

ILLINOIS GOLFER

THE OPENING 9

Saturday,
July 10, 2021



Tim Cronin / Illinois Golfer

THE FINISH Fans populate the 18th green hillside at TPC Deere Run. A gallery of about 10,000 Friday was big enough to be called a crowd.

Deere's leader list led by Luke List

REPORTING FROM SILVIS, ILLINOIS

1 Luke List once missed the cut in the Russian Open.

Friday saw him rushin' to the top of the leader board in the 50th John Deere Classic via an 8-under-par 63. And he didn't even have to kill moose and squirrel along the way. Instead, he bagged eight birdies at TPC Deere Run and stands at 13-under-par 129 at the halfway point.

List is best described as a journeyman player. The 36-year-old Vanderbilt grad has been around so long he won on the Korn Ferry Tour both under that name and when it was called the Nationwide Tour, back in 2012. He has a couple of second places on the PGA Tour, but seeks that first victory. Maybe this will be the week, even as he comes off three straight missed cuts.

"Momentum is kind of funny and you can find it in the smallest of things," List said. "I had a good round with some buddies at home. One round and I'm like, OK, I feel like I've got my game."

List has had more important things on his mind of late, which partly explains the missed cuts. His newborn boy **Harri-son**, born a month premature, spent two

weeks in the ICU with RSV, a respiratory virus, before pulling through.

"He was intubated for a couple days," List said. "Luckily, he's back home and growing and eating like a champ, and going to be big soon. Everything is great now."

Sebastian Munoz is a stroke back at 12-under 130 thanks to a bogey-free 4-under 67, and at the moment is low Colombian, five strokes ahead of **Camilo Villegas**, his boyhood idol.

"Camilo has been the Colombian golfer forever since I was a kid," said Munoz, who has missed only four greens.

2 There were two other 63s, authored by **Chase Seiffert** and **Lucas Glover**, who are part of a seven-way tie for third at 11-under 131. The latter, while without a win in a decade, is the better known tourist thanks to victory in the 2009 U.S. Open, but Seiffert can't be discounted.

His tie for ninth in the 2018 Travelers came about after he Monday-qualified, which proves that even longtime mini-tour players can cash in. Friday, he went 6-under in a six-hole stretch which including pitching in on the third hole.

"To see those things go in, sometimes you need good breaks to happen for sure," Seiffert said.

Glover's eight-birdie, no-bogey trip was about as good as it gets without eagles and albatrosses involved. As might be expected, Glover's short game was superb.

"I wedged it very nice today and putted well, which you have to do here because you get a lot of opportunities," Glover said. "It's a fun golf course, and barring some crazy conditions you're going to get a lot of opportunities."

3 Ryan Moore finished with a bogey on No. 9, but before that, he was re-prising his run to the title in 2016, when he played the final 46 holes bogey-free.

"I just want to keep doing exactly what I did the last two days," Moore said. "You keep that pace shooting 5-, 6-under each day, you're going to be right there in the mix on Sunday. Obviously I did the right things these first two."

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Moore and List have a history that Moore surely recalls fondly. They met in the title match of the 2004 U.S. Amateur, with Moore scoring the victory on Winged Foot's West Course.

4 He'd hardly be called a dark horse, but **Jason Dufner** is at the least lurking, tied for 12th at 9-under 133 after a 68-65 start. Dufner's best known for winning the 2013 PGA Championship, but has two wins since, most recently the 2017 Memorial. His best finish this season is a tie for 26th at Pebble Beach.

5 **Doug Ghim** continued to play well on Friday, with a 4-under 67 for a two-day total of 9-under 133. That's consistency, which is what he's been looking for – except for the start.

"One over after three is not what you're looking for," Ghim said. "I was hitting good shots, but lipped out twice in my first three holes. That usually means you're pretty close. I just had to stay patient."

Once the putts began to fall, they fell a lot. He birdied the fourth hole from just inside 19 feet, then added four more birds on the back nine. The five birdies added up to 50 feet, 11 inches of putts. And there were two more near-misses on Nos. 15 and 17.

That bogey on No. 3? It's his only one of the week.

