

Production Transcript for 25INTCUTKF - SIMMONS BANK OPEN FOR THE SNEDEKER FOUNDATION.mp3

[00:00:33] >> Opening round coverage of the Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation. This event first played back in 2016. Had some big names win over the course of this event's history. Back at the Vanderbilt Legends Club, the North Course this week. And I mentioned Nashville. Oh, boy, get yourself in a little bit of trouble down there if you're not careful. James Nitties knows what I'm talking about. Broadway will get you. You get a little more peace and quiet at the Legends Club facility. Renovated the clubhouse a year ago. A couple of golf courses on property. Hosting golf tournaments all over the place. Got a collegiate event next week. This week, it's the Korn Ferry Tour. Let's get the finals going here in Franklin, Tennessee. Weather today, you see, it's warm, it's nice. There are scattered showers and storms in the area. Right now, kind of keeping an eye on that as we try to avoid a little bit of snow that's been floating around the golf course over the last half hour or so. We are head to the Korn Ferry Tour finals, Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation. Got some great play early in the day. Trent Phillips entered the week 60th on the points list. This is final hole of the day, the 9. That one in there just below the hole. He knocked that in for birdie, shoots 64. And Trent Phillips right there on the first page of leaderboard having himself a good week. A lot of these names trying to make a push over the next five weeks. Try to snag one of the 20 PGA Tour cards up for grabs. Nelson Ledesma, one of those players outside the Top 100 on the points list. But he had himself an excellent, excellent Thursday. That at the 5th. This at the 6th. Part of an eight bird in his final 11 hole run for Ledesma. Career low round on the Korn Ferry Tour. Ledesma with that 61. He's atop leaderboard at 9-under par. And how about Johnny Keefer? The youngster out of Baylor has just been impressive as a pro all over the world.

[00:02:34] Atop the points list, Tour bound for next season on the PGA Tour. Slow start, but Keefer made the turn and started throwing some darts. That at 10, he made that for birdie. Playing alongside Neal Shipley, two-time winner this season on the Korn Ferry Tour. He's saying nothing because he loves it, and he should. That in there tight at 11. Shipley, he'd make birdie there, as would Johnny Keefer. The birdie at the 10th. Watch this one. Just sneak in the left side. Keefer making a little bit of a move on this back nine at the Vanderbilt Legends Club. North Course this week. Excellent event. Just about 30 minutes or so from downtown Nashville as we kick out -- kick off the Korn Ferry Tour finals. And you see a lot of red on the first page of that leaderboard. Those are players trying to play themselves into that Top 20 as we get these finals going. Today, Ledesma setting the pace, 9-under par 61. What a round.

[00:03:35] >> One of those players that kind of burst on the scene and he just kind of waiting for him to continue the play. We saw earlier in the season Pontus Nyholm just been slowly dropping down that points list, James. Finally getting his first victory this year. Progressed slowly since being on the Korn Ferry Tour. Getting better, learning a lot more about his game, but got that W.

[00:03:58] >> Longest hitter on the Korn Ferry Tour this season, Christo Lamprecht.

[00:04:20] >> Doesn't hit a whole bunch of fairways, but when he does, it is a flip wedge for Christo each and every hole. Shipley now set to go at the 14th. Emilia is going to be following this trio today.

[00:04:33] >> Good afternoon, Shane and James. Would love to keep this down the left side. That opens up the green to the right. Just drifting off to the right portion of the fairway.

[00:04:45] >> Shipley moves it out there too, Shane, to sleep. A bit more accurate than were talking about Lamprecht.

[00:04:53] >> Go over to the 27-year-old. Bogey-free on his day. Just a couple birdies trying to get it to 3-under par. Pontus just skirting that edge. Mentioned his great season on the Korn Ferry Tour. Continuing that into the finals.

[00:05:16] >> Back here at the Simmons Bank Open. And during our break, you see Galletti just about to give that a rip and the horn blew.

[00:05:23] >> That's a player late in his round trying to get this thing in, but scattered storms in the area.

[00:05:28] >> Got leaderboard mentioned the career low round on the Korn Ferry Tour for Ledesma. Came in the week 105th on the points list. This is a guy starting to think about finishing out the season. Getting to French Lick now, as you see projected, if he can win this thing. Just outside that Top 20, and 20 PGA Tour cards are out there this season on the Korn Ferry Tour. Pierceson Coody has had himself a very solid season when he's played on the Korn Ferry Tour. Kind of splitting time between the PGA Tour and the Korn Ferry Tour. Sixty-six for Coody. Doc Redman, good solid round going out there at 4-under par. Got a few holes left to play. Golf course playing a little more different, James, this year than we saw last year. I mean, you think about the weather we've had in the area. I mean, not a lot of rain over the last six weeks. Finally got a little bit of rain late last week. But right now, obviously the weather playing a big part of this Thursday. Really the one day we thought we might run into some weather. You see Justin Suh entered the week 22nd, having to have a good push here. We heard the horn a moment ago, of course. Weather delay right now in the opening round of the Simmons Bank Open. Everybody off the golf course as a storm blows through. So a bit of a bummer for us. Not a delay for Neal Shipley. What a season he's had on the Korn Ferry Tour. James, kind of think about the journey, right? He had long hair, fan favorite in Denver as he made that run at the US Amateur a couple years ago. Lost to Nick Dunlap in the championship, but of course, gets into the Masters, in the US Open, low amateur, both of those major championships. First player to do that since Viktor Hovland back in 2019. But a little bit of a slow start as a pro.

