued. So it's really just trying to stay patient, not trying to overdo it and not trying to almost carry too much momentum from one week to another because it is the beginning of a new tournament every single week that you show up. So just because you played well last week doesn't mean you're going to get to start five shots in front of everyone the next week. Just really trying to start from scratch, stay positive, stay in the moment and just really do the things that I need to be doing with eating, sleeping, stretching, all that stuff. Just routine after a while has been very helpful. Not trying to overdo it in terms of practice, but make sure I try and take care of everything else."

**Austin Smotherman** on his bogey-free 7-under 64... "I made a couple of long putts today, that was kind of nice. One with the flagstick in, that was kind of going past the hole. Then another one for eagle on 16 there, like 25 feet in the middle of the green. Took a couple good shots there. Felt like I hit good drives on the holes that you could score on and then the few loose shots that I had I could kind of still get it around and make 4."

**Smotherman** on splitting time between the PGA TOUR and Korn Ferry Tour... "Just stringing together a lot of golf. It's all kind of been just a lot of OK golf here and there. I've had some really nice rounds out here, had some nice finishes but kind of few and far between. Just tough splitting time, I don't wish it on anybody. It's just a lot of golf. Figuring out how to manage the week, figuring out how you want to go about it towards the end and just realizing it just comes down to what you're doing right in front of you and figuring out how to get some rest. That's been my biggest thing this week. With the weather we've had, I feel like I kind of just didn't do a whole lot with the rain and then kind of some blustery winds on the first day I got here. It was opposite of what we have for the tourney rounds."

### Notes

- Making his ninth start of the season, **Scott Harrington** (T2/-8) rolls in two eagles en route to an opening round 8-under 63; his lowest round of the season
  - Made the cut in all three career starts at the Memorial Health Championship presented by LRS; best finish in the event was a T11 in 2017
- **Max McGreevy** (T2/-8), who is currently No. 7 on the Korn Ferry Tour Points List, is one stroke off the lead in position T2 after a first-round 8-under 63; best opening round position in a Korn Ferry Tour event since the 2020 Price Cutter Championship presented by Dr Pepper (co-leader)
- Four-time PGA TOUR winner **Scott Piercy** (T4/-7) cards a 7-under 64 with seven birdies (Nos. 3, 6, 7, 11, 13, 15, 18) and an eagle (No. 16) against two bogeys (Nos. 1, 10)

- In 12 starts this season across the PGA TOUR and Korn Ferry Tour (six each), Piercy matches his low round of the season (Zurich Classic of New Orleans/R1)
- Colombian **Marcelo Rozo** (T4/-7) posts his best round of the season with a 7-under 64, making birdie on Nos. 1, 2, 6, 8, 11,13, 14, 16; lone bogey came on the par-4 18th
  - Rozo has made the cut in all three previous starts at the Memorial Health Championship presented by LRS (Best finish; T21/2022)
- **Brandon Harkins** (T4/-7) plays the first round bogey-free with a 7-under 64, making birdies on Nos. 1, 8, 12, 16, 18 and an eagle on the par-5 sixth
- Making his sixth start of the season, **Patrick Newcomb** (T4/-7) turns in his best round of the year with a 7-under 64, making six birdies (Nos. 2, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14) and an eagle (No. 16) against one bogey (No. 3)
  - Newcomb finished fourth in his most recent start at the Memorial Health Championship presented by LRS (2022)
- Korn Ferry Tour rookie **Austin Greaser** (T4/-7), who Finished No. 3 in the 2024 PGA TOUR University Ranking, records the lowest round of his professional career with a 7-under 64
  - The former North Carolina Tar Heel earned Korn Ferry Tour membership for the remainder of the 2024 season, as well as an exemption for Final Stage of 2024 PGA TOUR Q-School presented by Korn Ferry with his No. 3 finish in the PGA TOUR University Ranking
- **Harry Higgs** (T13/-6), who was the second player on the season to be declared #TOURBound, cards this third consecutive bogey-free round with a 6-under 65
  - Higgs has played 57 consecutive holes without a bogey (last; Compliance Solutions Championship/bogey, No. 6/R2)
- University of Illinois rising senior **Jackson Buchanan** (T23/-5), who is playing on a sponsor exemption this week, cards a 5-under 66 in his first career Korn Ferry Tour start
  - Starting on No. 10, Buchanan made five consecutive birdies to start his round and six in his first seven holes before a double bogey on the par-3 17th; the 22-year-old made two more birdies on his second nine (Nos. 3, 8) against one bogey (No. 4)
- Open qualifiers **Taylor Bibbs** (T23/-5), **Peter Bradbeer** (T23/-5) and **Griffin Wood** (T23/-5) all turn in rounds of 5-under 66
  - This week marks Bradbeer's first career start in any PGA TOUR-sanctioned event; turned professional in 2021 after playing four years at Bucknell and one at Temple
  - Bibbs is making his fourth career start on the Korn Ferry Tour and first of the season; made his last start on Tour at the 2023 Memorial Health Championship presented by LRS (T39)