

# Honda Classic

Tuesday, February 22, 2022  
Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, USA  
PGA National Resort

## Matt Jones

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome our 2021 winner of the Honda Classic, Matt Jones to the interview room.

Matt, welcome. Making your ninth start in the Honda this week and I was just looking back at some your past performances, first top-10 here came in your first start, which was actually your first top-10 on the PGA TOUR, back in 2008 I believe. So just some thoughts on obviously pretty special being back here especially this year.

MATT JONES: Yeah, it's amazing to be a defending champion any event is fantastic. Doesn't happen too often on the PGA TOUR for a lot of golfers, but to be associated with this golf tournament and be a defending tournament of this tournament that's been around for so long is great.

THE MODERATOR: You're off to good start in the calendar season, 3rd in Hawaii and coming off a top-15 finish last week. Just kind of assess the state of your game heading into the week.

MATT JONES: Yeah, it's been good all year. I haven't puttied the best, and that would show on my stats, but if I can figure that out I'm looking forward to this week.

And it's always a test and a battle out here, so it's more of a course where you just try and battle along and just make pars, make a couple of birdies here and there and limit your mistakes, and that's what I did last year and hopefully I'll do this year.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. Questions.

**Q. There hasn't been a whole lot of wind on the PGA TOUR this year, do you put in any extra effort getting ready for this tournament knowing that there probably will be wind?**

MATT JONES: No, I'm used to the wind. I've normally performed well in the wind in the past and over in Australia growing up in the wind you just try to lower your ball flight a little bit, which actually helps me, I like to hit a low ball flight

naturally, I'm not a high-ball flight hitter. So historically I would say the more wind the better for me.

**Q. The other Bear Trap, holes 5, 6 and 7, which play tougher than the Bear Trap last year and on many other years. Can you talk to me about how difficult, why what makes that stretch so difficult?**

MATT JONES: Well the tee shot on 5 is very difficult. Especially with how they have -- the way the wind comes from. A lot of the times we have it a lot off the left, trying to work it into it, you pull it, you're in the hazard, you block it right and then the green, to get up-and-down, is not easy.

6 is probably the toughest hole on the golf course, I think. Especially with that tee shot. You got to take on the water, but if you come out of it you're in the bunker, in the rough, and then that green's just really hard. To get close to the pin is very tough. Especially when they have the greens at 13 and they're really firm which they probably will be this year.

6 is always just an -- or 7 is just a very tough par-3 as it is as well. The wind, hitting that green in reg and the pin locations, it's a big, long green too, so it's hard to get close to the pins anywhere there.

**Q. Does it get into your head like the Bear Trap?**

MATT JONES: It probably doesn't because, like on 7, there's not the threat of the water and making a big number that quickly. You can make bogeys easily, but there's not the threat of the big number and then having to hit again from a tee when you've got the hazard right there again, like on 15 and 17 on the Bear Trap.

**Q. As a long-time PGA TOUR guy, I guess the way I wanted to introduce this question is by asking, do you feel loyalty to the PGA TOUR itself?**

MATT JONES: I've been out here for this is my 15th year, I've had a great career out here, it's something that I've always wanted to do growing up as a kid. It's been a life-long dream of mine and I am very happy to be out here.



I know where your question's coming are from and I have no affiliation I've never spoken to the Saudis, I don't know anything that's going on. Loyalty's probably not the word, but it is, it's a mutual, a mutual happiness for me to be out here representing the PGA TOUR and for me to be allowed to be out here to play on the PGA TOUR.

**Q. You are -- obviously the reason I'm asking that question as you pointed out was the Saudi stuff. And somebody who's had a career like you've had, let's say this happened 20 years ago, and there was this big schism in the PGA TOUR and some other league, you know, it could have had a huge affect on how somebody like you made a living, for instance. And I'm curious, you know, looking at it from that perspective, how do you feel about this idea that there's a sort of bridge burning perhaps going on with people thinking about leaving?**

MATT JONES: Look, everyone has their right to look at it, to decide. I can't really comment on it because I have no idea of the financials and what -- there's been so much talk about this person was getting offered this. I have never had any firsthand experience dealing with them or talking to them, so I'm really at not a point I can talk about it, because I don't really know what was going on with it.

**Q. Couple off topic ones. In 2014 when you won the Houston Open did you get a letter from Arnie and what did it mean to you?**

MATT JONES: I honestly can't remember. I've thought about this because I can't remember if I did, I would have to go to my files. So that's probably a bad answer, but I really can't remember if I did.

If I did, it would be phenomenal and amazing.

**Q. And for the following week story I'm working on, most people say that the tee shot at TPC Sawgrass on 17 is the scariest. I want to find out what's the second scariest tee shot on that golf course and why.**

MATT JONES: I mean, it's not that scary but it's really hard, is that tee shot on 8, the par-3.

As for scariness, there's not many other scary holes like there is on 17. I mean, 17, it's just grass or water that's all you have.

On the other holes there's always a side you can miss something on. So it's not that scary.

Depending on the wind, the shot -- the tee shot on the other par-3, I actually find, number 13, that can be

somewhat of a tough tee shot, especially with that bowl and it goes straight into that hazard.

But as for a tee shot that would be somewhat scary -- oh, 18. I forgot about the 18th. There you go. That's really the one that would stand out is the as the second hardest.

**Q. What make it's so difficult?**

MATT JONES: There is no miss. Literally it's hazard or if you're in the right rough you really can't get access on that green because of how fast and it slopes straight into the water. You have to just lay it up. But you really got to clutch up and hit a great shot there on 18.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports