

2025 The Panama Championship
(3rd of 26 events on 2025 Korn Ferry Tour Schedule)
[Tournament Media Site](#) | [Interview Transcripts](#)

Panama City, Panama	January 30-February 2, 2025	Points: 500 (winner)
Club de Golf de Panama	Par/Yards: 70 (35-35) / 7,534	Purse: \$1,000,000 / \$180,00 (winner)

Partial First-Round Notes – Thursday, January 30, 2025

The first round was suspended due to darkness at 6:25 p.m. ET and will resume Friday at 7:15 a.m., with 13 players needing to complete the first round. The second round will begin as scheduled.

Weather: Partly cloudy. High of 90. Wind NW → N/NNW at 4-15 mph, gusts up to 18 mph.

Leaderboard

Pos.	Player	Total
1	Johnny Keefe	(-7) thru 17
2	Nick Gabrelcik	(-5) thru 16
T3	Sam Bennett	66 (-4)
	Hank Lebioda	66 (-4)
	Dan McCarthy	66 (-4)
	T.J. Vogel	66 (-4)
	Kensei Hirata	66 (-4)
	David Kocher	66 (-4)
	Davis Chatfield	66 (-4)

Charting the Leader

Category (Stats entering week)	Johnny Keefe
Age	24
2025 Korn Ferry Tour Points List	No. 95
Starts – Wins – Top-10s on Korn Ferry Tour in 2024	0-0-0
Starts – Wins – Top-10s in Korn Ferry Tour Career	2-0-0
Starts – Wins – Top-10s at The Panama Championship	0-0-0

Johnny Keefe (1st/-7 thru 17)

- First-year member making his third career start on the Korn Ferry Tour; poised to hold first 18-hole lead/co-lead in a Korn Ferry Tour event, with his previous career-high 18-hole position being T16/2025 The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club (finished T60)
- Looks to post a career-low round on the Korn Ferry Tour; best round this season: 67/R2/The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club
- One of three players looking to record a bogey-free first round (Hank Lebioda, Rob Oppenheim)
- Earned fully exempt status on the Korn Ferry Tour for the 2025 season by finishing No. 1 in the 2024 Fortinet Cup standings on PGA TOUR Americas; in 10 starts last season, made all 10 cuts and posted nine top-10s, including four runner-up finishes and a victory at the 2024 CentrePort Canada Rail Park Manitoba Open
- Claimed the final spot in the 2024 PGA TOUR University Ranking and finished No. 25 to earn exempt membership into the North America Swing of PGA TOUR Americas
- Played five seasons (2019-24) at Baylor University where he recorded seven top-three finishes, highlighted by two victories (2021/Rice Intercollegiate, 2023/Valero Texas Collegiate); topped PGA TOUR member Jimmy Walker's school record for career stroke average (71.45)

Additional Player Notes

- Second-year member **Nick Gabrelcik** (2nd/-5 thru 16) is in line to establish a new career-high 18-hole position (previous: T16/2024 Price Cutter Charity Championship presented by Hiland Dairy Foods)
- Korn Ferry Tour winner **T.J. Vogel** (T3/-4) looks to establish his best 18-hole position since being T3/2020 Utah Championship presented by Zions Bank and Intermountain Health (finished T18)
- **Sam Bennett** (T3/-4), who finished No. 31 on the 2024 Korn Ferry Tour Points List as a rookie – one spot outside of earning a PGA TOUR card – records his low round of the season in 4-under 66
- The top-ranked player in the field and six-time Japan Golf Tour winner, **Kensei Hirata** (T3/-4), posts 4-under 66 via six birdies and two bogeys in his second start of the season; finished runner-up in his Korn Ferry Tour debut at The Bahamas Great Abaco Classic at The Abaco Club
- Korn Ferry Tour Points List leader and winner of The Bahamas Golf Classic at Atlantis Paradise Island, **Hank Lebioda** (T3/-4), opens with a bogey-free 4-under 66; cards his eighth round of the season in the 60s (low round: 62/R2/The Bahamas Golf Classic at Atlantis Paradise Island)
- **Pierceson Coody** (T10/-3), a Class of 2023 Korn Ferry Tour graduate and winner of the 2023 Panama Championship, makes his second start of the season and sits T10; finished T7 at The Bahamas Golf Classic at Atlantis Paradise Island – his first start on the Korn Ferry Tour since earning PGA TOUR membership at the 2023 Korn Ferry Tour Championship presented by United Leasing & Finance