



87TH PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

BALTUSROL GOLF CLUB

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

THURSDAY, AUGUST 11, 2005

An interview with:

STEPHEN AMES

JULIUS MASON: *Stephen Ames*, ladies and gentlemen, at 3-under at the 87th *PGA Championship*. If you wouldn't mind going through your card and we'll go to Q & A, please.

STEPHEN AMES: Okay, the 2nd hole was 3-wood off the tee, just went through the fairway. I hit a sand wedge to about six feet above the hole, made that.

3, it's only a 500-yard par 4. I made bogey.

7, another 500-yard -- poor drives on 3 and 7 so I had no opportunity of making par. Actually 7 I did lip out for par from about ten feet.

10th hole, it was 7-iron to about 15 feet, made birdie.

11 was 7-iron to about 15 feet, made birdie there.

Then 12, I was just pin high on the fringe of the green and chipped it in for birdie.

Then 15, drive left, couldn't get it up-and-down. Actually missed about an eight-footer for par.

And then 17, I hit driver, 3-iron, lob wedge to about eight feet below the hole, made a nice putt there.

Then 18, driver, rescue club to about pin high, 20 feet, two-putted for birdie.

Q. You had a pretty good run here last year at the *PGA Championship*. Is there anything about the setup or anything about the way that this tournament is run that might account for that?

STEPHEN AMES: I think on the whole all majors, the way they're set up, suit my game a lot. It tends to be a lot of ball-striking. You've got to maneuver your golf ball around the greens, so getting into the greens or into the pins I should say, a lot of shapes off the tees, which I'm enjoying very much this week because it's an old style traditional golf course that definitely suits my eye, not your

typical *TPC* that we play where it's bomb the ball down the middle of the fairway kind of thing.

Baltusrol is a great layout, great traditional golf course and it's a great tradition.

Q. You had a putt to take the outright lead on the 18th hole. How close was that? It looked like it was almost --

STEPHEN AMES: It actually just burned the left edge, yeah.

Q. My understanding is you came here Sunday. That's a little different than what you've been able to do so far this year in the other majors. Just talk a little bit about your preparation and where your head has been this week maybe as compared to the other few weeks this year.

STEPHEN AMES: Last week international in Denver I had my coach out with me, Dennis, and we worked on a few things that we've been working on from the *British Open* onwards with the swing. What we've done from there is incorporate a little bit more shot-making, picturing shots a little bit more, which I had completely gone off of for part of this year, if not all of it, and preparation coming into here was to continue doing those things when standing over a golf ball was to basically call the shot and play golf in other words, and Robert, my caddie, has obviously been on me for doing that, and every time I went out and played I was hitting the shot that I had seen and wanted to hit. So that was my form of preparation.

Also the fact I worked a little bit more on my lag putting because I found in the past in playing majors that my lag putting has been the worst part of my game because of the speed of the greens and the slope of the greens that we play so I worked a little bit harder on that. Of course the short game, you flop a lot of shots, and I worked on that, also.

Q. *Phil* just came in and talked about hitting a predominant fade off every tee.

STEPHEN AMES: Right.

Q. What would you say your percentages were, and are you going to change that at all tomorrow?

STEPHEN AMES: He's left-handed, so fade is a draw; is that right? For me, right-handed, I do that a lot, also. There are a few holes you can fade the ball off the tee. 7 for sure, 8, 13 or 14. What's the one with the creek down the right? I think it's 13 or 14, you can fade it there. The rest of the holes you can draw it, definitely.

Q. That's what you're doing?

STEPHEN AMES: That's what I'm doing out there, also, hitting a lot of draws.

Q. Notwithstanding what you just said about the mental preparation and such, did this kind of come out of left field a bit? Because I know at the *British* you weren't real happy with the way you've been hitting the ball?

STEPHEN AMES: When was that, prior to this one?

Q. Yeah, I mean, does this one just kind of show up on you or were you expecting it?

STEPHEN AMES: No, when Dennis came out there last week, even though I had missed the cut I hit the ball exceptionally well. I think mentally I wasn't prepared last week, and I felt like when I walked off the golf course for those two days, it was like, I can't think of a bad shot that I hit. That I knew there that the golf swing was starting to make a turn for the better. Obviously it's still here this week and we're still doing the same drills from last week, so it's still there from last week, which is nice.

Q. It looked like a lot of the who guys made a little bit of a move at the end did so on 17 and 18 and it was almost as though you wait all day to try and get a couple of real opportunities, and the guys that are close took advantage of that.

STEPHEN AMES: Yeah, of course, I agree. I think the back nine for sure obviously is the scoring nine because of the two par 5s, finishing holes. The front nine is definitely the tougher nine by far. It's three or four shots tougher, I think.

With the 10th, the 11th, a lot of guys are hitting 3-woods, 7-irons. 13 is a short hole, 14, 15 is a little shorter, 17 you can't get up, but 18 you can definitely get up.

It was funny, I was standing there on the green looking back at *Retief Goosen*, how far he

hit it. I think he only had 6-iron. I had rescue. The longer hitters have a massive advantage on those holes and that's where the scoring should be done, on the back nine.

Q. Talk about 17 and 18. How do you like those as a finish and is the unreachable par 5, is it a good hole, a great long, just a long hole?

STEPHEN AMES: It's true it's an unusual par 5. I think it's a good par 5 because if you miss the fairway, now you've got to gamble, do I try and carry the cross-bunkers depending on the lie or do I lay back and then have another 3-wood in? I think it's a good hole. It's definitely a gamble. Your first shot is I think the most important shot, then it sets it up from there.

Q. How hard is it to visualize every shot, I mean, as far as a discipline? How much did it help you out there today in specific instances, and what percentage of Tour players do you think use that technique?

STEPHEN AMES: I would think almost everybody, I'm not sure. I know the great ones did. The great ones do, let's put it that way. I know *Tiger* doesn't hit a golf shot unless he sees it beforehand. *Nicklaus* did the same thing. I think it depends on the player itself, if he's a mechanical player or if he just thinks of his golf swing or if he's a feel player. *Faldo* did it, *Norman*, and all those guys, they don't hit shots without seeing it beforehand. *Freddie* is the same way, such a feel player. For me it's a gift that I have which I don't utilize as much as I should. I get bored with it, let's put it that way.

Q. Where did it help you today specifically?

STEPHEN AMES: Definitely with the shaping of the drives because you've got to shape a lot of your tee balls, and I think on the whole for what kind of shots I want to play in for the second shots because of some of the pins tucked behind traps, you're going to have to draw it in or fade it in, and that way for me, it like puts a light in my eye and I can go and play golf, take the challenge. That's when I perform my best.

JULIUS MASON: *Stephen*, thanks very much for coming down and joining us.

STEPHEN AMES: Thank you.

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