



PHIL MICKELSON: It was a fun day. I really like the golf course. I think what's so fun about this is with the altitude, you have a chance to hit drivers on the holes that will really punish you if you don't hit it straight, and you can play conservative if you want but then it's very difficult to get to some of these pins that are on greens that are very challenging. I think it provides a fun, interesting, exciting mixture of holes and strategies.

Q. No. 8 is the hardest hole out here. You birdied that hole, hit a terrific putt. Take us through that hole because you hit a great drive, still had like 210 yards in.

PHIL MICKELSON: Yes, it's a very difficult hole. I think it might even be a converted par 5, I don't know, the green seems pretty small. I hit 3-wood off the tee because with the hole turning from left to right and going uphill, it's a difficult hole for me to hit driver and draw it because it's drawing right into the hill. So a little more loft with a 3-wood feels comfortable. I hit a good 3-wood out there and had 6-iron, I had 233 to the hole. I had been over the green in the practice round and realized that's not where you want to be, so I just played to the bottom of the tier. I tried to fly it into the bottom and just not go over. I left myself a good -- an easy 4. Not an easy putt to make, per se, but not hard to two-putt and it went in. It was fun for that to happen.

Q. And the crowd roared. You kind of felt they were behind you at that point?

PHIL MICKELSON: It was really cool. The people here have been terrific and so supportive and nice and it's been a real treat for us to play.

Q. Talk about your brother, fills in for Bones on the third hole. Talk about the whole day, how that transpired.

PHIL MICKELSON: The first three holes, Bones hasn't been feeling well and the first three holes are straightaway going from the clubhouse downhill, and we got back and we looked back up the hill and I could see that it was going to be a difficult walk. There was a cart there and Sabrina with (inaudible) Television drove him up to the clubhouse.

Tim knew that he probably wasn't going to make it the whole round and so he came out. It was great. Now, you can't replace somebody like Bones. He's phenomenal and he's so good with club selection and strategy and so forth, but my brother's a great player and he did a phenomenal job today. He's caddied in amateur events and he's played at a high level in amateur events so he has a good grasp of this. And then the other two guys, Scotty Vail and Greg, the caddies for Louis Oosthuizen and Snedeker, were very helpful, too.

Q. (No microphone.)

PHIL MICKELSON: Well, he's irreplaceable. I mean he's one of the best in the business. He's so good at club selection, and here at altitude that's where he's invaluable and so forth. But he's hurting. It's a difficult course to walk because it is hilly. He had two knees done but that's not the issue, he just hasn't been feeling well. So he's irreplaceable and I love playing with him. We've had phenomenal times.

But on the positive side, I had a lot of fun with my brother. He's so fun to be around and he did a great job today. He's a good player in his own right. He's a scratch player, understands the game, has caddied for many top players, is Jon Rahm's manager, understands the nuances of the game. He came out and did a phenomenal job. When you also have guys like Scotty Vail that works for Snedeker and Greg who works for Oosthuizen helping him out and making it easy, helping him with the pins, raking bunkers and just so forth, it was a pretty easy transition.

Q. I would imagine when two were kids there was a lot of ribbing back and forth. What was it like on the golf course today, him legitimately working for you for about four hours?

PHIL MICKELSON: Well, see, I love that. Yes, he does -- he does give me the needle, but I think that's so funny. It keeps me relaxed. The fact that he told -- he has a few stories about me that he wish he didn't -- it can be challenging, but he's so fun to be around, he's one of the quality people that I know.

Q. From a golf standpoint, you bring in Bones so much and you guys talk so often on the golf course. Was there something perhaps not missing today, but did it seem different to you not being able to do that because, like you and everybody else, you guys are all creatures of habit?

PHIL MICKELSON: Well, my brother understands, you know, he understands how to play the game at a high level and how to shoot low scores and when to go for it and when not to. And as a college golf coach for many years, he also understands smart strategies, strategic play and smart plays. And so does Bones. So he was there if I needed to talk through some stuff, but for the most part, these greens are greens I'm going to read on my own. Also, the irons, you really have to feel, get a sense for it. You can't say I like an 8 or I like a 9 because it can go such a different yardage. It's based on how you feel, how hard you're going to hit it and all those nuances.

So of all places to have it happen, this is probably the easiest to transition, but Bones is invaluable. He's so good at what he does.

Q. Speaking of those nuances, here you are right now just one shot back with a chance to win a WGC event coming up this weekend. After playing this golf course a couple of days, how much more of a sense of a feel do you have for the way you're supposed to play here this weekend as you go for another title versus when you first arrived here?

