



Explore NB Open

Mactaquac Golf Course | Fredericton, New Brunswick | July 9-12, 2026

First-Round Notes – July 9, 2026

Weather: Partly sunny with a high of 83. Wind from the W at 5-10 mph.

Golf Course: Par 71 / 7,275 yards

Resources: [Full Leaderboard](#) | [PGA TOUR Media Site](#)

Pos.	Player	Score
T1	Lance Simpson (USA)	63 (-8)
T1	Thomas Ponder (USA)	63 (-8)
T1	Evan Knight (USA)	63 (-8)
T4	Seven players	64 (-7)

Thomas Ponder (Dothan, Alabama) made an albatross and an eagle Thursday at Mactaquac Golf Course en route to an 8-under 63 and a share of the first-round lead at the Explore NB Open in Fredericton, New Brunswick. **Lance Simpson** (Knoxville, Tennessee) carded a bogey-free 63 to open his second pro start, while **Evan Knight** (Novato, California) rounds out the trio at 8-under.

Ponder started with bogeys on Nos. 10 and 11 before eagling the par-5 12th to return to even par. He made the turn 3-under, then holed a 6-iron from 204 yards for an albatross on No. 1. He was 6-under on the three par 5s and 3-under on the four par-3s, and his 63 is his best first-round score in 34 starts on PGA TOUR Americas. A third-year pro out of the University of Alabama, Ponder leads the tour with five top-10s this season and entered the week No. 4 on the points list.

Simpson earned membership this summer by finishing No. 11 in the PGA TOUR University Class of 2026, and he finished T27 in his pro debut two weeks ago at the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas Wichita Open presented by Syndeo.

Making his 43rd career TOUR-sanctioned start, Knight's 63 is the lowest score of his career. His best finish of the season was T22 at the Abierto del Centro Zurich presentado por Personal, and he's currently No. 75 on the points list.

Seven players are T4 at 7-under, and the low Canadian after 18 holes is **Joey Savoie** (Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec), who is T11 at 6-under.

About PGA TOUR Americas

PGA TOUR Americas identifies and prepares the game's future stars as players compete to earn membership on the Korn Ferry Tour and eventually the PGA TOUR. The 2026 schedule consists of 15 events in nine countries, and the season culminates in October with the Dominican Republic Tour Championship presented by Scotiabank, where the top 10 players on the season-long points list earn Korn Ferry Tour membership the following season.

Since the inaugural PGA TOUR Americas season in 2024, Johnny Keefer (2024) and Michael Brennan (2025) have finished No. 1 on the PGA TOUR Americas points list, and both players earned their PGA TOUR cards for the 2026 season.

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