

**LECOM Suncoast Classic
(8th of 26 events on 2025 Korn Ferry Tour Schedule)**
[Tournament Media Site](#) | [Interview Transcripts](#)

Lakewood Ranch, Florida April 16 – 19, 2025 Points: 500 (winner)
 Lakewood National Golf Club Par/Yards: 71 / 7,133 Purse: \$1,000,000 / \$180,000 (winner)

First-Round Notes – Wednesday, April 16, 2025

Weather: Mostly sunny. High of 85. Wind N/NW at 5-14 mph, gusts up to 22 mph

Leaderboard

Pos.	Player	R1	Total
1	Jorge Fernández Valdés	61	61 (-10)
2	Tanner Gore	62	62 (-9)
T3	Michael Johnson	64	64 (-7)
	Neal Shipley	64	64 (-7)
	Tom Whitney	64	64 (-7)
T6	<i>Five Players Tied</i>	65	65 (-6)

Charting the Leader

Category	Jorge Fernández Valdés
Age	32
2025 Korn Ferry Tour Points List	No. 157
Starts – Wins – Top-10s on Korn Ferry Tour in 2025	6-0-0
Starts – Wins – Top-10s in Korn Ferry Tour Career	110-1-4
Starts – Wins – Top-10s at LECOM Suncoast Classic	2-0-0

Jorge Fernández Valdés (1st/-10)

- Cards a bogey-free 10-under 61 to establish a new career-low round (previous: 62/2016 Brasil Champions presented by Embrase)
- Posts the low opening round in the last seven playings of the LECOM Suncoast Classic (previous instances: 62/Mason Andersen/2024, 62/Albin Choi/2020)
- Holds the first 18-hole lead/co-lead of his Korn Ferry Tour career in what is his 111th start
- Best finish in two previous starts at the LECOM Suncoast Classic is T22/2023 (other: MC/2024)
- Owns two made cuts in six events played this season (best finish: T60/Club Car Championship at The Landings Golf & Athletic Club)
- Missed part of the 2024 season due to an injury
- Previously finished No. 31 on the 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Points List, one spot out from earning PGA TOUR membership (top 30 from Points List); entered the season-ending Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by United Leasing & Finance at No. 24 on the Points List but fell to No. 31 with a T61 finish
- Captured his first career Korn Ferry Tour victory at the 2023 UNC Health Championship presented by STITCH, defeating Korn Ferry Tour member Trent Phillips; became the first of two Argentinian winners on the Korn Ferry Tour in 2023 (Alejandro Tosti/Pinnacle Bank Championship)
- A four-time winner on PGA TOUR Latinoamérica; earned Korn Ferry Tour membership via finishing No. 3 in the 2022 Totalplay Cup standings off the strength of three top-10s including a victory

Additional Notes

- Second-year member **Tanner Gore** (2nd/-9) posts a bogey-free, career-low 9-under 62 (previous: 63/2025 The Bahamas Golf Classic at Atlantis Paradise Island); establishes a new career-high 18-hole position and

stands inside the top-five following the first round for the third time this season (others: T4/The Bahamas Golf Classic at Atlantis Paradise Island, T4/The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club)

- Rookie **Neal Shipley** (T3/-7) cards a field-leading 11 birdies en route to 7-under 64; establishes a new career-high 18-hole position (previous: T19/2025 Astara Chile Classic presented by Scotiabank/finished T15)
- **Michael Johnson** (T3/-7) ties his second-lowest opening round score in 7-under 64 (64/twice/2025 Astara Golf Championship presented by Mastercard, 2018 The Panama Championship); enters the second round in the top-10 for the third time this season (other: T4/Astara Golf Championship presented by Mastercard/finished T13, T9/Visa Argentina Open presented by Macro/finished T37)
- Class of 2023 Korn Ferry Tour graduate **Tom Whitney** (T3/-7) opens in 7-under 64 via one eagle (No. 4) and six birdies (Nos. 9, 10, 13-15, 17) against one bogey; posts his career-low opening round on the Korn Ferry Tour (previous: 65/seven times)
- Winner of the 2025 Astara Golf Championship presented by Mastercard **Kyle Westmoreland** (T6/-6) sits inside the top-10 following the first round for the first time this season (previous best: T29/2025 Visa Argentina Open presented by Macro/finished MC)
- First-year member **Nate Stember** (T6/-6), who earned Korn Ferry Tour membership for the first time by finishing in the Next 25 and Ties at Final Stage of 2024 PGA TOUR Q-School, ties his career-low round and establishes a career-high 18-hole position (previous: T47/2025 Club Car Championship at The Landings Golf & Athletic Club/finished MC)
- Sixteen-year-old amateur and sponsor exemption **Miles Russell** (T84/-1), who made his Korn Ferry Tour debut at the 2024 LECOM Suncoast Classic and became the youngest player on record (since 1983) to record a top-25 finish on either the Korn Ferry Tour or PGA TOUR at 15 years, 5 months, 20 days of age, opens in 1-under 70