

**ROUND 3 INTERVIEW**  
**May 5, 2018**



**TIGER WOODS (-1)**

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**Q. Tiger, I know not the finish that you wanted, but your putting stats were a lot better for Saturday's third round.**

**TIGER WOODS:** (No microphone.) I was so close to shooting about 7 under on that back nine.

**Q. Given that you were right on the cut line, what's it do for you (inaudible).**

**TIGER WOODS:** Well, my ball-striking's been fine, I just haven't made anything. If I would have made a few more putts or just putting normal, I would have been up there next to the lead. So just go out there and do the same thing I've been doing this week and hit the ball well and make a few putts, which I was able to do.

**Q. Not the finish that you wanted, but overall a much better putting day. You said yesterday that you know you had to make the adjustments, they just hadn't been done yet. What adjustments did you make today?**

**TIGER WOODS:** Well, we were kind of trying to figure it out, how could I hit the putts hard enough. I changed my stroke a little bit and went a little more old school, how I used to putt, a little more handsy, a little more wristy toe moving a lot more, and it worked. I was saying earlier, I was so close to shooting about 7, 8 under today. I still didn't have enough pace on a couple that I left on the lip. I'm close, I'm hitting the ball well enough to contend, to win this golf tournament, but I just haven't made putts.

**Q. Well, those low scores are certainly out there. If you're able to get that done tomorrow, what is the big goal for you? Is it now win or are you just trying to reach --**

**TIGER WOODS:** If I can just post a good number tomorrow, see what happens. I think these guys will probably, the way these conditions are, they'll go out and get to double digits under par. That may be out of reach tomorrow, but who knows. Maybe I can play a low one and see what happens. I feel like I'm hitting the ball well enough and just trending in the right direction for next week.

**Q. I know that wasn't the finish you were looking for obviously on 18, but overall assessing this third round here at Quail Hollow Club?**

**TIGER WOODS:** Well, I hit it about the same, just made more putts. That back nine, I was close to shooting about 6, 7 under par on that back nine and left a couple putts, a few putts hanging on the lip. But overall it was another good ball-striking day. The only difference is I

made a couple more.

**Q. How encouraging was that birdie run on the back nine, 13, 14 and 15, and by the way, almost making an 82-footer there for eagle there on 14?**

**TIGER WOODS:** Yeah. Well, I missed a short one there at 10, I left one hanging on the lip on 11, and then I make a little run there, close one on 14 and I three-putt 18. Right there, that's 6 under par without really doing much. That's how well I played today and unfortunately just didn't score.

**Q. How much different did the course play today compared to Thursday and Friday?**

**TIGER WOODS:** It's playing shorter. They set up the tees a little bit differently today, they gave us a break on a couple of the holes. And it's definitely gettable, a couple of easier pins on some of the harder holes. Overall I think the guys will shoot some good numbers today. Obviously Peter did, but I think there will be a few more good rounds out there today.

**Q. Speaking of Peter, do you have respect for the path that he took, you know, going to Europe first and kind of a little unconventional way from what some of the other guys have done?**

**TIGER WOODS:** Yeah, well, he and Brooksy did the same thing. There's many different ways to get out here. You know, I think it's different now that you can't go to Q-School and get out here. It's changed so much. If you look back in the old days when Curtis first came out here, there were two Q-Schools in a year. Now there's no direct path but to either go through the Web or go through the European Tour and try and get into the -- try to get your world ranking higher. So there's different ways of doing it. So I think what Peter and Brooksy did is certainly different than most of the kids do who are American born, but it's certainly a good way to do it.

**Q. You worked so much to get your putting down this week. Is there any fear about it getting so ingrained this way that it hurts you going forward or --**

**TIGER WOODS:** Well, I changed my stroke a little bit. I was telling Amanda over there I made it a little more handsy, kind of like how we used to putt when greens were so slow on public courses. So I put a little more hit into my stroke, put a little more load, a little more hit and it worked out good, I hit some good putts. Just also left a few out there, too.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

**TIGER WOODS:** Because I'm hitting it well. I was looking for runs like that the first two days, but I didn't make anything to get on those runs. I hit the ball in the right position to make them. I was in there 10, 15 feet numerous times and missed them all, so I never got on a run.

I finally got on a nice little run there, made a couple putts and almost made a bomb on 14. Next thing you know, the round just flips; it goes from kind of an average round to all of a sudden I could really post something really good here.

