

**Second-Round Transcripts | Astaro Golf Championship presented by Mastercard  
Friday, February 11, 2022**

**Ben Griffin (-12, Solo Leader)**

City Plays From: Chapel Hill, North Carolina | Turned Pro: 2018 | College: University of North Carolina  
Exempt Status: Qualifying Tournament Finishers 11-40 and Ties (thru 2022)

*On his 9-under 61 on Pacos today...*

“Hit it very well. Actually hit it pretty good yesterday, too. Just staying patient yesterday and couldn’t quite get the putts to drop, then today the putter was very hot. Played my game, played a little bit of angle golf. It’s a shorter course, but you can short side yourself, so it’s important to be on the right side of the pins. I was able to do that, and made a lot of putts. That was the key today.”

*On his 6-under 29 on the front nine (his back nine)...*

“At the turn, I finished on No. 18 for my front nine, I three-putted for bogey. I was a little disappointed. That lit a fire in me to get going, because I knew there were a lot of birdie holes ahead. I birdied Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, kept attacking, had good looks on the next few that didn’t fall, and birdied No. 7 and finished with a birdie on No. 9.”

*On the difference of Lagos course compared to Pacos course...*

“It’s just longer. I think the greens are in a little bit better shape on (Lagos), so you can make a lot more putts, which is kind of ironic I made the putts on the shorter course. It’s just a little longer, a little tougher, but you just have to keep doing the same thing. The grasses are different but pretty similar. I’m just excited for the weekend, just to keep the pedal down and keep going.”

*On his last time in Bogota, playing in a local qualifier two years ago...*

“I played well in the qualifier, too. I was in a playoff and missed out on a spot, which was a bummer flying from North Carolina down to here. I knew the course was gettable. Guys have been shooting low scores. I just had to trust myself, believe in myself, and have the courage to go out there and do it.”

*On his goals for the weekend right now...*

“Just keep pushing. The tournament is not even close to over. A lot of golf left. I’ve been feeling really good about my golf game. I’m just trying to keep the patience and keep doing my thing.”

*On whether he’s done anything special this week...*

“With the altitude, I haven’t felt my best. But I’ve been sleeping okay. I’ve just been playing well the last few weeks. I missed the cut last week in Panama, but I still felt really good about my golf game. Patience is the key, just knowing my time is going to come. I practiced (last) Saturday and flew here Sunday to get acclimated. It’s a bummer missing cuts, but I’m very focused this year on doing the right things for my body and keeping a good sleep schedule. I’ve been waking up early, so I feel good when I go to the first tee even if it’s a morning tee time. Just trying to do the right things, and hopefully it pays off.”

**Ryan McCormick (-11, T2)**

City Plays From: Middletown, New Jersey | Turned Pro: 2014 | College: St. Johns University  
Exempt Status: Top 75 in 2020-21 Regular Season Standings (thru 2022)

*On his 2-under 69 today...*

“Didn’t get off to the greatest start, but just hung in there most of the day. It was nice to make a couple birdies late, a couple 20-footers on No. 16 and No. 17, and then hit it in the hazard on No. 18 and made a good par there. Happy with how it ended.”

*On making two bogeys in his first three holes but making an eagle shortly thereafter...*

“I chipped in twice on the front nine, which is pretty lucky. But it turned the momentum around for sure.”

*On finding his plugged ball...*

“Trevor [Werbylo] hit his ball left off the tee; he hit a provisional. We got up there – I basically hit my ball at the left edge of the green. We spent time searching for Trevor’s ball, and then my ball, evidently, we found (in) close to three minutes plugged just short of the green. I was fortunate to chip that in (on No. 4).”

*On being 11-under and what the key will be to continue his success on the weekend...*

“Just keep doing more of the same. I feel good with my game. Certainly not looking too far ahead. Just focused on getting some sleep tonight and being ready for tomorrow.”

*On his off-course routine...*

“I’m staying with a friend of mine, Evan Harmeling, this week. It’s nice we have a kitchen, cooking up some food; he’s pretty good in the kitchen, a little bit better than me. Making some home-cooked meals has helped for sure. It feels a little normal.”

*On whether he’s done anything different in Colombia than he would at any other tournament...*

“No. Pretty much just hanging at the Airbnb with Evan is the only thing different for me. Just a little bit more relaxed.”

*On the crowd today and how he will deal with larger galleries on the weekend...*

“It’s exciting. We haven’t had a lot of fans for a long time. It should be fun for all of us to play. Hope people come out and watch some great golf.”

*On whether playing the Lagos course today will help him carry momentum into the next two rounds...*

“Yeah. It will be nice going back and playing that course tomorrow having it so fresh in my mind. I certainly got a favorable draw. Playing the easier course first, it was a little easier to work into the golf tournament.”