"Bogeys out here are detrimental because the scoring's so good," Ghim said. "There's always that scoreable stretch on the back nine. You just try to stay patient and the putts fell."

Ghim says his putting hasn't been great, but he's 28-of-28 within five feet so far this week, which you have to be to climb up the leader board. And his birdie on No. 4, tracked by Shotlink at 18 feet, 10 inches, was a bonus.

He goes into Saturday tied for 12th place, four strokes behind leader List.

6 **Maverick McNealy** aced the 136-yard 16th hole, a one-hopper that wowed those in the gallery of about 10,000 who were there. He used a pitching wedge to do so. It's the first ace in the Deere since 2014, when **Charles Howell III** aced the third hole. McNealy is at 7-under 135 and tied for 24th.

7 Goin' home: Pekin native **D.A. Points** ran his astounding record of missing the cut in the Deere to 13 times in 14 starts, which makes no sense at all given his talent. Points, a three-time winner on the PGA Tour, tied for 38th in 2011 and otherwise has never played Deere Run on the weekend. This year, he scored 71-70 for 1-under 141 and missed the cut by three strokes.

Defending champion **Dylan Frittelli** also missed the cut, missing a 6-footer for par at the last to stay at 4-under, the cut line. He sent it two feet past the hole, sinking the bogey comebacker to finish at 68-71-139, a stroke short.

Frittelli is the fifth straight defending champion to fail to play the weekend.

Jordan Spieth, the winner in 2015, didn't even show up in 2016, Ryan Moore missed the cut in 2017, **Bryson DeChambeau** withdrew late in the first round in 2018, and **Michael Kim** missed the cut in 2019.

The cut to the low 65 and ties came at 4-under 138, with 72 players advancing. Among the notables failing to do so aside from Points and Frittelli: K.J. Choi and Aaron Baddeley (139), Mark Wilson, Bill Haas and Harry Higgs (140), Brian Harman and Beau Hossler (141), Sung Kang (142 after an opening 67), David Perkins (144) and Kevin Streelman (145). It's the sixth Deere cut at 138.

8 There were three more withdrawals on Friday: **Fabian Gomez** went 15 holes and dropped out standing at 1-over, **Kramer Hickok** played 11 holes and pulled the pin after a double-bogey moved him to 3-over, and **J.B. Holmes** went double-bogey, triple-bogey on the second and third holes, falling to 6-over, and called it a day. Update: **Si Woo Kim**, a Thursday WD, stopped because of a back injury.

9 Saturday TV schedule: Golf Channel from noon to 2 p.m., and CBS from 2-5 p.m. PGA Tour Radio on Sirius/XM starts at noon and runs until the last player putts out. Tee times were shifted from the weekend standard of twosomes off the first tee to threesomes off both Nos. 1 and 10, starting at 10 a.m., to escape overnight thunderstorms that are expected to run into the early morning.

Deere Numbers

Leaders

1 Luke List	129 -13
2 Sebastian Munoz	130 -12
T3 Adam Schenk	131 -11
T3 Chesson Hadley	131 -11
T3 Brandon Hagy	131 -11
T3 Chase Siffert	131 -11
T3 Chez Reavie	131 -11
T3 Lucas Glover	131 -11
T3 Ryan Moore	131 -11
T10 Nick Taylor	132 -10
T10 Patrick Rodgers	132 -10
T12 Doug Ghim	133 - 9
T12 Jhonattan Vegas	133 - 9
T12 Kevin Na	133 - 9
T12 Jason Dufner	133 - 9
T12 Russell Henley	133 - 9
T12 Hank Lebioda	133 - 9

Key Tee Times

11:26 a.m. CT

Jhonattan Vegas	133
Kevin Na	133
Jason Dufner	133

11:37 a.m. CT

Nick Taylor	132
Patrick Rodgers	132
Doug Ghim	132

11:48 a.m. CT

Chez Reavie	131
Lucas Glover	131
Ryan Moore	131

11:59 a.m. CT

Chesson Hadley	131
Brandon Hagy	131
Chase Seiffert	131

12:10 p.m. CT

Luke List	129
Sebastian Munoz	130
Adam Schenk	130