[00:07:05] >> Started with conditional status this year. Talked about missing the first two cuts, and feeling the pressure to getting himself to the rest of the season.

[00:07:15] >> But he has really caught fire as of late. Couple of wins, one of four players Tour bound. And as we wait out the weather, he is down with Emilia.

[00:07:25] >> Thank you, Shane. Neal, thanks for spending some time with us as we're waiting out this storm delay. You've had a really good last couple of weeks. Four Top 8

finishes before Boise Open. What's clicked in your game now that you're Tour bound? Congratulations.

[00:07:39] >> Thank you. Yeah. And I found some good stride with the putter. It's been kind of hot the last few weeks, especially for those weeks we're in the Top 10 and been driving the golf ball awesome all season. So just trying to keep that going here this week and going into the rest of the playoffs.

[00:07:54] >> Well, as we're in a weather delay, what's your go to way of occupying your time?

[00:07:59] >> Oh, gosh. I mean, now, you can just scroll TikTok and Instagram. You know, some of the guys will play some cards just for fun and, you know, just kind of hang out with some of the dudes. It's like a traveling circus out here. So we kind of know everybody. It's a lot of fun.

[00:08:12] >> You were up at the Ohio State Texas game. What was that experience like Week 1?

[00:08:16] >> It was awesome. We had a great atmosphere at the Shoe, and it was awesome to get a dub, and just excited for the Buckeyes and what they have in store for us this season. I think we got a great squad and pumped to watch them.

[00:08:27] >> You'll be back in Columbus next week for the Nationwide Children's Championship. What are you most looking forward to coming back to your alma mater?

[00:08:34] >> I'm pumped to see some old friends in town, and definitely there's a couple restaurants I want to hit and get back to. And the Columbus food scene I think is severely underrated and really excited about some of those opportunities.

[00:08:46] >> Well, yes, you got a Diet Coke kind of sitting right there. You love your diet drinks. How would you kind of rank your hierarchy of what you go to first, and as the day goes on, maybe what you select?

[00:08:57] >> Well, definitely like a water first guy in the morning and some coffee. And you know, maybe I allow myself maybe one midday either, you know, Diet Coke or Coke Zero is probably a good go to for me too. So that's definitely, you know, not the best thing to be having during a rain delay. But we're Tour bound so I think I can afford one now just to enjoy it.

[00:09:15] >> Yes, most definitely. Don't leave out the Diet Dr. Pepper.

[00:09:20] >> That's probably -- That's up there. It's probably one or two. I forgot about that.

[00:09:24] >> Well, thanks so much Neal for the time. And hopefully, we'll see you out on the golf course soon.

[00:09:28] >> Thanks. Take care.

[00:09:29] >> How about the man that sits atop the points list? Johnny Keefer, head of the PGA Tour next season, James. Saw some great play from Keefer as he made the turn today.

[00:09:42] >> Love his action. That low finish, great wedge game, and he could fill it up too. Knows how to go low, Keefer.

[00:09:49] >> Yeah. Made a birdie at 10. This at 11. Just sneaks in that left side. He's been impressive. He's not been a pro for long, but the 24-year-old has been incredibly consistent this season. You see the birdie, birdie run at 10 and 11. Drop the shot there at the 12. I mean iron play is so impressive. We talk about the distance and the putter and things like that. Twelve of 13 greens this season. He is 17th in that category all year long on the Korn Ferry Tour.

[00:10:20] >> Ledesma, see there start of the week at 105th on the points list.

[00:10:24] >> Now projected, if he can keep this going, James, to just outside that top point list.

[00:10:29] >> A lot of red at the top of the leaderboard as you said, Shane. Shout out to Rhein Gibson. Spoke to him last night. He tweaked his back, didn't know if he could play today. His driver broke after six holes. Shot 4-under.

[00:10:43] >> Got it in before the weather. A couple obstacles to jump over for Gibson in these finals. You see so many of these players, as we've mentioned, needing a good week, needing something to happen.

[00:11:01] >> The Korn Ferry Tour finals and second round coverage of the Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation. Had a bit of weather on Thursday. Delayed the proceedings out of the gate. But the weather should be ideal the rest of the way as we return to the Vanderbilt Legends Club, the North Course here in Franklin, Tennessee. About 30 minutes or so from downtown Nashville. They see so many great players in and around this golf facility all year long. This week, of course, kicking off the Korn Ferry Tour finals. And excited to run you through the rest of the season as we give out 20 PGA Tour cards for 2026. A lot of stress for so many of the players in the field this week. Hundred and fifty-six players invited. We had 136 actually on the tee sheet on Thursday. And as I mentioned a day ago, storms in the area. Today, not the case. It's warm, winds are down, scoring up, and we've seen some already in this second round. Hitt with that great round of 61. Seen some sub 65 scores from plenty in that early wave.

