

RICKIE FOWLER

NOT VERBATIM

RICKIE FOWLER: Definitely looking forward to the (inaudible) out here. You know, the (inaudible) in the schedule, make my first time down. I had been looking forward to the opportunity and finally with not playing much in Asia, not playing at all this year over there, I was (inaudible) to have an event, to play in an event in between Presidents Cup and Tiger's. So this was a perfect fit. Like I said, I had never heard of (inaudible). A lot of guys have been down here, guys, wives, girlfriends, (inaudible) a great resort, (inaudible), the golf course is a good test (inaudible) so excited that it worked out this year to come down. Yeah, so far I'm (inaudible).

DOUG MILNE: You're coming off a great season, 10 top-10 finishes. You had a little time off. Is your game still right where you want it to be?

RICKIE FOWLER: I would actually say it's pretty good. I didn't play a whole lot between Presidents Cup and now. I think I've (inaudible) five weeks off, which a couple were charity days or pro-am for Oklahoma State golf. Nothing up until two rounds last week that I (inaudible) playing golf. So it's exciting to come back. It was nice to see (inaudible) not far off (inaudible), continued to stay in good form. It was a good year across the board. It would have been nice to have had more wins or get a major, but to be up there in a lot of the majors, to get a win at Honda, plenty of top-10s, being in contention and the stats across the board, when you look at that stuff, it was arguably the best I've played or have been playing. So more wins in the majors will definitely come if that continues.

DOUG MILNE: With that, we'll take a few questions.

Q. Rickie, can you take me through your preparation a little bit, like have you gone out to Vegas to see Butch or what exactly have you been working on? Is it (inaudible)?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, the casual rounds I try to just keep it fairly casual. I didn't want to get too tied up in working on specific things. Continue to think about maybe one or two of my queues were through the year towards the end of the year just so I wasn't getting too far off or getting into bad habits if I was playing any golf.

I didn't talk to Butch a whole lot. Wasn't physically around golf for a couple weeks and that wasn't necessarily designed that way or anything. I love staying in touch but it wasn't like I was hitting any golf balls so I didn't need to pick his brain or send him videos. We talked a little bit last week, sent him a swing video and surprisingly he didn't have a whole lot bad to

say. Just a touch laid off at the top, which is something that we continue to work on, but a lot of the early positions in the swing and after impact were all good.

Like I said, I played two rounds last week to kind of see where we were, to get some work in. Was able to come down here and get some more time relaxing, but even with those weeks off, I think we had roughly a month off, obviously didn't play a whole lot but spent a lot of time in the gym. The body's healthy, very strong, stronger than I was at the end of the season. So that being said, it makes it easier to come back and play golf even though I hadn't touch the clubs a whole lot.

Q. What day did you get here?

RICKIE FOWLER: We got in Saturday.

Q. Just your first impressions about the course?

RICKIE FOWLER: I like the golf course. It's a fun layout. I enjoy playing in windy conditions, so I know it can get fairly windy down here. Like I said, it seems like a fun layout. I've only been around it once now, but very much demanding of the tee ball. You have to hit the ball pretty straight to stay out of the native area, whatever you want to call it, don't go into it. You have to hit the ball straight off the tee to have a chance this week.

The golf course is in great shape. I've heard it's in the best shape a lot of guys have seen in the past three, four, five years. So I guess I picked a good year and no, I'm looking forward to it. We're off early tomorrow morning, so hopefully get off to a good solid start and have a good week here.

Q. Now that you had a month off, you're beginning this new season, do you have in your mind any adjustments, any changes in your game, equipment, anything coming into this new season?

RICKIE FOWLER: Well, right now, no changes. I'm sure I'll be working on some new stuff the next few weeks before Tiger's event. But really, with this fall and the reason for not playing overseas, to really playing here, playing Tiger's event, starting up in Maui, looking at more of this fall/winter as a time of rest, spend time in the gym, create some sort of -- somewhat of an offseason because we don't necessarily get much off time unless you choose to take it. This was one of my times where I've -- I don't think in all the time of my years on Tour I've really had a full offseason in a way. So not necessarily stressing the November, December time. I mean, I'm excited to be down here and I want to play well and I feel like I definitely can play well. I wouldn't be here if I didn't feel I could win. But I'm also enjoying the relaxation and getting some time in the gym and we'll definitely be ready to go and really get the season going in January.

Q. When you get that much time off, do you have -- do you sit back and sort of reflect, okay, I'm 28, played in President Cups, Ryder Cups, I've done everything there

is to do, I played the Olympics, what do I have to do to hit the next level, or what is next to do on your to-do list? Is it just turning those top-5s in the majors into wins and getting Justin and Jordan congratulating you behind the 18th green?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, I mean, it's a fine line. You know well enough, seeing guys and where they finish and how they play and understanding how much one putt or one shot can do, whether it's coming down the stretch or even that one putt early in the week. It's a very fine line between finishing 10th in a major and being right there in contention.

I mean, to be honest, I've had roughly a month off but I haven't had a whole lot of time to think or even sit down. I think we've had maybe a total of a week and a half at home. I was able to go to Stillwater for homecoming and we went to Napa for a few days after the fires, which we were lucky to still be able to do the trip and kind of help show Napa was alive and well. Then went to my girlfriend's homecoming at Berkeley, spent some days in Scottsdale.

Maybe some time to think before Tiger's event, but maybe not. Even though you get an offseason or take some time off, it's rare that we get to just sit down and do nothing and think. But I know between my caddie and my agent, my girlfriend's family, kind of my close team, we'll definitely be sitting down and making sure we're all doing the right stuff, laying out the schedule properly and figuring out what we can do better to tighten up, whether it's preparation, golf game to make sure that we're not letting any chances slip away.

Q. Rickie, you're one of the favorites to win the tournament. What does it mean for you? Is it more pressure or what is it?

RICKIE FOWLER: I mean, I'm coming off of a great season looking at it statistically, and some of my finishes, arguably my best season across the board. Maybe not as many wins as I would have liked to, but played very well. So yeah, I have very high expectations for myself. Not necessarily looking at who are the favorites or underdogs, obviously the PGA TOUR produces arguably the best players in the world. So we've got a great field here this week. Some guys coming off the Web or Q-School that are playing well. We've got some rookies out here. I'm looking forward to it. My girlfriend and I have had a great time here at Mayakoba so far and looking forward to playing well. I'd be honored if I could stand on the 18th green on Sunday and have a trophy in my hands, but I have a lot of work ahead of me.

Q. Rickie, I want to know how you is your relationship with Spanish guys on the PGA TOUR like Jon Rahm and Sergio Garcia and if you can remember any good memories with them?

RICKIE FOWLER: I've got a great relationship with a lot of Spaniards. Jon Rahm, I've played quite a bit with this past year. We've had a good time playing with each other. I played with him before he turned pro. Good friends with Tim Mickelson, who used to be his college coach and is now his agent, so we've been buddies for a little while.

Sergio's been one of my best friends on Tour for a number of years. I was in his wedding

just this summer. So we've had a lot of good times together both on and off the golf course from I think it was last year being in Switzerland playing in his charity event. Yeah, the most kind of fun, intimate moment with Sergio and Angela, being a part of their wedding in Austin earlier this year, to be able to share that experience and have a fun couple days there was pretty cool.

DOUG MILNE: Well, Rickie, we appreciate your time as always.