

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW: JACK NICKLAUS & GARY PLAYER
Friday, April 23, 2015



JACK NICKLAUS: Is anybody else playing? Are we in this alone?

Q. How did it feel out there today, day one?

JACK NICKLAUS: Actually, I think both Gary and I hit the ball reasonably well. We did what we had to do, we didn't make too many mistakes. We did three-putt a hole on the front nine, first nine we played, but we hit a lot of good shots.

Q. Pretty windy out there today, did that affect the game at all?

GARY PLAYER: I didn't think we would play this morning. I went back to bed. The next thing I heard we were playing. I would have given odds -- obviously Jack did a good job on the drainage here. It's nice to see people come out and support us, pay 75 bucks to come out. We appreciate their support.

JACK NICKLAUS: Really? 75 bucks? Last time I played a tournament it was 5 bucks.

GARY PLAYER: Don't tell how long ago that was.

Q. How would you say this compares to the first year?

JACK NICKLAUS: I think the people now understand having a golf tournament and they understand what it is, what we're doing, what we're playing, more people will continue to come. I think we're going to have pretty good crowds on the weekend. Forecast is for a lot better weather, that's for sure.

Q. What do you think about how this facility has come together, what Johnny has put together?

JACK NICKLAUS: He's just started. This is just a shell of what he's going to finish with. If he lives another 40 years, he may take all of Arkansas in, too.

GARY PLAYER: You know, I think he's got seven pros having done something here, I think it's six or seven pros, and fishing and hunting. The trail rides, there's so many trail rides here. The museum. This cathedral, I've never seen a view out of a cathedral like that. I call him the genius, he is a master.

Q. This is really a gem for the Branson area, isn't it?

JACK NICKLAUS: Yeah. Johnny and I were talking this morning walking down to the first tee, he says, Do you think we picked the right date for you? I said, Might have been a week

or too later, but we're here and the people are here, it's going to be a nice tournament. Gary's right, there's so many things to do here, you're certainly not going to get bored, that's for sure.

Q. And you guys were talking about how it's not so much about golf, it's been having fun. Were you guys able to do that?

JACK NICKLAUS: First of all, we came here to win a golf tournament.

GARY PLAYER: You must understand that.

JACK NICKLAUS: That's number one. Neither one of us play very much golf anymore. We still came here to do that, that's what we've done all our lives. That's what we have our fun with, that is our fun. Yesterday I went fishing and my wife Barbara and my grandson Billy, we went down and we all caught some nice fish and we had a blast. Everybody is very hospitable, everybody wants us to have a good time. Last night they had the bull riding.

GARY PLAYER: I loved that bull riding, I loved it. I got a kick out of that bull riding, I love that. I love the country music, I love the names they gave the bulls. I wrote a lot down to name some of my horses. What really amazed me was a 12-year old boy riding that bull. I hate to see what his body's going to look like when he's 30. He will not be able to walk, I'll tell you that, because that bull shakes, rattles and rolls.

Q. When you're friends with Johnny Morris, does he guarantee fish when you go fishing?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, I went last year and didn't catch any fish. It was after the rain and I went down to the Chocolate River, what Dogwood Canyon looked like, yesterday the water was nice and clear. You could see the fish, you could spot pretty much what you wanted to target. If you didn't spook it with -- line it with your cast, you had a shot at getting it.

Q. Did you get what you wanted to out of this round, do you feel you're in a position to win?

JACK NICKLAUS: I think both Gary and I felt like it should have been a lot lower. It's tough when you haven't played. I haven't hit a putt, competitive putt, I haven't hit a competitive putt since the Father-Son and that was in December. You've played.

GARY PLAYER: I've played more than you have, but I haven't hit a competitive putt of any importance since maybe last year here.

JACK NICKLAUS: So neither one of us have done much. When you don't compete, you have a chance to really shoot some bad scores. We didn't do that. What we did is we had a decent score. When one was in trouble, got it up and down all right. But we didn't make enough birdies. Now we have one round under our belt, let's just make a few more birdies.

GARY PLAYER: And I think Jack's saying ham and egg, that's the thing you've got to do.

Q. How about playing with Lee and Mike today, what was that like?

JACK NICKLAUS: We play with them every year here. Well, two years. Yeah, they play very well. Lee, Lee is just a magician hitting the golf ball. He only plays 36 holes a day. He does actually, he plays twice every day. I don't know how in the world you can do it but he does it. And Mike doesn't play at all. He has a ranch or farm up in Michigan and he spends most of his time up there. He's a strong guy.

Q. Do you guys prefer the par 3 courses at this point? Is it more fun for you?

JACK NICKLAUS: If we can get one that's shorter than that, it would be better.

GARY PLAYER: I think we're going to enjoy the one tomorrow as well.