

ROUND 3 INTERVIEW
April 1, 2023

SAM STEVENS (-8)



Q. Sam, overall what were the keys to your round today and really just a strong week so far for you?

SAM STEVENS: Yeah, I hit the ball pretty nicely today, got off to a good start and was able to make a couple birdies early. Then in the middle of my round I still hit mostly good shots, I just -- it's a tough course and got in a couple weird spots and made a few bogeys, which wasn't great. Then started hitting it good again at the end of the round and made some birdies to finish. Overall I was very happy with it.

Q. What was it like mentally kind of riding through the swings of that, the hot start, the lull in the middle and then finishing strong as you said?

SAM STEVENS: Yeah, the hot start was great, that was super easy, nothing to worry about there. Then in the middle of the round I was frustrated because I was telling my caddie, it's like I was maybe 3 under through 10 and then 11's just like kind of a tricky hole, you don't know whether to hit it up over the bunker or lay it short and made a bogey. No. 12 I hit a decent tee ball, kicked left, had to take an unplayable, made bogey. And then 13, hit a decent shot, landed on the green and I was just getting frustrated. Then 14 I hit it over the green. I hit a perfect shot right at the flag and it went over the green. My caddie just said that's the way golf is sometimes. So stayed patient and was able to get a couple looks coming in.

Yeah, that was the key, just staying patient and knowing if you're going to make them, they'll come, but you can't force them, especially out here.

Q. How much do you feel like a strong showing last week helped you build some momentum and have the success you're having now?

SAM STEVENS: Yeah, for sure. I feel good about my game and I've felt pretty good about my game for a while. I think that last week gave me a little bit of confidence. Definitely I got off to a slow start on Sunday last week and just being able to hang in there and give myself a chance to win definitely was a confidence builder, because I got off to a little bit of a slow start the first round here, too. Yeah, I've been mentally doing really well, just kind of staying patient and hanging tough, especially when maybe I hit a couple bad shots.

Q. To be in the mix now going into the final round, do you allow yourself to think about what it would mean to win this and punch a ticket to the Masters or what's the mentality?

SAM STEVENS: Yeah, I hadn't really thought about it that much. Those guys, I mean, is Patrick still leading? He's at 11 under, 12 under. He could birdie the last four or five and I would be seven or eight shots back. We'll see where they finish up. Maybe I'll be in the last group or second-to-last group or up there. But like I said, you just have to stay patient out here. I'll think about it a little bit if I have a chance, but won't dwell on it too much.