

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW
January 25, 2018



TED POTTER, JR. (-6)

Q. The last shot at 18, that chip shot, that ball was moving when it went in the hole.

TED POTTER, JR.: It sure was. I'm glad it caught the hole because it was probably four feet, five feet by. To go bogey free around this course is pretty amazing and happy how I played today.

Q. Looking at your numbers, you did a lot of scrambling today and it paid off, and the flat stick was really good.

TED POTTER, JR.: Yeah, I got off to a good start on the front nine, so shooting 5 under on the front nine definitely built some confidence going into the back nine. But got some loose swings out there, missed some fairways so had to do some scrambling, but all in all I'm happy where I finished.

Q. Great start. You know what it's like to win on the Tour, you know what it's like to battle your way back on the PGA TOUR, you had a great Web.com Tour season a year ago. What was that like for you knowing that you tasted success and you wanted to be back out here?

TED POTTER, JR.: I mean, to prove that after injuries and everything to get back out on the Web or my Tour card back, I mean definitely positives. Everything's been positive so far. Haven't got off to a good start this year, but I'm working through it and the swing's getting better. I'll hit some balls this afternoon. I got a little loose out there on the back nine, but getting close. All in all, I'm feeling good.

Q. What a round you were able to put together with that 6-under 66. Before we get into the round, how nice was it to finish with that chip-in on 18?

TED POTTER, JR.: It's always nice to finish especially with a birdie and the chip-in was a bonus there. Just happy to finish the round bogey free.

Q. How were you able to put together such a nice number in what seemed to be fairly tough scoring conditions on the South?

TED POTTER, JR.: The first nine I got off to a good start, hit a lot of fairways, a lot of greens, so I gave myself a lot of opportunities to make birdies. Back side, got a little wild off the tee with a couple drives and I made sure to put myself towards the front edge of the green so I had easier up-and-downs, I just didn't want to go over these greens where the rough is, so tried to give myself a good opportunity to make par.

Q. Ted, congratulations on a terrific round of 66, ended in style with a chip-in. Tell us about that one.

TED POTTER, JR.: Yeah, nice to finish with a birdie on the last hole, and then chipping in was a bonus to make the birdie. Thought I hit a good shot into the last hole with my third, took a big hop and took it over the back edge there. Luckily it wasn't in the bunker so I had a little uphill lie and made it a little bit easier.

Q. Fabulous front nine of yours, 31 5-under par, what was the particular key to that, were you holing putts or hitting it close or what?

TED POTTER, JR.: I hit a lot of good iron shots into the greens so I didn't have many long putts, so definitely the iron play on the front nine helped. Holed some good putts so it's always good to make some putts early to build some confidence.

Q. You played on the PGA TOUR for three years back around '12, '13, '14, then you had this injury, you had the broken ankle. How hard has it been to fight back from that?

TED POTTER, JR.: It's been tough, but I mean it's getting better. The ankle's healed up well so feeling good about it. As long as I can get around 18 holes walking, I'll be here.

Q. I understand you are a bit like Phil Mickelson, you mirrored your dad and you watched your dad play and played left handed because you were watching him and did it in reverse. Is that the case?

TED POTTER, JR.: Yeah, that's pretty much how it worked out. He started me young enough where watching him hit balls and I probably tried to do the same thing he's doing, so flipped the club over and tried to hit it left handed, so he built me left-handed clubs.

Q. Talk about your round today.

TED POTTER, JR.: Got off the first hole, got off to a good start and made birdie on 1, so definitely a positive start. Hit a lot of fairways and greens on the first nine and that really helped me get going with shooting 5 under. Just all in all it was a good day. I scrambled a lot on the back nine, and then the last hole there, chipping in on the last hole was a bonus to finish at 6 under.

Q. You don't have a lot of experience around this golf course. What do you think the key is to play at least the South course well?

TED POTTER, JR.: I think the biggest key on this course is hitting fairways. I mean you've got to hit the fairway on this course. The rough's penalizing. It's hard to get it to the green if you hit it in the rough, so you're going to scramble if you're not hitting fairways.

Q. After coming back from the injury and the Web.com Tour, do you feel this is an opportunity early in the year to kind of put up a good tournament and establish a good season?

TED POTTER, JR.: Yeah, it's always nice to get off to a good start no matter what part of the season it is, the fall or the beginning of the year. Yeah, definitely. I mean this is probably my second time playing this event. I think the first time was when I was a rookie out here and it was cold and it was just tough. I didn't think I would come back because of the weather, such a long golf course. But this year looked like the weather was going to be better, and with my reshuffle number, I've got to play as many events as I can get into, so definitely some positive there this week with the weather how it is.

Q. You missed a handful of cuts in the stretch leading up to this. Did you feel better coming into today or was it one of those rounds where you didn't see it coming?

TED POTTER, JR.: I've been working hard the last couple weeks on my swing trying to get it feeling better than -- I mean, during the offseason, didn't get much time to practice. Florida was cold and wet and it wasn't good weather for practicing, then got out to Sony and I was pretty rusty. So last two weeks, I mean, Humana, got a lot of good practice in last week. I know I didn't play really well. Got some good practice in the first couple days this week so my swing's feeling a lot better than it was at the end of last year. Still got a lot of work to do, but all in all I'm going in the right direction I feel with my swing.

Q. Any changes specifically you made over that period?

TED POTTER, JR.: Just trying to not hit the ball right to left as much, not to get over the top of it, trying to get a little bit I guess flatter, you could say. Just trying to get where I can hit more draw shots. I don't want it going left as much.

Q. Do you feel like you can relax a little bit now going into tomorrow?

TED POTTER, JR.: Yeah, I'm going to go hit a few balls on the range just trying to tighten up what happened out there on the back nine, just a couple loose swings going left a little bit. But I'll be fine, I feel fine about today. I mean it's a good round for me since I haven't played well the last few weeks, so it's definitely a positive.