[00:12:00] >> It is Friday at the Simmons Bank Open for the Seneca Foundation. Austin Hitt came into the week 41st on the Korn Ferry Tour points list. But man, did the 27-year-old light it up today. Twenty-nine on his way out, made the turn, kept it going. This at the 2nd. In their tight. He'd make birdie there.

[00:12:20] >> Then at the par-3 3rd. Great tee shot from Hitt. And this one's going to go. Just give it a little bit of time. There it drops. Hitt was on fire. But like an overcooked steak, Hitt was not done just yet. This at the 4th for three in a row. Austin Hitt, put himself around on the board today. Tack one more birdie. Hitt, a 61 in Round 2. Career low round on the Korn Ferry Tour. Trying to move up the points list. We got a lot of big names around the top

of this leaderboard. Trent Phillips shot 64 a day ago. This one at 13. Gets him within two. So Phillips right there as well.

[00:13:03] >> Here at the 14th, Trent Phillips. Putt for eagle. This would tie him for the lead.

[00:13:10] >> He's going to put from here. On line too.

[00:13:11] >> Back to Alvaro Ortiz here at the 13th. Twenty-nine-year -old. Just on the outside in terms of the points looking in. Coming into the week 24th. That is just sensational right there. As we head out to the par-5 14th, Blanchet with his second.

[00:13:52] >> Two hundred and fifty-fifty yards for Blanchet. Trying to hit a big draw up and over the trees. This is drawing hard.

[00:14:03] >> Not a fortuitous kick there. The miss is left of the green here.

[00:14:08] >> Shows you that approach from Ortiz. Back at 13, trying to pay it off.

[00:14:15] >> Eagles right.

[00:14:17] >> Just catches that right side.

[00:14:19] >> OK.

[00:14:20] >> I was trying to miss.

[00:14:22] >> Looks like Blanchet is going to wait for the group on 17 to finish out as he sizes up this very difficult third shot, which he was unfortunate to end up in. This golf ball just hit the bank on the left side and kicked across the cart path to this thick rough. Probably some of the thickest on the golf course. The key with this shot is to let gravity do the work in that through swing. You still want speed, but it's going to be longer of a backswing, shorter of a follow through. Trying to pop this up in the air.

[00:14:59] >> Smart shot.

[00:15:01] >> Let's go to 16.

[00:15:10] >> Hundred and fifty yards today. Beautiful.

[00:15:15] >> Blanchet is trying to convert this for his birdie.

[00:15:19] >> Putts are great. Inside the Top 10 on the Korn Ferry Tour. Sees a lot go in.

[00:15:29] >> Kind of like that.

[00:15:31] >> I think like that. Yes.

[00:15:32] >> It's on the middle. Pretty creative up and in, the 2nd.

[00:15:38] >> Here's Phillips.

[00:15:44] >> Yeah, rolls that one in.

[00:15:55] >> Gonzalez will be next. And it's a great angle where they're hitting from on this right side because there's a big hump on the left. So if you're coming from the left side of the fairway, it's really hard to judge your carry number. Whereas right here, you just got to make sure that you stay in your posture with the ball just below your feet. Lower trajectory from Gonzalez. Right over the flag, though.

[00:16:23] >> That compression, you could just hear it. Almost like a perfect high five.

[00:16:29] >> Here's Ortiz at 17. Good tee shot.

[00:16:35] >> Something in behind it. Spin it back. Give yourself an uphill putt. It's trying, but that is going to be so quick.

[00:16:44] >> Very defensive from that position. It's still getting better, though.

[00:17:00] >> Gets it to go. What a great birdie from Gonzalez.

[00:17:05] >> Took a lap, but it dropped. Needed it.

[00:17:07] >> Now, you get 18 up ahead.

[00:17:10] >> Cut right now at 20 under par. Gonzalez took advantage of the very birdieable 17.

[00:17:16] >> Now, Ortiz ripping down the hill.

[00:17:26] >> No issues there.

[00:17:27] >> Ortiz been on a run as of late. It's him at 10-under par.

[00:17:32] >> He made that putt look a little easier than it's been. One of the quickest putts out here.

[00:17:38] >> Now, Gonzalez.

[00:17:40] >> Well, you know you're confident off the tee when you're going right side of the fairway with penalty area on the right. And this is a beautiful looking shot.

[00:17:49] >> Cannot wait to watch Gonzalez on the PGA Tour. As quick as he plays, the swagger, the confidence.

[00:17:56] >> Go back to 17. Ledesma, good angle here.

[00:18:01] >> Something just behind it. A little left. Pull the string.

[00:18:04] >> I think he likes it. He should like it. It's really good.

[00:18:08] >> That's beautiful.

[00:18:10] >> Up to 18. Just off, but a good look for birdie here at the difficult par 4.

