



2024 The Panamá Championship (*3rd of 26 events on 2024 Korn Ferry Tour Schedule*) <u>Tournament Media Site</u> | <u>Interview Transcripts</u>

Panamá City, Panamá Panamá Golf Club February 1-4, 2024 Par/Yards: 35-35—70/7,534 Points: 500 (winner) Purse: \$1,000,000 / \$180,00 (winner)

Partial First-Round Notes – Thursday, February 1, 2024

The first round was suspended due to darkness at 6:28 p.m. ET and will resume Friday morning at 7 a.m., with 16 players needing to complete the first round. Second-round tee times will run from 6:40 a.m. through 1:40 p.m. off the first and 10th tees.

Weather: Partly cloudy and breezy. High of 92. Wind N at 5-25 mph.

Leaderboard

Pos.	Player	Total	
T1	Trey Winstead	65 (-5)	
	Augusto Núñez	65 (-5)	
3	Austin Hitt	66 (-4)	
4	Cristobal Del Solar	67 (-3)	

Things to Know

- **Trey Winstead** cards the lone bogey-free round, while Argentinian **Augusto Núñez** closes with consecutive birdies, including a chip-in at the par-4 ninth, to share the clubhouse lead with matching 5-under 65s
- Rookie Austin Hitt bounces back from 1-over 36 on front nine with 5-under 30 on back nine, sits one stroke off the clubhouse lead following 4-under 66
- Current first-round scoring average of 72.458 is on pace to be higher than the 71.944 from last year's first round of The Panamá Championship
- Last year's 18-hole leader of The Panamá Championship stood 6-under par, while Pierceson Coody's winning 72-hole total following a three-way playoff with Mac Meissner and Sam Saunders was 3-under 277
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Charting the Co-Leaders

Category (Stats entering week)	Trey Winstead	Augusto Núñez
Age	25	31 (Nov. 3, 1992)
Starts – Wins – Top-10s in Korn Ferry Tour Career	3-0-0	111-0-12
Starts – Wins – Top-10s on Korn Ferry Tour in 2024	2-0-0	2-0-0
Starts – Wins – Top-10s at The Panamá Championship	Debut	4-0-0

Trey Winstead (T1/-5)

- Opens in bogey-free 5-under 65 with five birdies (par-4 fifth, par-3 sixth and eighth, par-4 10th, par-5 12th)
- Only player to record a bogey-free round (no potential bogey-free rounds among those yet to be completed)
- Marks his lowest round in what is his fourth career start and 11th career round on the Korn Ferry Tour
- Making fourth career Korn Ferry Tour start in first season as a member; he finished T28 at Final Stage of 2023 PGA TOUR Q-School presented by Korn Ferry for guaranteed starts in the first 12 events of the 2024 season
- Owns a missed cut and T66 in two starts this season, as well as a T43 as an open qualifier at the 2023 Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Kansas Wichita Open Benefitting KU Wichita Pediatrics
- Played five seasons at Louisiana State University (2017-22), where he was a two-time medalist at the David Thoms Intercollegiate and garnered a 2017-18 Southeastern Conference All-Freshman Team selection

Augusto Núñez (T1/-5)

- Posts 5-under 65 featuring six birdies (par-4 10, 14, 16, third, par-3 eighth, and par-4 ninth) and one bogey at the par-4 seventh
- Bounces back from only bogey of round with consecutive birdies at Nos. 8 and 9, his final holes of the round
- Entered the week with missed cuts in both season-opening events in The Bahamas
- Playing from Tucuman, Argentina, finished No. 180 on the 2022-23 FedExCup Fall standings as a PGA TOUR rookie; he earned his first PGA TOUR card via a No. 6 finish on the 2022 Korn Ferry Tour Points List
- Turned professional in 2012, playing predominantly on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica for the first five years of his career; he owns three career wins on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica, and notably finished No. 2 on the circuit's 2016 Order of Merit, followed later by a No. 1 finish on the circuit's 2019 Order of Merit

Quotables

Trey Winstead on his opening-round 5-under 65... "I played very well. I was fortunate enough to have first tee time off, so kind of played most of my round without any wind or much wind. So it's kind of starting to blow now, so was very fortunate with that. Just did everything very solid."

Winstead on gaining experience since turning professional in 2022... "Played the APTs last year, a couple G Pros and they were great, a lot of really good competition out there. And just the formats of them, being able to have like the cut after 36 holes and four rounds of competition... it's a real tournament. Being able to go through that and just being able to compete, learning how to score the ball was really big. Then obviously going through (PGA TOUR) Q-School was a grind, and was just very fortunate that it went my way."

Augusto Núñez reflecting on his rookie season on the PGA TOUR last year... "I loved my time on the PGA TOUR. It's an incredible tour, and I was able to fulfill my dream of playing there. It was an incredible year for me, despite losing the card. Now I have to keep working to get back there. It's 2024 and you have to start from scratch and continue playing golf. We are going to do our best to get back there."

Additional Player Notes

- Rookie Austin Hitt (3rd/-4), who finished T11 in both of the season-opening events in The Bahamas, ties his low round of the season (6-under 66/R4/The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic)
 - Hitt turned professional in 2021 following five seasons at University of North Carolina (2016-21), where he finished with the fourth-lowest career scoring average in program history (72.20)
 - Gained entry to this week's field via his No. 3 finish on the 2022-23 PGA TOUR Latinoamérica Totalplay Cup standings (top five were guaranteed entry this week); he earned Korn Ferry Tour membership for the first time via his top-five finish in the Totalplay Cup standings
- Chilean **Cristobal Del Solar** (4th/-3), who finished No. 52 on the 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Points List as a rookie, follows a 1-over 36 on the front nine with a 4-under 35 on the back nine, highlighted by birdies on four of his last seven holes (par-5 12th, par-4 15th, par-3 17th, par-4 18th)
 - Del Solar finished solo fourth in the season-opening The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic
- Ross Steelman (T5/-2), who co-led through 36 holes of last week's The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club, opens in 2-under 68; he has finishes of solo third (The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic) and T20 (The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic) this season
 - Steelman finished No. 4 on the 2023 PGA TOUR University Ranking for Korn Ferry Tour membership last season, and finished T28 at Final Stage of 2023 PGA TOUR Q-School presented by Korn Ferry for guaranteed starts in the first 12 events of the 2024 season
- Argentinian Jorge Fernández Valdés (T5/-2), who won the 2023 UNC Health Championship presented by STITCH en route to a No. 31 finish on the 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Points List, opens in 2-under 68
- Last year's outright 18-hole leader **Ryan Gerard** (T12/-1), who earned Special Temporary Membership on the PGA TOUR last season, opens in 1-under 69
- Rookie **Charles Porter** (T12/-1), the first-to-last player who gained entry to this week's 144-player field, holds on for 1-under 69 after three consecutive bogeys on Nos. 5-7 (began his round on No. 10)