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### **First-Round Leaderboard**

<b>Pos.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Scores</b>
T1	Adam Long	63 (-7)
T1	Seth Reaves	63 (-7)
T1	Samuel Del Val	63 (-7)
T4	Eight players tied	64 (-6)

### **Stephen Curry records first-round 71 at Ellie Mae Classic; Three others lead with 7-under 63**

**HAYWARD, California** – Golden State Warriors All-Star Guard Stephen Curry returned to the Web.com Tour’s Ellie Mae Classic on Thursday, posting a 1-over 71 at TPC Stonebrae in the tournament’s opening round of play.

“[It was an] awesome day,” Curry commented after his round. “Obviously I came in with high expectations based on how I played last year. We just wanted to play better. I started off the round and I got a little rattled on the back nine (his first nine). Then going into the front nine on No. 2, a couple three putts and I was able to right the ship from there.

“I think I hit every green on the back almost and gave myself plenty of opportunities, which was pretty cool. I just have to make couple more putts tomorrow and see what happens, but I think the way I was able to turn it around after being 3-over through my first 11 holes was pretty solid.”

Curry’s playing partner, Martin Trainer, who is currently No. 4 on the Regular Season money list and the only repeat winner of the 2018 season, was especially impressed by the Bay Area star’s skills.

“His game as a whole was really impressive,” Trainer remarked. “It really surprised me. Obviously, he’s not as sharp because I don’t think he plays as much as we do. He’s got a real job. But he definitely has the talent and the touch, and I was very impressed several times today. He got off to a bad start and he came all the way back and ended up having a pretty good round.”

Beginning his day on the par-4 10th alongside Trainer and fellow winner Cameron Champ, Curry slightly pulled his iron off the tee into the first cut of rough, up against a sprinkler head adjacent to the fairway.

“I can’t play this hole without getting a ruling,” he joked, referencing his infamous opening tee shot from 2017 that wound up in a drink cup inside a cart left of the hole.

After taking a drop, the back-to-back NBA Champion recorded three consecutive pars to open his round before stumbling with bogeys on Nos. 13, 15 and 16 to turn in three-over par. After making the turn to the front nine, Curry recorded a fourth bogey at the par-3 second but rallied quickly thereafter with a two-putt birdie on the par-5 fourth after reaching the green in two shots.

On the par-4 seventh, Curry hit his second shot to 10 feet and promptly converted the birdie try to move back to two-over par for the round. His shot of the day, however, came on the par-4 eighth, where a flush 9-iron from 148 yards ricocheted off the pin and settled 5 feet short of the hole. The 30-year-old calmly rolled in the putt for his third birdie of the round to move back to one-over par.

“Yeah, there's one of those off the face, hit it flush and it was on line. Then I hear Jonnie in the back whispering under his breath, like, ‘Be as good as you look,’” said Curry. “I see it hit -- or I hear the pin rattle and that was a cool moment. I didn't know how close it landed. When I walked up there, literally was an inch away from dunking it. Out here I don't get many dunks.”

At the 598-yard par-5 ninth, Curry hit an impeccable tee shot and a flawless second which landed 20 feet short of the back-right hole location and scurried to the back of the green, roughly 40 feet from the hole. Putting up and over a ridge, he left his first putt 5 feet short and then missed the ensuing birdie try. The closing par left him with a respectable round of 1-over 71 and within striking distance of the cut line heading into Friday's second round.

“It was fun to be able to hit some decent shots early, and from there turn it into actual scoring, which was good,” he said after his round.

First-round co-leader Adam Long, who opened with a 7-under 63 to join Seth Reeves and Samuel Del Val atop the leaderboard, wasn't offended by being upstaged by a competitor entering Friday. The 30-year-old was excited about the level of attention Curry brings to the tournament and admitted to following Curry's score closely during the round.

“It's awesome,” he said of Curry receiving a sponsor's exemption into the field. “He exudes excellence. He's a tremendous athlete. We're all talking about his score, you know, what is he at, what does he have left – it's really fun to watch and hopefully he'll keep the pedal down.”

Long had a slow start to the day, carding six pars, two birdies and a bogey on his first nine to make the turn at TPC Stonebrae at 1-under 34. The Duke University alum heated up on his second nine, the tournament's front nine, picking up a birdie at No. 1, a streak of birdies on Nos. 4-6, and two closing birdies on Nos. 8 and 9.