[00:18:20] >> Now, the approach shot for Gonzalez was right over the flagstick from 212 yards. This putt is very similar to the one he had on 15. Just on the fringe, above the hole.

It's going to be very quick and break hard to the right. The key is just getting it out on that start line a couple of feet out to the left.

[00:18:47] >> Good line. Really good line right in the middle. What a way to finish.

[00:18:51] >> What a birdie. Hardest hole on the course. Get a laser off the tee. Beautiful second shot. And you get a long one to go.

[00:19:01] >> Back here at 17. Ledesma in tight. Needs to get within one of the lead.

[00:19:09] >> That was always going to in. What are we doing here? Nelson Ledesma, red hot a day ago. Just his third birdie on this Friday.

[00:19:16] >> No bogeys in the second round.

[00:19:19] >> Well, James, everybody chasing Austin Hitt.

[00:19:22] >> Man, did he get off to a good start. Started at the 10th today. Birdied 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. Twenty-nine on his way out, made the turn. This at 2.

[00:19:34] >> Something you have to do well out here at the Legends Club North Course, where wedge it and then convert.

[00:19:41] >> Speaking of converting, this at the 3rd. Good tee shot.

[00:19:46] >> Dripping that one right over the front edge for birdie. Got him to 8-under on the day. And now, at the par-5 4th.

[00:19:52] >> When you're seeing a lot of putts from left to right going in perfect speed in the middle. Now, he's feeling it. It's the toughest putt for a right-hander they say, Shane, but not Austin Hitt.

[00:20:02] >> Yeah. Got it to 9-under with that birdie. Dropped the shot at the 6th. Tacked on one more birdie at 8. Sixty-one, career low round for Austin Hitt.

[00:20:10] >> Started the week 41st on the points list, James, but that's what you can do. More points up for grabs in these final. Six hundred points go to the winner. And Austin Hitt now projected if he can keep this going into that Top 20. And how about Johnny Keefer? Atop the points list, you get an invite into the US Open and the Players Championship next year if you finish atop the points list. Keefer just doing what Keefer does in the Top 20 on this leaderboard.

[00:20:38] >> The Korn Ferry Tour Finals and third round coverage of the Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation. And a little bit of weather on Thursday. It's been really nice both Friday and on this Saturday here in Franklin, Tennessee. Downtown Franklin right here. Get a milkshake, maybe watch a little bit of golf. I'm sure one eye on that Georgia, Tennessee game for so many of the fans. In this area right now, the eyes on Austin Hitt, the way he's been able to play through two-and-a-half rounds here at the Vanderbilt Legends Club, the North Course this week. Right in the smack-dab center of the State of Tennessee. New clubhouse here at the Vanderbilt Legends Club. Hosting a great, great tournament once again here on the Korn Ferry Tour to kickoff these finals. Mention the

weather. Ideal for scoring. It's warm, winds are down. We are seeing a lot of good scores. Shad Tuten with the 63 today. And of course, Ian Gilligan with that 61.

[00:21:32] >> It is Saturday at the Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation. Opportunity for so many of these players to make a move in these Korn Ferry Tour finals. How about the youngster, Ian Gilligan?

[00:21:43] >> Getting it done. He was outside the Top 144 on the points list and his limited start. So needed to make the cut this week. Made the cut and they made a serious, serious move on this Saturday. That birdie at 16, this one at 17. And Gilligan with an opportunity at 18 with a birdie to shoot the tournament scoring record 60. And this was it. This for the best round we've seen around the Vanderbilt Legends Club in this event. Just missing on the right side. But still, Gilligan, an excellent round of golf. Third 61 we have seen this week. Moves him all the way up into a tie for second. As you see there, entered the week 153rd, now projected in the Top 80.

[00:22:30] >> Now, big putt here to avoid back to back bogeys for Hitt.

[00:22:51] >> This is a really big putt for Austin Hitt. About the same distance he had on the last hole that he missed. Really important to keep your eyes still and finish the stroke. That's very easy to get short and quick and just peek at the hole.

[00:23:03] >> It's a gross bogey for Hitt. Just a flip wedge here at the short par 4.

[00:23:10] >> A massive drive. Little too close to the green to spin it.

[00:23:14] >> Inside 50 yards.

[00:23:17] >> For a moment, Austin Hitt had a two shot lead. Bogey at 9, bogey at 10. First time this week he's made multiple bogeys in a round here at the Simmons Bank Open. Now, we've got a host of players tied at 14-under.

[00:23:30] >> Go to the 12. It looks different but it's effective. Eleven and 12 getting up and down for Bauchou this week.

[00:23:41] >> Look at this.

[00:23:42] >> Do it.

[00:23:42] >> Sure.

[00:23:43] >> Wow.

[00:23:44] >> Let's get improve the stats. Pitch in for Bauchou.

[00:23:48] >> Shane, you see all those divots down there? That talks about how difficult the grain was. He just puts it back in the stance, clips it, goes in like a putt.

[00:24:00] >> Now, Austin Hitt looking up at a name for the first time in a while.

[00:24:06] >> This is just 94 yards for Hitt. It's very difficult to get close. Requires a lot of precision. This is a narrow green. Need to take an aggressive line, just left of the flag.



[00:24:14] >> Beautiful. It's a shot you have to put way back in the stance and kind of trap a wedge. You don't want to get along, so.

[00:24:31] >> Hundred and sixty-two yards for Ledesma. The ideal shot is getting a cut into this right-hand hole location. But the ball is above Ledesma's feet. So either have to exaggerate the cut or play the draw with the lie. You just got to make sure you don't cross target. That bunker on the left is hole high with the flag. So it's pretty narrow up there on that green.

[00:24:59] >> Really nice iron shot.

[00:25:02] >> Here's Hitt at 11.

[00:25:12] >> Quick putt here.

[00:25:14] >> Let's do a raise of bogey at the previous hole. OK, back on track. If there's anything in his game, it's that club right there.

[00:25:25] >> How about the two birdie putts in a row for Ortiz? Hit it a foot at 16. That at 17. Did a little this a day ago, James. Made a late run. Shoot that 65 on Friday. He has torn up the back nine. Now, Hitt.

[00:25:45] >> Even though Hitt is pitching back into the green, this is still going to have a good amount of rollout. Got to elevate something a couple places onto the green. Ideally leaving yourself an uphill putt. When you can't see the putting circus, it's all about visualization. Getting up onto the green, finding a spot, and then imagining the trajectory of the shot.

[00:26:19] >> It went high. Sounded a little heavy. Get a little deceleration there.

[00:26:25] >> Back to the 13. Important putt here for Nelson Ledesma. Hadn't made a birdie since the 1st.

[00:26:32] >> Compared to being 12-under the first two days, different kind of game. One of those rounds where you're having to fight with your C plus game. It could turn into his A game if he's able to drop this one.

[00:26:45] >> And he does. Good putt from Ledesma. Opportunity upcoming.

[00:26:49] >> On 5 next. Easiest hole in the golf course.

[00:26:55] >> Now, Hitt. Up the hill. This has been slow for so many players this week. Tough to get it to the hole.

[00:27:02] >> And when you have a slower putt, when you're used to having a lot of quick putts on this golf course, very easy to get a quicker tempo and kind of jab at it. So you want to make sure that you hit it with more pace but keep the rhythm.

[00:27:24] >> What a putt. Right in the middle for Austin Hitt.

[00:27:28] >> Up at 18. Ortiz mentioned how well he's played the back nine this week. Has not made a bogey on the back nine around this North Course. Going to have to hole this to continue that trend.

[00:27:43] >> This is a club here. He's had a nightmare year on the greens outside the Top 130. Thirty-two of putting statistics. So he's found something this week. Can he get this one to go? Look like just miss this putt left.

[00:28:02] >> How insane for Ortiz. Cannot believe that didn't move right.

[00:28:06] >> Everyone is thinking this has to go to the water. That was a great putt. It would have been a fantastic scrambling par here at the difficult 18th. Two for Ortiz and still a very positive Saturday. And he's right there.

[00:28:23] >> First bogey of this Saturday comes at the last. Not the first player to run into trouble at 18.

[00:28:31] >> Just 105 yards for Hitt. This flag is only 5 paces on, slightly down breeze. Would love to land something between the front of the green and the flag. Get it to one hop stop. It's really important when you're a power player like Austin Hitt to be able to dial back the speed on these wedge shots to control your distance.

[00:28:50] >> He's put himself in really good positions here off the tee in this third round. He's only missed two fairways. It's just about getting it close enough with these clubs in these wedge shots.

[00:29:10] >> There we go. There we go. That's more like it. Pretty approach. Got a little kick off the collar. Going to have a good look. Quick down the hill, but an opportunity to get to 16-under par.

[00:29:25] >> Caleb VanArragon here at 17. Oh, wow. Racing by. I tell you, take a deep exhale because that was gone. That's the quickest putt of that green.

[00:29:53] >> Perfect is the speed. Austin Hitt pouring it in. Up and down day for Hitt. Got off to a great start. Start struggles in the middle of the round. That's now back to back for Hitt. And he is back atop this leaderboard in Tennessee.

[00:30:07] >> Bauchou up ahead.

[00:30:14] >> Laying up off the tee here.

[00:30:15] >> Don't hate it.

[00:30:17] >> Like it a lot to this front hole location. And that's exactly why he proved us right.

[00:30:26] >> VanArragon just off, trying to close things out with three birdies in a row.

[00:30:39] >> Good finish for VanArragon, the rookie on the Korn Ferry Tour.

[00:30:43] >> He's card through Q school.

[00:30:45] >> Bauchou, just a little bit left for his birdie.

[00:30:48] >> Just breathe on this one. Left to right breaker. The quickest putt on the course.

[00:31:02] >> Or just dead center, firm. I like it. Confident.

