

## LECOM Suncoast Classic (Korn Ferry Tour)

Lakewood National • Lakewood Ranch, Fla. • April 18-21, 2024

### Golf Course Superintendent

#### Joel Ehrhart, GCSAA

Years as GCSAA Member: 12

Years at Lakewood National: 1

Years as a Superintendent: 11

Previous Courses: The Oaks Club (super), Coral Creek (super), Plantation (super), Sarasota National (super)

Hometown: Pittsburgh, Pa.

Education: Edison State College

Professional Tournaments Hosted: This is Ehrhart's 2<sup>nd</sup> Korn Ferry event after previously hosting LPGA Q-School.

For superintendent contact info, contact Mike Strauss, GCSAA at [mstrauss@gcsaa.org](mailto:mstrauss@gcsaa.org) or 785-312-5164

### Other Key Golf Personnel

Martin Harris, Assistant Superintendent

Max Rudder, Assistant Superintendent

Ryan Green, Equipment Manager

Nick Campbell, PGA Professional

Number of Employees: (36 for both courses and grounds)

Number of Tournament Volunteers: 15

Golf Course Dog: Phoebe, 5-months, Golden Retriever

### Course Architect

Architect (year): Brandon Johnson (2017)

Renovation Architect (year):

### Twitter

Superintendent - @EhrhartJoel

Tournament - @KornFerryTour

GCSAA - @GCSAA

Tournament Fact Sheets for the PGA TOUR, LPGA, PGA TOUR Champions, Korn Ferry and Epson Tours and USGA and PGA of America championships can be found at: <https://www.gcsaa.org/media/tournament-fact-sheets>

### Tournament Set-up

Par: 36-35--71

Yardage: 7,113 (unofficial)

Stimpmeter: 12

### Course Statistics

Average Green Size: 8,200 sq. ft.

Acres of Fairway: 45

Acres of Rough: 55

Number of Sand Bunkers: 57

Number of Water Hazards: 21

Number of Holes Water is in Play: 14

Soil Conditions: 3% silt

Water Sources: Effluent

Drainage Conditions: Good

### Turfgrass

Greens: TifEagle bermudagrass .110"

Collars: TifGrand bermudagrass .210"

Approaches: TifGrand / Celebration bermudagrass .210"

Tees: Celebration bermudagrass .300"

Fairways: Celebration bermudagrass .350"

Rough: Celebration bermudagrass 2"

### Additional Notes

- The nines are flipped for the tournament.
- A potential bunker renovation could take place in the summer of 2025.
- Ehrhart is current president of the Suncoast Superintendents Association chapter of GCSAA.
- Equipment manager Ryan Green followed Ehrhart to Lakewood. The Jamaican has a degree in electrical engineering.

(more on next page)

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Since 1926 the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) has been the top professional association for the men and women who manage golf courses in the United States and worldwide. From its headquarters in Lawrence, Kan., the association provides education, information and representation to 20,000 members in more than 78 countries. GCSAA's mission is to serve its members, advance their profession and improve communities through enjoyment, growth and vitality of the game of golf.

**From Ehrhart:**

**Changes to the Course:** “We increased the width of the 4th tee to allow them to move the players back if they choose. Before the tee was very narrow and heavily shaded. We broadened it by about 5 feet and have since thinned out the dense canopy that did not allow a great visual from the tee. Other than that, no changes have taken place.”

**Weather and effect it has on conditions heading into tournament:** “We went from one extreme to another from 2023 being in record breaking drought due to an El Nino pattern in the winter of 23/24. Knowing that weather was going to be very suspect this winter we adjusted our fungicide program and fertility programs to play more “defense” than we typically would. We feel it has paid off tremendously with the conditions of the course considering the amount of play both golf courses receive here at Lakewood National. We went on a stretch in January-February where we only had three quality days of sunshine in a three-week period that makes growing turf grass in Southwest Florida tough. Mix in nearly 13,000 rounds in the month of February and that makes it extremely challenging to grow any quality turf grass. The team really executed well on the plans we put in place to make sure we gave the turf the best potential to withstand the stresses this winter. Although we haven’t received much more rain year to date than last year our irrigation pond level is in much better shape due to us being able to really cut back on water from all the overcast days.”

**Other challenges to get course ready this year:** “We have a motto down at Golf Course Maintenance that every day is tournament day and we say this because we feel like every day at Lakewood is a tournament. As long as our standard is tournament-like conditions we can control all of our variables and let Mother Nature control the rest. This makes getting ready for this event a little less stressful than some would think. I will say one thing we don’t have to worry about this year is having advance week the same week as our club championship. That made a challenge for us from an agronomy standpoint. Trying to control speeds for one level of play demand versus another in a short window made things a little tricky.”