



ROUND 2 INTERVIEW
January 26, 2018

PHIL MICKELSON (-6)

Q. Just kind of a roller coaster of a day for you. How would you describe your 68?

PHIL MICKELSON: It was a really easy, fun front nine and it was a lot of work on the back. It's kind of how I just play, it's just kind of the way I play. Hit a lot of good shots, hit a lot of bad shots. Mentally, when I'm really focused and sharp over a shot I hit some really good shots, and sometimes I just have a hard time keeping that focus throughout the shot, I hit some crazy ones. So it's just the way I play.

Q. What'd that putt on 4 do?

PHIL MICKELSON: Yeah, the putt on 4 was kind of a crazy one because I have struggled with that putt leaving it short. I leave it short six, seven feet all the time and I made sure I gave it a little extra, it was going to run by quite a bit and it went right in. Those are bonus ones.

The ones that are really cool that get the round going are the ones like on 5 where I have about a 12-, 15-footer that could go either way. They're hard putts, they're breaking in there and yet they're close enough that you can really make them and think birdie. So when I made that putt, that's actually a putt that gave me a little bit more momentum, and the par putt on 17 kept the round going and kept me focused to try to make birdie on 18.

Q. How were you able to tackle the par 5s?

PHIL MICKELSON: Yeah, I played them well today. I drove it well on the first three. I hit it pretty long on the first three and hit the fairway and had 5-wood into both 6 and 9 and had a 7-iron into 13, so that allowed me to play those under par, 4 under. And then the last hole, nobody was going to get there on 18 so I tried to really bust a drive just maybe in hopes of getting there. It's probably a good thing I missed the fairway because I would have been tempted and it probably wouldn't have been the smart play, but I missed the fairway and just wedged it up there and made a putt.

Q. As a guy who's been at this tournament for such a long time, it's got to make you feel good maybe not as a player but as a supporter of the tournament to know it's going to be rocking this weekend with all the big names that have made the cut?

PHIL MICKELSON: I'll tell you, I just love playing here. I just -- it just brings back a lot of great memories, and to have a strong field like we have and to see the tournament have a long-term sponsor and the field, it's cool. It means a lot to me to see this tournament succeed and it is, it's really thriving and it's fun to be a part of it and fun to be here on the

weekend.

Q. We were talking a little bit on Thursday about the difference of North and South, how they're getting closer. Now that you've been able to evaluate both over these past 48 hours, still holding true?

PHIL MICKELSON: Well, the North is a long, hard golf course now. There's no pushover. There might be two or three more birdie holes on the North than the South, but they're both very difficult, very little scoring discrepancy between the two now, and yet both can be had with good play.

Q. What were the conversations like with your brother when you were going bogey, bogey, eagle, bogey?

PHIL MICKELSON: No different than when I went birdie, birdie, birdie, you know. We were just trying to get the right club, the right yardage, hit the right shot. But sometimes I'm focused and pull it off and sometimes I'm not and it's just kind of the way I play.

Q. How's that dynamic working so far?

PHIL MICKELSON: It's been awesome. I love being around him, he's one of my favorite people to be around and he reads greens phenomenally and he pulls some good clubs. So there were two times out there today I went against him and I was wrong. He had the right club. It was obvious on 15 I came up short, he wanted me to hit 6, I hit 7, I wasn't even close. So he's doing a really good job.

Q. Phil, what do you expect out of the weekend? It's going to be 80 on Sunday and I think it's a change in winds I think with the Santa Ana. You've seen how this course can play with the switch.

PHIL MICKELSON: I didn't know that was going to be the case. I've played it under all kinds of conditions and I just think it's going to be a fun weekend. Whatever conditions we have, we'll try to make it work. But it's fun to be a part of this tournament, it's fun to be in contention, it's fun to be here on the weekend and it's fun to start the year here.