[00:31:04] >> That is playing your own game right there, Zach Bauchou. Iron off the tee. Great wedge shot. Birdie at the 17. Back to tied at 16-under par.

[00:31:12] >> VanArragon at the 18. Trying to clean things up. Slow start to his Saturday, but came on strong to finish. A round a 68 for the 24-year-old.

[00:31:26] >> Zach Bauchou in the rough here at 18. Awkward this tough, tough closing hole.

[00:31:33] >> Just looking middle of the green.

[00:31:40] >> Sit right there. That's a fairly good shot. No trouble. Kept it safe. Only hole high.

[00:31:55] >> This from Bauchou. Right in the middle again. Just like at 12. What a way to finish.

[00:32:01] >> The hardest hole in the course. He's playing nearly half a shot over par. Let's just make a bomb. I think that putt is working for Bauchou.

[00:32:12] >> That's the third birdie of the day at 18, Bauchou. Talk about an exclamation mark to a great round of golf.

[00:32:21] >> Not only did he make it, but this was going some 8 or 9 feet by the hole. So right here, he's like, please catch the pin. Yes. That might have went off the green. Guess what, it's in the bottom of the cup. Fantastic birdie for Bauchou to finish his round.

[00:32:38] >> Birdie at 17, and another look here at 18. Unlikely three to close for Zach Bauchou. Sixty-four on this Saturday. Matching a round a day ago.

[00:32:51] >> Look at this leaderboard. Bauchou at 17-under par. Austin Hitt, both in maybe unfamiliar territory this season, James, both with an opportunity to really start these finals with a victory.

[00:33:01] >> I like what he said there. He said, I'm just going to stick to my game plan and get ready to win. And he's just got to manifest it. Considering like you said, he hasn't been inside the Top 10, now he's leading. Sorry, he's one back of Bauchou and he's been in the best position he ever has on the Korn Ferry Tour. So it's going to be a big day for him. He got past the Saturday, which has usually been the bane of his existence when it comes to scoring average on the Korn Ferry Tour. He did -- He showed some really good pressure, made putts. And I think it's going to be interesting with the two guys at the top of the leaderboard, how they're going to battle it out and hold off the rest of this field, especially the number one on the points list, Johnny Keefer.

[00:33:40] >> Yeah. Johnny Keefer just floating around 64 today. Quiet round of golf considering who he is. And Johnny Keefer, as you look at the board, four back of Bauchou, three back of Hitt. Keefer wins, that's three victories in the season. You get that promotion late in the year like we saw a season ago.

[00:33:59] >> And Keefer's an assassin. He probably thought he was going to be further back after he finished today, but he is close and he is hunting.

[00:34:12] >> The Korn Ferry Tour finals, final round coverage of the Simmons Bank Open for the Snedeker Foundation. Warm Sunday here in Franklin, Tennessee, about 30 minutes or so from Nashville as we kick off the Korn Ferry Tour finals right here at the Vanderbilt Legends Club. The North Course hosting this week once again. We've got a bunch leaderboard on this Sunday. A couple players looking to win for the first time in their Korn Ferry Tour careers, and really give themselves opportunity to get one of those 20 cards handed out at the end of the season, heading to the PGA Tour in 2026. New clubhouse this year at the Vanderbilt Legends Club. Awesome golf course. Really great facility for the golf team, both the men's and the women's. Korn Ferry Tour, always excited to get back here. Get an opportunity to dip your toe in the Nashville scene.

[00:35:01] >> Hitt here at the 10th.

[00:35:08] >> Eighty-six yards for Hitt. Off an upper slope, so you can be more aggressive.

[00:35:13] >> He's going to take Bauchou to school there with a similar line.

[00:35:18] >> Been both putting from off the green.

[00:35:23] >> To 11. Approach from Keefer.

[00:35:26] >> Quick putt. Got to make a move. He's been doing all season. Talk about his skill set, ninth in driving distance, 17th in terms of green in regulation percentage, 15th in putting average.

[00:35:53] >> Just off the green here at 10. And that new putter again. Showing up.

[00:36:01] >> That's it. I'm getting a putter next week.

[00:36:03] >> Bauchou here at 11.

[00:36:15] >> Front left hole location. Get this yardage correct.

[00:36:21] >> Just like that. What a shot. Dialed with those wedges this week. Now, Hitt trying to answer.

[00:36:42] >> OK. That's perfect position. You want to be putting straight uphill here.

[00:36:48] >> Mentioned some of the players making a move. Patrick Welch here.

[00:36:55] >> Par 5. Well done. Very well done.

[00:36:59] >> Back to Bauchou and Hitt. Hitt will be first to go.

[00:37:32] >> Right in the middle again for Austin Hitt. Slow start to the day. Austin hit catching fire.

[00:37:39] >> Now, Bauchou. Different style of putting as of late. It is working this week.

[00:37:50] >> Trying to marry line and speed. I see there's about a cup outside right.

[00:37:58] >> Perfect read, perfect speed. Great answer, Bauchou.

[00:38:02] >> Go to 14. Welch to get to 17-under. Curls that one in the left side. Nice up and in.

