

# The 151st Open

Mixed Zone

Friday, 21 July 2023

## Michael Stewart



**Q. 68, 73 for 1-under. You'd have taken that, wouldn't you?**

MICHAEL STEWART: Absolutely, yeah. Kind of a disappointment the way I finished obviously. Today was -- I feel like I hit it pretty good but kind of put myself in some tough spots.

Any time I had it offline, bar a couple, but any time in the bunkers I got some not-so-good lies, which you know you're going to get around here.

Hit it in the rough a few times and could advance it a little bit, but I got up and down holing some good putts, so yeah, just thrilled. Yeah.

**Q. The bunker and the double bogey was...**

MICHAEL STEWART: Yeah, yeah, it's all you can get at. It's a downwind par-5 and kind of anywhere you can hit it, anywhere right. Like anywhere right the bunkers aren't really in play, and I just pulled it a little bit and didn't move in the wind and of course it was in that bunker.

I knew with that pace it was going into the face, so I didn't quite get it far enough out of the bunker as I would've liked and didn't get a great lie.

In hindsight I wish I hit 8-iron down and gave myself a chance. I think the annoyance of hitting in the trap made me try to hit a 3-iron. I didn't have as bad lie as the shot was, but I didn't have a great lie.

I just kind of spiralled in errors in from there.

**Q. Take us from last night when you left here to this morning. How did you feel?**

MICHAEL STEWART: I actually feel pretty good. I had sort of five minutes to myself when I got back to the flat and just sort of tried to message as many people as I could.

My phone was going ballistic. No, I slept pretty good again. I was up at 6:00. I wanted to be up at quarter to 7:00 but I was up at 6:00.

Actually feel like I've seen every hour from like 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning, you know.

But, no, fine. Did some stretching, and when you're doing things to pass the time you feel a little bit better.

Again, I thought it was going to be much better. Again, just soon as you walk over that bridge it's the exact same feeling.

**Q. What are your thoughts and aspirations for the weekend?**

MICHAEL STEWART: My thoughts are hopefully keep doing what I'm doing. I've tried not to look too far ahead at the weather, but the people are telling me the weather is going to be pretty poor tomorrow.

It's kind of hard to gauge what I want. I want to just keep having fun, just keep playing remotely decent golf, holing putts, hearing people cheer for you.

I've got great support with me. No, it's been a great experience. I just hope the weekend can kind of match what's happened the first 36 holes.

**Q. Times you were tied for third. Were you looking at the scoreboard?**

MICHAEL STEWART: I looked at the scoreboard on the 10th tee. I seen it there. I just obviously bogeyed to go back to I think -3. When I looked up I thought, oh, I would've been tied third. No, I tried not to look too much, because when I looked, the one thing I looked at and I seen MICHAEL STEWART was 8-under and obviously shot 6-under, which an incredible score today.

I mean, if anyone is within five of him, they're going to have played really well as well.

10-under is fantastic for three rounds.

**Q. (Indiscernible.)**

MICHAEL STEWART: Yeah.

**Q. (Indiscernible.)**



MICHAEL STEWART: Yeah, I'm kind of not sure how it's going to work with the Challenge Tour stuff. I know it equates to Mallorca points, so I don't know how it works. There's obviously only 45 guys that play Road to Mallorca, and if you finish below that I don't know how they're going to work it out, but I've got a wedding in March next year, so that helps pay for that.

**Q. That will be the good lady squirreling this away then.**

MICHAEL STEWART: No, she's got her own business. She does great. It just takes a lot of bad pressure off me.

**Q. To think at the moment you're the leading Scot, how does that feel?**

MICHAEL STEWART: Yeah, great, I suppose. I mean, there's so many good Scottish players, so it's nice that I'm up there, but I'm sure come Sunday there's going to be quite a few of us that are kind of there or thereabouts, guys that are playing great that will kind of push through, as well, especially if the weather -- the Scottish guys know how to handle the tough weather. I should say British and Irish guys know how to handle some tough weather, so hopefully all of us can push up the leaderboard on Saturday and Sunday.

**Q. You did think this day might never happen. Now you're here and you're through to the weekend. How does it feel given what you said?**

MICHAEL STEWART: Yeah, feels amazing. It's hard to put into words exactly how I'm feeling. My feet are killing me. But yeah, just proud -- I'm proud of myself because I didn't know -- especially after the start yesterday. I keep looking back on how I started yesterday, and it was nice because I had the same -- had a shortish putt for par on 1, and I didn't try and replay the short putt I missed on 1 yesterday, but I was ready to like, right, just kind of settle yourself down and hole it.

Then on 2, I felt like I got quite unlucky on 2 because I had an iron that's went arguably 40 yards further than I thought and then made a good putt for par.

Yeah, to play that stretch where yesterday I was kind of nervy and made a couple of silly bogeys, I've managed to steady the ship and make a good solid start.

I felt like I played really, really solid. I just need to -- there's a couple of things I need to be better at.

**Q. You knocked it in the hole a couple times in the middle, as well.**

MICHAEL STEWART: Yeah, I had a chance on -- I say chance. I didn't really have a chance on 12, but I lipped out from a kind

of long distance on 12. Then go to the very next hole and make a great up-and-down from a very tricky lie in the bunker. Made a great up-and-down from 85 yards on 14 for par, as well.

It's kind of you moan about lipping out, but then you make two great saves, so it kind of evens itself out.

**Q. We talked last year about the COVID years and stepping away from golf, with the hand sanitizer and everything like that. Are you glad you stuck with it? A couple of years ago you would have never really envisaged.**

MICHAEL STEWART: No, no, I just had that conversation two minutes ago, as well. Listen, it's not like a poor me story, it's just that's what people have to do. There's so many guys that have been in the same position as me that have just left and they've not come back.

I was fortunate enough to work -- the people I was working for were great enough to let me go and play golf on the Tartan Pro Tour and I was eligible to play Q-school and I got my card back and stuff, and that kind of gave me some kind of security, financial security type thing.

So yeah, extremely grateful, but again, it's like so many people that are in the same boat as me.

**Q. (Indiscernible) that kind of just stepped away from golf, wasn't there?**

MICHAEL STEWART: Yeah, there's a few. James Byrne, he's working for the Tour now, and Ross Kellett is actually work with Ewen Ferguson this week, and there's a few other guys, Callum McCoy is working for I think it's First Point.

These guys are -- Gavin Dear, they've won the world championships as amateurs. It's fantastic golfers that -- it's just -- as cliché as it is to say, it's just life, unfortunately. Some people, it's what they have to do. It's the same as me.

It would have been crazy for me to think that I could have just laid off 2020 and go and practised my golf or wait for the golf to start. It's not the reality.

**Q. Where is the wedding?**

MICHAEL STEWART: The wedding is in Eyemouth we're getting married. My fiancée is a -- we're getting married and then we'll buy a house. She's obviously done wedding events on the west coast, so she's done every single wedding venue that there is. I think she wanted to go somewhere that she -- she didn't want to turn up next week and feel like she was at her work.

**Q. What's her name?**

MICHAEL STEWART: Abbie.

**Q. Who's your caddie this week?**

MICHAEL STEWART: My caddie is one of my good friends, Stuart Muir. He's the bar manager at Barassie Golf Club.

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