“Nothing was really struggling,” Long said when asked what changed in the latter half of his round. “I was just hitting it okay [to begin]. I wasn't hitting it real tight, so I had a lot of 20-footers and I just wasn't making those putts. So, it was just okay. Then on the back I was hitting it a little tighter and a little closer... It was all later on in the round, but I'll take it.”

For Long, who sits at No. 23 on the money list heading into the final two events of the Regular Season, a win this week would essentially lock up a spot in The 25 and his first PGA TOUR card. Though trying to balance the pressure of playing to maintain a spot on the money list versus playing to win might be difficult for some, the St. Louis native embraces the experience.

“I can't block it completely out,” Long said. “There's a lot of time between shots and between rounds and tournaments to think about it and it's what everyone wants to talk about. I know what I need to do, I know what's out there, but it's fun. It's a good position to be in and I'm enjoying it and just trying to keep the pedal down.”

#### **THURSDAY NOTES:**

\* Thursday weather: Hazy, High of 86, Winds W/NW 7-15 mph.

\* This week's purse is \$600,000, with \$108,000 going to the champion.

\* In the history of the Web.com Tour, only two former professional athletes competing in events have broken par in a round: Ralph Terry (1990 Dakota Dunes Open / 71) and Grant Fuhr (2008 Ford Wayne Gretzky Classic / 70). Of the 11 non-golf professional athletes to compete on Tour, none have made the cut (including Stephen Curry).

\* Co-leader Seth Reeves carded a bogey-free 63 in the opening round, his first bogey-free round of the 2018 season. The former Georgia Tech golfer is currently 88<sup>th</sup> on the money list but made five of his last six cuts entering the week in Hayward.

\* Co-leader Samuel Del Val's 7-under 63 was one shot shy of his career-low round on the Web.com Tour. Del Val recorded an 8-under 63 in the third round of the 2017 KC Golf Classic on his way to a career-best T5 finish. The native of Spain has made just five cuts in 2018 and is currently No. 117 on the money list.

\* Stephan Jaeger (58) is the only player to own the first-round lead in Ellie Mae Classic history and go on to win the tournament. Jaeger's record-setting round gave way to a 30-under-par total for the week and a dominant seven-shot

victory. Three first-round leaders/co-leaders have gone on to win during the 2018 season, most recently Martin Trainer at the Price Cutter Charity Championship presented by Dr Pepper.

\* The Web.com Tour has produced 18 first-time winners this year. With 54 holes to play at TPC Stonebrae, there are currently eight players inside the top 10 looking for their first Tour title.

\* First-round co-leader Adam Long is rooming with Matt Harmon this week. Harmon, who finished runner-up at this event in 2012, opened with a 6-under 64 and sits T4 heading into the second round.

\* Through 18 holes of play, there are three international players inside the top 10 on the leaderboard. Thus far in 2018, the Web.com Tour has had winners from seven different countries claim titles in the first 21 events: Argentina, Canada, England, Germany, Mexico, South Korea and the United States. Four international players have won the Ellie Mae Classic (Stephan Jaeger, Si Woo Kim, Daniel Chopra, Michael Sim).

\*The highest start by an eventual tournament champion currently sits at 1-over-par 71, with Michael Sim opening with the score in 2009.

\* The largest 18-hole lead in tournament history is four strokes, having occurred in both 2016 with Stephan Jaeger. Through 20 events this season, the largest first-round lead also sits at three strokes, with Maverick McNealy having entered the second round of the United Leasing & Finance Championship three clear of the field.

\* There has been just one wire-to-wire champion at the Ellie Mae Classic (Stephan Jaeger, 2016). The last wire-to-wire winner on the Web.com Tour was Aaron Wise, who captured the 2017 Wichita Open Supporting Wichita's Youth title in wire-to-wire fashion.

\* TPC Stonebrae scoring average:

	<b>Front (36)</b>	<b>Back (35)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>R1</b>	Front (35) 34.390	Back (35) 34.766	Total (70) 69.156

\* NEXT WEEK: The Web.com Tour travels up the west coast to Oregon for the WinCo Foods Portland Open presented by Kraft-Heinz, the final event of the Regular Season.

*For highlights from today's round, or any 2018 event visit <http://bit.ly/webcomtour2018>*

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