[00:38:13] >> Bauchou looking at the flag. Trying to cut it away from it. That's right at the center of the green if it's the right yardage.

[00:38:39] >> Now, this could get closer here. That is a perfect shot to this 210-yard par 3 for Bauchou. What a time to do it after he's feeling the heat of Austin Hitt.

[00:38:51] >> I mean, James, this has been the hardest hole today in this final round, this 12th hole. Normally, the 18th second toughest. But right now, just five birdies here at the 12. Playing well over par.

[00:39:01] >> Got to 15. VanArragon just off the green. Off the fairway, excuse me.

[00:39:06] >> Awkward back right hole location. Just anything in -- Just a little left or straight at it.

[00:39:13] >> What angle?

[00:39:14] >> Had no angle.

[00:39:15] >> And he created his own.

[00:39:16] >> If Bauchou can run another one in, extend this lead.

[00:39:21] >> This is a makeable putt for Bauchou. You get it on the right section all of a sudden, and trying to scramble for a three. Looks like trying to make a two. Outside right on this one. Very critical to marry line and speed.

[00:39:35] >> Still very quick. Need to pay attention. Can't be too aggressive.

[00:39:53] >> What a putt. Another birdie for Bauchou. Been dominating this back nine on this North Course. Has not made a bogey on the back this week.

[00:40:04] >> Now, Caleb at the 15.

[00:40:09] >> Keep pace. Good roll there. I mean, that is a very unlikely birdie considering where he was off the tee.

[00:40:15] >> Back here at 14. Austin Hitt is going to have to start doing something.

[00:40:26] >> I'm trying to treat this chip like a putt. This would kick right when it lands on the green.

[00:40:30] >> Easy now.

[00:40:30] >> Thought he might have got the putter on that. It looks kind of bare and tight, but still confident. This also for eagle now for Bauchou.

[00:40:42] >> Like putter here for Bauchou. Just trying to get good speed on it.

[00:40:51] >> Really for Bauchou, you would like to have made that, but it's just get it within a 2-foot circle. Already two in front. And after your playing partner's got a little bit of work left to make birdie.

[00:41:04] >> Got to 16. If you remember, there you go, Ortiz nearly made a hole-in-one here at 16. Opportunity for another two.

[00:41:13] >> Yeah. Great putt. Ortiz has dominated his par 3 this week. Three birdies over the four rounds here at 16.

[00:41:22] >> Now, Bauchou just finishing up for his birdie.

[00:41:27] >> And, James, you said it, didn't need to make eagle. He understood four was very good in terms of where he's at on this leaderboard.

[00:41:34] >> But see what he did there? Finishing out. There's no need for him to finish out any other day in a stroke play event. But he's got Austin Hitt sitting there with around 10 feet for his birdie. He's like, I want him to know I'm in the cup before.

[00:41:45] >> That was the first time that Bauchou decided to finish out before Austin Hitt. This feels like a turning point. If Hitt were to make this or miss it, that would go into Bauchou's favor. Got to just hit a confident putt here. Remember that these are the putts you practice in your drills. You have to want to step up to the plate. And that's what Austin Hitt said. I need to come out today wanting to win. Not a lot of movement in this one.

[00:42:16] >> Made a putt here at the 14th a day ago from a similar distance. Needed it at the time. Needs it right now.

[00:42:24] >> He's putted well this back nine.

[00:42:28] >> That's a great answer for Austin Hitt. Not done yet. Not done yet.

[00:42:34] >> That's a big turning point as well. If that putt misses, it's a lot different.

[00:42:44] >> Gilligan here at 15. Important one here. Gives himself a little breathing room. Walking it in.

[00:42:51] >> Yeah, he knows it. Knows how big that was.

[00:42:57] >> This approach shot also sets up well for Bauchou. Trying to hit his pull fade.

[00:43:17] >> I mean, just relentless golf right now from Zach Bauchou. Every shot right at it.

[00:43:24] >> He's showing no signs of being in -- up at the top of the leaderboard, like someone that's never won on the Korn Ferry Tour before. I mean, he just took it at a tucked right hole location. Straight over the flag.

[00:43:38] >> Now, Welch on the fairway here at 18.

[00:43:42] >> Great drive. One good swing to finish.

[00:43:49] >> He likes it. What a shot. An eagle. Walk off for Welch.

[00:43:57] >> How good is that? Welch gets up to minus-19 now. Just posted -- projected 33rd on the points list.

[00:44:06] >> And for Bauchou, now an opportunity to extend this lead to three.

[00:44:35] >> Just relentless golf right now from Zach Bauchou. Another birdie. Birdies at 11, 12, 14. Now, 15.

[00:44:47] >> Go to Ortiz here at 17. He's ripped up these final few holes all week long. Another birdie.

[00:45:03] >> And James, for the first time on this back nine, Hitt has the opportunity here to put a little pressure on Bauchou if this could go.

[00:45:10] >> Yeah. Bauchou's got a tricky putt, downhill left to righter. So this is that match play effect again. First in wins. He needs to get this to go to apply some pressure.

[00:45:31] >> Just not enough steam. It'll be a birdie. You're three back with one to play.

[00:45:37] >> Yeah. It's easy for us to sit here and be like, he should have hit that, but that was kind of a quick right to left putt, even though fantastic to have that eagle opportunity. We've seen him with his last three attempts, it's kind of hit his lines, but just run out of a little bit of speed.

[00:45:55] >> Back here, closing hole. Ian Gilligan, who got off to a rough start, has played excellent to finish. This for birdie at 18. How about it for Ian Gilligan, the 22-year-old? Four birdies over his last five holes to post a round under par and has played his way to Columbus.

[00:46:15] >> Now, back down the fairway. Two players left on the golf course. See what Hitt can do.

[00:46:33] >> It's kind of a break there. Bouncing through that bunker. He looked like he was trying to fashion a high fade there really. As Emilia said, you couldn't really take it anywhere at the green.

[00:46:45] >> Now, Bauchou. All that's left is one swing. One more good one.

[00:47:01] >> This is drifting towards the left bunker. Trying to get a good kick.

[00:47:06] >> Just fine.

[00:47:07] >> That's right where he would have been looking to hit it.

[00:47:12] >> Back here at the 18th. Bauchou, back of the green. Hitt just off the green. And really the drama is on Hitt's hands if he could somehow pitch this in, put a little pressure on Bauchou.

[00:47:25] >> But even though Austin has missed it towards the fat portion of the green, it's not an easy shot. Trying to pitch it over a little knob, and then everything is going to kick to the right. Would love to come with a bit of an elevated chip shot with some spin, which is doable out of this Zoysia, but got to give it a look to pitch this in.

[00:47:50] >> Well done from Austin Hitt. Really well done. Going to be his best finish of his career on the Korn Ferry Tour in his 50th start.

[00:47:59] >> Now, Bauchou, when you think about his experience in terms of playing golf, both as an amateur and collegiate player and professional, part of that winning Oklahoma State team back in 2018, went two and one in match play, with wins both in the semifinals and that championship match. Been around so many players that have had major success on the PGA Tour. For Bauchou, just a couple of putts away.

[00:48:36] >> Made a long one here yesterday. You do again? What a putt from Bauchou.

[00:48:40] >> Wow.

[00:48:40] >> I tell you, Shane, when Austin Hitt's pitch shot was creeping by the hole from Bauchou's angle, he would have taken a deep sigh of relief now knowing that he had three putts for the victory. And he'll go ahead and just a perfect pace putt. Something he's done great all week long is those long putts.

[00:49:00] >> Yeah. You think about what happened here a day ago with Zach Bauchou. He hit it in tight at 17, made birdie there, then made a long one with a lot of speed here at 18. Unlikely putt to go in.

[00:49:09] >> No matter if it goes or does, he's going to finish second alone here in Tennessee.

[00:49:15] >> That important number right there. Projected 24th on the points list. Four spots out of that PGA Tour card. Very positive start to his finals campaign.

[00:49:33] >> Nice up and in. Great week for Austin Hitt. Very, very proud of the way he's performed. Simply got outplayed by a guy who found it on and around the greens in Zach Bauchou.

[00:49:50] >> Bauchou, this for a 31 on the way in. And a closing round 64 to win for the first time on the Korn Ferry Tour.

[00:50:18] >> Bauchou, a winner at the Simmons Bank Open.

[00:50:23][ Applause ]

[00:50:31] >> The battle between those two, a lot of fun to watch all afternoon long.



[00:50:36] >> Champion, Zach Bauchou.

[00:50:37] >> You think about Bauchou, James, the way he pitched the golf ball this week, the way he putted the golf ball this week. We've always talked about the ball strike and it's always been there. But the short game.

[00:50:49] >> Impressive, Shane. And a guy that came to the Simmons Bank Open last year, 35th on the points list, didn't get his PGA Tour card after the heartbreaking miss of the Tour Championships. Now, projected seventh on the points list. And really looks like he's one of the more informed players on the Korn Ferry Tour outside of a guy like Johnny Keefer, Smotherman, and Shipley.

[00:51:10] >> Considering the way he has played some of the golf courses to finish out the season in his career, I'd be carrying a whole lot of confidence over the next three events to close out 2025. Well, Zach Bauchou is your champion here at the Vanderbilt Legends Club.

[00:51:26] >> Bauchou, 64, 64, 64 over the final 54 holes to win for the first time in his 55th start on the Korn Ferry Tour. Bauchou, impressive in and around the greens, the scrambling, the pitching, the putting.

[00:51:41] >> Great to watch.

[00:51:43] >> Of course, Bauchou, an opportunity to just roll along in these finals. And as we saw this week, so much opportunity for so many players to move up the points list and give themselves an opportunity to get into that Top 20. We got three events left in this Korn Ferry Tour season. A lot of smiles from so many of the players this week in Tennessee. The golf course held up. But it was a Zach Bauchou show. What a week from Bauchou. What a win.