**Vincent Norrman (-10, T4)**

City Plays From: Sweden | Turned Pro: 2021 | College: Florida State University

Exempt Status: Qualifying Tournament Finishers 2-10 and Ties (thru 2022)

*On the 6-under 65 today...*

“Struck the ball unbelievably today, and I putted a little better than yesterday. Nice to see a few drop.”

*On a bogey-free front nine and starting his back nine with an eagle...*

“I hit the ball really good. I think I hit every green on the front, and lipped out on No. 9 for birdie there. And I came out hot on the back nine with an eagle, and I was just solid from there on out.”

*On how he made eagle at No. 10...*

“I hit a pretty good drive down the middle of the fairway, then cut a 5-wood in there to 9 feet and made that.”

*On being 10-under what his goals are for the weekend...*

“Keep on playing the way I am. It will be nice to see a few putts drop on the weekend, and I think we will be in good position.”

*On dealing with the wet conditions and altitude...*

“It’s hard, because the greens are soft and these back pins are hard to get to. I play in meters and the books are in yards, so we have to do a lot of math. My caddie is doing a great job with that, so it’s not really a big issue.”

*On playing with Colombian Nicolas Echavarria and the gallery following him...*

“He’s a super great guy. It’s fun. It’s not often you’re out there and make a putt and get some cheers. It’s always fun with a crowd out there.”

### **Rob Oppenheim (-10, T4)**

City Plays From: Andover, Massachusetts | Turned Pro: 2002 | College: Rollins College  
Exempt Status: Finishers 151-200 in 2020-21 FedExCup Standings (thru 2022)

#### *On his 7-under 64 on Lagos today...*

"It was a great day. I've been playing pretty good lately but I just haven't been shooting low scores like this. Today, some of the putts fell, which hasn't been happening. Golf gets fun when you start making the long ones. Made two putts unexpectedly. Sometimes you just hope to two-putt those, and they went in. That's usually the difference between an okay round and a great round."

#### *On where he made the long putts...*

"No. 12, I was on the fringe, probably a 50-footer, and it went in. Made a nice putt on No. 9 for birdie as well. Great golf course. I enjoy coming here. This is probably my sixth or seventh time playing this event. I grew up in the northeast up in the Boston area, so I'm used to playing tree-lined short courses with a lot of wedges. This course fits my eye really well, so I definitely enjoy coming here."

#### *On finishing his front nine with four birdies in a row...*

"I made four in a row, but we were the first group so we hit the back end of the guys (teeing off) and we waited about 30 minutes. But I birdied No. 10 and kept it going. Once you get on those kind of runs, you just want to stay out of your own way, just try to hit putts, keep your head down, and stay focused."

#### *On the keys for the weekend...*

"Just keep making the putts. It hasn't been the greatest start to the year, but that's golf. Sometimes you're playing well but just not getting the results. It was nice to see some of the putts fall and put up a low score. I haven't done that in a while. It was a lot of fun."

#### *On any other shots that was a highlight today...*

"I played more conservative than probably most guys. I just tried to hit the fairways, hit greens, give myself putts for birdie. I don't think this is a course you can overpower."

#### *On whether he felt like this would be a special week after a hole-in-one Wednesday...*

"That's a good sign. This is a great week. I always enjoy coming here. I've had decent success here. But having an ace, that's a little lucky. A good start to the week for sure."

**Brandon Matthews (-9, T6)**

City Plays From: Dupont, Pennsylvania | Turned Pro: 2016 | College: Temple University  
Exempt Status: 2020-21 PGA TOUR Latinoamérica Order of Merit winner

*On his 5-under 65 on Pacos...*

"It was good today. I didn't get what I wanted to get out of the round, especially with how well I'm hitting it right now. Did a lot of good things. We were very confused by some of the bounces and results of the shots we hit today. If I can just keep chipping here over the weekend, I really like the big golf course (Lagos) here. I think it's one of the best we play all year. I'm excited to get out there over the weekend, and I feel it could be a really good week here."

*On starting his back nine with three birdies in a row...*

"I made about an 8-footer for birdie on No. 11, and I threw my hands up in the air because it was the first putt I saw go in over 3 feet the entire day. It was just tough out there because I kept hitting good putts, hitting good pitch shots, hitting really good shots coming in, and I couldn't get anything out of it. I didn't short side myself too much today. I'm really excited for the weekend. I think I'm in a really good position, and I'm happy with the way I grinded on that back nine."

*On his position heading into the final two rounds on Lagos...*

"I'm looking forward to it. I feel like my game is in a good spot right now. It should be a fun weekend."