

**ROUND 3 INTERVIEW**  
**February 11, 2023**

**STEPHEN AMES (-9)**



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**Q. What is it like to be winning here for the first time with the beautiful weather?**

**STEPHEN AMES:** Yes, no, it was a great week. Today -- obviously the first day and the second day -- last day the weather was fantastic. Yesterday was a little overcast, but I think overall everybody enjoyed the week.

**Q. Totally. You play 18 holes today with par. Was it your game plan today?**

**STEPHEN AMES:** No, that's never a plan to have 18 pars, but at the end of the day it ended up being 18 pars. At one time it got close, within one shot, with Mark and then he faulted with two double bogeys and he kind of opened the door a little bit. So my mindset the last five or six holes ended up being let's just get home with pars. I did the job I needed to do.

**Q. How can you describe the golf course and what do you remember about this week in Morocco?**

**STEPHEN AMES:** Golf course overall from -- I played it in '91 I think was the last time I played it and it wasn't quite the golf course that it is today. The golf course today is a lot tougher than it was back then thanks to the redo of the greens that they've done.

A lot of the professionals obviously have -- I wouldn't say they're over thrilled with the condition of the redesign that he did and kind of had to go across at that, too, because it's a little severe in some spots. For us it was very difficult, so I'm just wondering what the average amateur who's playing, it's got to be even more difficult for them.

I think overall the condition itself was very good. The greens were fantastic, the tee boxes, fairways were very nice and of course the weather was adequate to go with it as well.

What I remember about Morocco I think overall, the Moroccan cuisine suits my palate very much, so I had a fun week eating all the different foods that I had this week. Yeah, I was very much in my element here.

**Q. And did you play (indiscernible)?**

**STEPHEN AMES:** I played -- I think I played one Hassan Trophy years ago and then obviously I played Moroccan Open when I was on the European Tour, I think five or six times I think I did.



**Q. So this is the fifth title for you on the PGA TOUR, I think?**

**STEPHEN AMES:** Third on the Champions.

**Q. Third on the Champions, OK. I hope that you will keep good memories because it's here in Morocco.**

**STEPHEN AMES:** Yes.

**Q. What can you say about all the tournament, about the organization, the level of the tournament, the competition, everything? What do you think?**

**STEPHEN AMES:** Well, this is up there with all the good events, great events that we have on our tour right now. The beauty about this event is the fact that it's in another country, which I'm used to traveling and playing the world. Obviously I can say a lot of my American friends are not, so I think their eyes have been very wide open.

For me, like I mentioned to your other colleague, was the fact that I enjoy coming here because of the cuisine of the food. I enjoy it very much. This is very much up my alley when I came here.

**Q. (Untranslated question.)**

**STEPHEN AMES:** So again, I'll answer your first question, the first question is obviously yes, I'm going to come back as defending champion. Yes, I will be back.

Second, the ambiance, I guess like any country who's building golf up in it, there's obviously some etiquette that still need to be learned. One like the cell phones going off while we're trying to hit the golf ball, that's just all part of the growing up aspect of learning golf and the etiquette of it.

But the attendance was fantastic. A lot of people were out there watching, which is fabulous. I think overall everything about the whole event was run and done very nicely. We had a lot of fun. The transportation, the food, the flight, everything about it was just very easy. It was painstaking [sic] let's put it that way, didn't have anything to worry about.

**Q. What was the best shot of the day?**

**STEPHEN AMES:** The best shot of the day?

**Q. Yeah.**

**STEPHEN AMES:** The last one.

**Q. What was the key, the key point to win the tournament?**



**STEPHEN AMES:** What was the key? What? Sorry.

**Q. The key for you mentally and technically to win.**

**STEPHEN AMES:** Technically it was I didn't have too many swing thoughts this week, which was nice because normally I play with quite a few. The mental part was what I worked on the hardest this week, trying to stay in my -- out of my way, one, and to stay in the present, play one shot at a time, play each shot as if it's my last, which I did very nicely. Especially today considering that Mark kind of sneaked up on me a little bit there and I still hung in there and did my routine, stuck to my process and I hit the shots that I needed to hit coming down the end. So technical-wise I think it was there.

Mentally it was the fact that I needed to step up a little bit more and become a little stronger. Since I've been working with my psychologist the last year and a half, it's definitely helped and it showed today and it showed this week.

**Q. Stephen, your first win since 2021, obviously a great year last year but just couldn't get a win to finish. What's it feel like to be back in the winner's circle?**

**STEPHEN AMES:** Thanks for rubbing it in, yeah.

You know, I guess it's -- the first thing that comes to the top of my list is the fact that I don't have to ask Mike Caldwell, the president of -- CEO of Mitsubishi, for an invite for next year to Hualalai. I'm now exempt for two more years, which is great. It's the first event in Hawaii. In that respect, I know my wife is extremely happy with me there.

I think, you know, last year was obviously finishing eighth on the Money List and not winning was a great year, but at the same time we're always striving to win. The competition was there and I played nicely. So it's nice that my second event that I played this year that I come out with a W. So yeah, I'm looking forward to the rest of the year and see what happens and go from there.

**Q. How would you describe in one word your experience in Morocco?**

**STEPHEN AMES:** Fantastic.