PHIL MICKELSON: What's so fun about this course and I think the reason I've really fallen for it so quickly is that you have alternate ways to play every hole. You can hit driver on every hole and with the altitude you can really try and overpower it. However, the trees are so thick and dense you don't have a recovery shot. There are no openings so you have to hit in the fairway.

You can play conservative with irons, and based on where the pins on these greens which are so challenging and fast, you can play aggressive on some holes, conservative on others based on how you feel, and that's like that on every single hole out here. It's really a fun, exciting course to watch guys play and to watch them this weekend because we'll play really very -- we'll have totally different strategies on this golf course.

Q. Phil, can you just talk about having Tim as opposed to Bones today, a little unusual, and obviously (no microphone.)

PHIL MICKELSON: Yeah, Bones is irreplaceable because he's so good at what he does and we've worked together now for 25 years that we just have this intricate rapport. He does a great job with club selection and we just work well together, so he's irreplaceable. But he wasn't feeling well, and as we went downhill the first three holes straightaway from the clubhouse and we turned and looked back uphill, I could tell it was going to be a struggle. We knew that this was going to happen at some point today, so we had Tim come out, and Tim is one of my favorite people to be around. Certainly I'm biased because he's my brother but he's so fun to be around and he's a good player in his own right. He's coached college golf for so many years and now manages Jon Rahm that he understands the game, he understands strategy, course management, he knows the way I like to play, so we had a really good rapport out there. I thought he did a phenomenal job and we had a lot of fun. It was a lot of fun to have him out there.

But a guy like Bones, who is really the best at what he does, is irreplaceable.

Q. How would you describe Tim's style compared to Bones'?

PHIL MICKELSON: Well, you know, Tim hasn't caddied a lot, so all the little unwritten rules or nuances that caddies go through -- who gets the pin, who's going to rake, you go rake somebody else's divot if they're hitting next or reading the green -- all these little nuances he wouldn't be in tune with. But Scotty Vail who works for Snedeker and Greg who works for Louis were so great about it, you know, helping him along the way. The day really went well.

Q. Phil, on 7 it looked like you were kind of debating what club you wanted to use. Is that maybe an instance where Bones would have taken away any kind of indecision you had?

PHIL MICKELSON: I was in between two clubs. I could have hit either one and I ended up going with the longer, the more of the two. I went with an 8 instead of a 9 because I just felt

like taking the water out of play. It was a little bit safer play. It flew a little bit long like I thought it probably would.

I think that nothing would have been different on that instance had Bones been out there. You know, on this golf course, I don't have Bones read the greens. On the club selection, we'll have options, but for the most part it's very difficult for a caddie to pull a club for a player here. So I've got to do it because it's based on how I'm feeling, how hard I want to hit it, what kind of draw or fade I want to hit because the discrepancy in distance is so great here that it's hard for any caddie to pull a club. So I don't use Bones all that much on the club selection either, even though he'll give me a few options.

So of all places for it to happen, this is probably the easiest one. I'm least reliant on him here, whereas at Augusta it would be catastrophic because we have so much history on that golf course over the years, so many shots that he's documented, how far each club has gone and where we want to be and not be and what happened in certain years when we went here and we made that putt and that putt, remember, it broke a little more. All those things on a course like Augusta would be invaluable that you simply can't replace. It would cost me a lot of shots. But a place here, which is a new golf course, we don't have that history. It probably was the easiest place to do it.

Q. (No microphone.) about course difficulty?

PHIL MICKELSON: I really like the golf course. It is a fun course to play because every hole you have multiple ways to play it, multiple tee shots, multiple ways to attack the pins and the greens. The greens are very difficult. They're deceptively fast, very contoured, a lot of pitch and slope in them. I think just it's a really fun test.

It's not an overly long golf course but it tests you on precision, being able to hit it the right distance, to hit it straight, to have the right touch chipping and putting. It tests all the areas of your game. It's a wonderful course.

Q. Phil, on 2, how tough of a shot was that for you? For the normal human being it would have been a nonstarter, but did you --

PHIL MICKELSON: I really thought -- I was in between a 64 and a 60. If I had flopped the 60 I think I could have made birdie. I had a gap, I thought it could be just about right, and I fatted the 64 a little bit and it came up short and I ended up getting up and down for par. It wasn't a hard shot. I should have gotten it on the green, I should have been inside 12 or 15 feet there was plenty of opening. I didn't have to do much to the ball to get it to go through that opening. It was just a flop shot would go through it naturally and I hit a poor shot. It should have been on the green with a birdie chance.

Q. (No microphone.)

PHIL MICKELSON: It's been very flattering to come play here and feel the support from the

people. They've been so nice and I'm very happy that this tournament, the World Golf Championships, has been brought here to Mexico City. It's been a great opportunity to bring the best players in the world right here.