

**PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW**  
**August 24, 2023**

**STEPHEN AMES**



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**DOUG MILNE:** You've had a lot going on lately coming off of that seven-stroke win two weeks ago. Just kind of bring us up to speed on how you're feeling. Game's still holding up well heading into this week?

**STEPHEN AMES:** Yeah, game's holding up nicely. Last week was a bit indifferent. I think a lot of it was due to the fact that I was unaccustomed to the cold weather I used to live in, not anymore. Of course you're dealing with a different element there as well, which is the altitude. Trying to work out your yardages and all that kind of stuff, especially when the temperature kept dropping up and down, so it was difficult for me in that respect.

**DOUG MILNE:** How impressed, for lack of a better term, are you with your season? It's obviously been impressive by everyone else's standards, but you've got to be feeling -- have you exceeded even what you thought?

**STEPHEN AMES:** Oh, yeah, by far. Even the fact of starting off the year off by winning Morocco, I was like OK, this is fun, this is nice. Kind of, should I say, sealed my future with Hualalai obviously with another two years on top of that. I'm actually trying to negotiate the extra years because I want four now rather than one.

I think at the end of the day, end of the year you're always looking for a win, obviously to play well.

The other factor is yeah, you win two, you win three, you win four, you never think those numbers coming in, but I think overall, yes, I have exceeded, well exceeded what I expected, yeah.

**DOUG MILNE:** And to what do you attribute that? Just form's better, game's better?

**STEPHEN AMES:** Everything in general. I think everything's clicking in the right spots. I know how to find my swing when it goes off a lot quicker than I used to. Putting's always a little issue. Obviously the weeks that you win you're probably making more putts than the average person, which was the same for -- when I won at Boeing. I was No. 1 in putting on poa annua greens, which is unheard of for me because I'm not a west coast guy at all.

So when I look at it that way, it's like, well, yeah, something else is changing, which is probably my mental attitude towards the game. How I am on the golf course, too, has probably made a big asset.

**Q. You mention the mental aspect. What do you do?**

**STEPHEN AMES:** A lot of it is just like everything else that we go through life, you accept the bad with the good. There are days we're going to get cut off when we're driving and you have to kind of bite your tongue, hold your breath and just say, oh, well, he's having a bad day.

That's the kind of attitude you have to have out here, too. You're going to hit bad shots, we're human. You don't know what's going to happen on the next shot, so you have to always be positive in that respect, and I have been very much that way inclined a lot more than normal. Rather than getting really mad or pissed off at myself that I hit a bad shot, I accept it, I move on to the next shot and play golf from there.

**Q. Do you work with a coach at all?**

**STEPHEN AMES:** No, I have my -- oh, I do have a mental coach. Don't worry, we all do. More for life stuff than golf.

**Q. I won't go there.**

**STEPHEN AMES:** Exactly.

Yeah, I guess it's -- there is a circle of life of where everything has to balance itself off perfectly. I mean, if you're not having a fun time off the golf course, then how can you have a fun time on the golf course? So when I put it in that life circle, I have every aspect of my life right now, they're firing on all eight cylinders as a car guy would say. That's where I'm happier off the golf course, I'm happier on the golf course, I'm ecstatic about life with everything that's going on, so it's perfect for me.

**Q. On that note, is it fair to say 2023 is the best year of golf you've ever played or is that too --**

**STEPHEN AMES:** Win-wise, yes, probably, because I've never won twice in one year. No, I never have, no. So yeah, when you look at it that way, yes. Four wins in one year for me is a lot.

**Q. But the quality of golf --**

**STEPHEN AMES:** Quality of golf is probably the same, I've just never been able to put it all together as the years have gone on, and I think a lot of it's due to the fact that I've learned how to play better within myself, which is more than anything else.

**DOUG MILNE:** And then finally about the course here, you've had a lot of history, it's probably been a while between the tours, but just some thoughts on this course here.

**STEPHEN AMES:** You know, it's a great old-style golf course. The golf course itself,

actually I was actually playing with a couple of the members today in the pro-am and we talked about so when was the last time you've ever redone the golf course, and they're like, oh, when it opened in 1957. So it's never been redone, the greens were never redone. And you can see that, too, because a lot of them falling off on sides where we used to have pins back in the old days, now they don't.

So it's -- but it's a great old-style golf course. It's right in front of you, it's bunker left, bunker right, you know what shape of shot you have to hit to put it in play. And the same for coming into the greens, when the pins are tucked you can come in on the right or come in on the left, either way.

For me, it's a shotmaker's course, you have to play that. If you look back in the days of the Buick, the shotmakers were always the ones winning. I think it was Tiger Woods, I can't remember, one of the few times here. So that obviously comes to mind, yeah, off the bat.