**Q. You touched on earlier this week about how you thought there would be roughly 15 guys in contention going into tomorrow. Do you stand by that?**

**TIGER WOODS:** Yeah. It's pretty packed up there. The guys are probably -- a good round will be 3, 4, 5 under par today, and I think there's numerous opportunities for the guys to do it and it will be stacked going into tomorrow. Just wish I was part of that stack.

**Q. How long has it been since you've hit the ball this well three rounds in a row?**

**TIGER WOODS:** Three rounds in a row? Jeez, probably Valspar.

**Q. Better off the tee this week, right?**

**TIGER WOODS:** Yeah, there's no doubt. Changing the shaft in my driver and my 3-wood certainly helped a lot. Found one that matched up and my spin rates are now correct. I don't have these highs and lows that I was having before.

**Q. All the time that you've taken off, what part of your game do you feel like is coming back the slowest coming into this week and through these two rounds?**

**TIGER WOODS:** Well, I would say my putting. It's been not very good this week. Unfortunately, I've had weeks like that in my career, but as a whole I think I've had a pretty good career putting-wise. We haven't had the -- it's not fun, trust me, it's not fun.

The good thing is I'm hitting putts on the right line. I feel like I'm hitting the putts on my lines, but my speed is not right. I haven't been hitting hard enough. What I'm seeing and what I'm feeling is not matching up with the way the greens are rolling, so that match-up is showing up in me missing putts on the low side and the grain is eating it up. All my putts have missed on the low side.

**Q. In a normal week, Tiger, you talk about those kind of 10- to 15-foot putts, how many should you expect to make realistically, what percentage, half?**

**TIGER WOODS:** You know, when I'm putting well, I don't feel like I should miss a putt inside 10 feet. I had a couple weeks like that. The '97 Masters and the 2000 U.S. Open, I didn't miss one like that under 10 feet for the week. When we get in runs like that -- you've seen Jordan do that, I've done that a few times. You get on runs like that where you just don't feel like you can miss one inside 10 feet. Now you throw in a couple from 30 feet and all of a sudden you look like, you know, your rounds are in the mid 60s every day, but you're not missing the ones you should make. That's basically the key to really playing well and shooting good numbers.

**Q. Was there something specific about these greens that are maybe different from other greens, or is it just a bad week in general when it comes to putting?**

**TIGER WOODS:** They're just a little bit slower than -- for me, they're slower than what they look. That's always a rough fix. It's always easier the other way around. Also, with the greens being this firm, you expect firm, hard greens to be quick, but they're just not. It certainly has gotten me this week.

**Q. You definitely put a lot of pace on the one at 18. Was it frustration from leaving the one at 17 a touch short?**

**TIGER WOODS:** I left one at 17, I left the one at 11, I left one at 14. I saw Brooksy's putt at 18 there, it looked like he hit a wall coming up there. I thought it was high, it was going to be about three feet past, but hit a wall and slid. So I thought my putt was a little bit uphill, into the grain and then crossing. I got fooled. Then hit a putt hard off again on the second putt and the grain just ate it up.

**Q. What was your club selection at 17 today compared with either Thursday or Friday?**

**TIGER WOODS:** 6-iron to pitching wedge. It was only 143 today.

**Q. Do you notice any difference at all in your irons this week? Has it made any difference for you because they are different irons?**

**TIGER WOODS:** They are different, yeah. I'm actually spinning the ball better now that I have fresh grooves in there. The overall makeup of the iron is not much different, if hardly any, from what I've played most of my career with, so that part's good. It's nice to have fresh grooves in.

**Q. So are you looking for that extra spin?**

**TIGER WOODS:** Anytime you have spin, you're able to control the golf ball. Without spin, you can't control the ball. So my grooves were getting just a little bit worn. A couple of my clubs I practice with -- I warm up with all the time with my 8-iron, practice at home with a 9 and 7 not to hit my 8, and those irons get worn. They certainly were getting a little bit hot and a little bit quick.

**Q. Would that be the case with your wedges? You haven't switched those out, right?**

**TIGER WOODS:** I switch them out probably every, maybe, week and a half, two weeks.

**Q. Even though they're not the --**

**TIGER WOODS:** No, no, I wear them out quickly. Because my house, my backyard's pretty sandy and chipping a lot, it wears them out quickly with the sand, just busts them out and the grooves will just wear out pretty quickly. Certain guys like Vijay switches, every week he has a new set. A lot of guys do that, I'm not the only one that does it.