

Travelers Championship

Friday, June 26, 2020

Phil Mickelson

Quick Quotes



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Q. How does this compare with some of your best rounds here? What was different and what were you doing well?

PHIL MICKELSON: So it's been a while since I've played here. I played last year not great, but it's been a while since I won back in '02. But I thought that I just -- I made some strides in the sense that I didn't try to go toe-to-toe with two of the longest guys in the game, Bryson and Rory. I ended up hitting some 3-woods on some of those holes because it fit my game better, and fortunately I made a couple of birdies. I'm thinking about No. 7 as an example, where they hit driver and I hit 3-wood and was still able to make birdie. Playing my game and the way the course set up for me was a challenge when you're playing with guys that hit it like that, but it allowed me to play some good golf.

Q. When you left Colonial, what was your mindset, and how different from just -- that stretch when you went home, I'm assuming you went home for a few days, to here? Did you feel more refreshed when you got here?

PHIL MICKELSON: So it felt a lot closer at Colonial. Earlier in the year I had missed some cuts, I wasn't playing great, and I came out of Colonial and actually I felt like I was pretty close. I was able to get a little work done last week and had a really good session, again, with Andrew earlier in the week and we kind of keyed in on something that made it -- just kind of calm me down and felt like I could strike it a little bit better. So I started to hit some much better shots, my misses have been better. It's only two rounds, but it's been very positive.

Q. Was that something that -- I know you don't like to reveal things, but was it something mechanical?

PHIL MICKELSON: So everybody's swing is going to be a little bit different, but just helped me kind of release the club through impact, so I've been able to hit my longer stuff a lot straighter, and it just seems a lot easier. I'm hoping to continue to build on it, work on it and hit it even better into the weekend.

Q. What would you say are your two or three favorite things you did today, shots, whether it was a hole-out or the putt on 14?

PHIL MICKELSON: So I made a six-footer on 13, and it was a huge putt for me because I hit a perfect 3-wood on a difficult tee shot for me. I've got water right, out-of-bounds left, and it's a slice wind. Very hard shot for me,

and I was able to hit a perfect 3-wood in the fairway and then I hit a beautiful little running 4-iron right on the edge of the green where I wanted, but I hit a bad first putt. When you play the hole the way you want to and you walk out of that par-5 with a par, it's very discouraging, but I made a difficult breaking six-footer and it just kept my momentum going, and I come out and hit a good drive on the next hole and end up making a long putt for birdie and birdied the next. Sometimes a little thing like that can really keep the round going or take away, and that was a really big putt for me.

Q. You said you didn't try to go toe-to-toe with two of the biggest in golf. Would a younger Phil Mickelson 20 years ago have tried to go toe-to-toe?

PHIL MICKELSON: Maybe. I tried in LA to match it with Brooks and Bubba, and those guys are long, and I was trying to swing hard, and I ended up missing the cut. I ended up not playing well, and I learned from that, and I said, okay, I'm going to play this golf course a certain way. There's some holes I can open it up and try to hit driver, but really I just want to get it in play on a lot of holes and let my wedges take over, and I've hit a lot of good wedge shots this week.

Q. You said you've made some good putts and obviously you made a bunch of them. What do you think you've done well or what are you concentrating on to match up your line and speed? A lot of guys have said over the course of the day the greens firmed up, the wind was here and there, but you seemed to be pretty focused and dialed in.

PHIL MICKELSON: So it's certainly challenging when you bring in all those elements. You've got green speeds that are changing, you've got crosswinds and so forth. But the greens don't have a ton of break, and so there's very soft little nuances that you just have to kind of feel and sense sometimes, and I feel like I've been doing a good job of that.

Q. Nothing about this is normal. How odd is it to go so low two days in a row and it be so quiet? It's probably never happened before, right?

PHIL MICKELSON: No, but I'm just appreciative that we're playing golf. I'm appreciative that Travelers has continued to support this tournament. I'm appreciative that we're able to bring some live sports to people back home, and hopefully give them a little bit of

entertainment in some downtime. It's fun to be back competing, and I feel like the methods that we've done, whether it's no fans or whether it's face masks at times and sanitizing your hands and all these things, I feel like we're doing it a very safe way, and it's just fun to be back out playing.

Even though it's quiet and it doesn't have the same atmosphere, it still is cool that we're able to do this.

Q. You're 50 now, short turnaround tomorrow morning. Doesn't matter?

PHIL MICKELSON: You know, it's probably a little bit difficult as you get older, but when you're playing well, you have that extra momentum, and it should be okay.

Q. On 17, what was the discussion? You were on the cart path, correct? Did you contemplate hitting it off of that?

PHIL MICKELSON: So I was on the cart path, and it was up against ground under repair, and I thought I could get relief from the ground under repair but still drop it on the cart path. I didn't realize that they were considered the same, right. So if you have casual water on a cart path you can take relief from the water and still drop it on the cart path. That's what I was trying to do with the ground under repair, but they considered it all part of the path, so if I had to go left up on that hillside, I would have played it off the path, but on the other side I had a level lie, a reasonable area to drop it, and I felt that was a better option than playing off the path, so I did that.

Q. If it was just sitting on the path you would have hit it off the path?

PHIL MICKELSON: I would have if I had to drop up the hill, but because of that ground under repair, my relief up the hill would have been further away, so that's why I was able to go on the other side.