

**ROUND 2 INTERVIEW: GRAEME McDOWELL**  
**Friday, November 13, 2015**



**GRAEME McDOWELL:** The putter's very much been the key this week so far. I'm seeing the greens well, keeping this really simple. Came into this two weeks with kind of a pretty relaxed attitude. I was hoping I was going to get here and I was going to feel like 2016 but it really hasn't. It's really about finishing 2015 off and if we could finish it off, great, and if we don't finish it, well, that's fine also because we hit the reset button and get on with next year. I've really felt relaxed on the golf course I guess is what I'm going to say. The last couple days, so far the attitude's been good. I've just been out there trying to play golf and enjoy myself. Like I say, keep it really simple on the greens, seeing them well and knocking some really nice putts in. The key today, I drove it so much better than I did yesterday. My first two tee shots yesterday both pretty much went out of bounds. The second one kicked in and didn't feel great with the driver. I actually put my old one back in the bag today and drove it much, much better.

**Q. When was the last time you played a round as well as today?**

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** You know, going back to Europe for that stretch. When I look back, I feel like I've been playing better since about the Scottish Open, decent at St. Andrews. I played well at Firestone in stretches. I think the first round at Firestone, or the second round, I can't remember which, I played really well. The first 27 holes at Whistling Straits I hit it as good as I could hit it, couldn't get the ball in the hole. About five weeks off I took after Whistling Straits straights was key for me, I needed to clear my head, I was under too much pressure. I was putting too much pressure on myself. That stretch in Europe where I played three or four weeks in a row there, I shot a lot of under par rounds and started to kind of get my confidence and belief back a little bit. Messed up a few back nines on Sundays, which was frustrating but fun at the same time because I haven't been on the back nine on Sunday very often. I've been going through kind of the processes really of getting there, messing it up a little bit, getting back there and playing a little better.

Today, like I say, I feel very relaxed. I didn't even realize I made seven birdies in eight holes to be honest. The five in a row yesterday I noticed because I doubled the first and I was trying my best to rally. But today I was just hitting the golf ball and rolling some nice putts and hit some really, really good shots today as well, so today was very pleasing. Yesterday I didn't feel as under control as I did today with the ball, and today was very, very pleasing. Like I said, I'm just going to work on my attitude this weekend, try and stay as relaxed as I can. Like I say, anything that happens these two weeks I'm looking at as a bonus really for this year.

**Q. Being in the lead, does that give you pressure for tomorrow?**

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** Yeah, of course. I mean, leading comes with its own expectations levels, normally from within. I've been in this position a few times before, frankly, so I kind of

know how to deal with it. I know what to expect from myself and I think that's the big key to kind of any sports psychology is kind of understanding how you as a person react to certain things. So I know how I react to leading and I know what I need to do. Keep talking about being relaxed and keep my attitude good, that's what I need to do tomorrow. I need to stay aggressive on this golf course. It's soft, it's there to be shot at like my 8 under par this morning. There's a lot of quality players in this field and guys that can go very low. No lead is kind of safe out there. You're going to have to stay aggressive. Like I say, the way I'm putting I feel like if I can get the ball anywhere on the green, I have a chance to make it.

**Q. At Firestone, even Turkey a couple weeks ago you've had chances to put yourself in contention and haven't got it in four rounds. What's the key this week?**

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** Learning a little bit from my mistakes, I suppose. The last few months not staying in the present enough on the weekends, kind of getting a little excited, caring too much. Just kind of mistakes that I used to make 10 years ago when I was trying to learn how to win out here. I guess I went through a spell in my career where winning started to become a little easier. I've had a spell here the last 18 months where making cuts has been hard and getting in contention's been difficult. I feel like I've got enough resources to pull on going into a weekend like this one. The keys are not getting too far ahead of myself and staying in the present. This is not last-chance saloon this weekend. Of course I would love to -- I would dearly love to be in the heat Sunday afternoon and have a chance to win here, but like I say, I need to keep the attitude good this weekend and I think I haven't done that well the last few months.

**Q. Do you have any interest in discarding the opening hole on this course and just playing the other 17?**

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** Yeah, yeah, absolutely. At least I'm trending in the right direction, six, five, and I've got my sights set on a 3 maybe tomorrow. Today I had it in the middle of the fairway, back-left pin position. I was just trying to rope a little 6-iron in there and I just didn't want to miss it left and I flared it. Hit a great chip and a great putt. But yeah, 3 over for that hole's not great. I'll work on that one. I like it, it's a good hole, nothing wrong with it, nothing wrong with it.

**MODERATOR:** I'm sure you've noticed that we've got so far five first-time winners in five events this year. How much is that either a push to have you as a veteran out here with a major championship title under your belt really elevate and raise your game or just excite you about the overall status of the competition level out here?

**GRAEME McDOWELL:** Yeah, I'm excited about where the game of golf is, just to be involved in the game and see it evolve the way it has I guess in sort of -- after what Tiger has been doing for the sport, seeing kids coming out. I say kids; I'm 36 and I feel like an old man out here these days. Used to be your mid 30s was the prime of your career. I'm not so sure anymore. I think maybe your mid 20s is the prime of your career these days. I think the great thing about this sport is you can play well in your teens, your 20s, your 30s, your

40s, even up to your 50s. The great thing about this game is the longevity. But I think there's a trend that we're seeing right now where these young guys, they're not scared. They have a belief level which has been inspired by Tiger and what he's done in the game and you see Rory's and Jordans and Jasons and Dustin Johnsons just coming out of the woodwork left, right and center, and I think we'll continue to see that. Going into the weekend here maybe some guys I'm not so familiar with on the leaderboard, playing with them this weekend. You can't help but respect the fact that kids are not scared of shooting 64s anytime, anywhere, doesn't matter who you are, how many major championships you've won. These guys aren't scared anymore and you've got to stay aggressive in this game nowadays and that's going to be the big key for me this weekend.

**MODERATOR:** Graeme, **welcome back and we appreciate it, hope to see a lot more of you over the weekend. The key today is I drove it so much better than I did yesterday.**