

FINAL ROUND INTERVIEW
May 6, 2018



PHIL MICKELSON (-7)

Q. Phil, a couple of bogeys to start, but seven birdies after that great save at 18. Your thoughts on how it went today.

PHIL MICKELSON: It was an up-and-down round. I didn't feel great the first four, five holes and I was just kind of fighting to hang in there. Then all of a sudden it kind of clicked and I just felt better with my game and made a few adjustments and made some birdies there the front nine. I thought anything under par today was going to be a good round, but I probably let a few go out there.

Q. And yet another top-5 here at Quail Hollow again. You love the place, you're due.

PHIL MICKELSON: Yes, I do love the place. I think it's some of the best crowds we play in front of. Some of the largest, some of the most fun to play in front of. Wonderful golf course tee to green. It is a hard golf course now. It is a brutally difficult golf course. There's no letup on it. It was a fight to play well this week.

Q. Confidence level, state of your game as you go to THE PLAYERS Championship?

PHIL MICKELSON: It's certainly hard to say because that golf course is very difficult, too. The concern I have is that after grinding out so hard this week, that the energy level isn't up for next week. But conversely, I've got a little bit of momentum from playing well after having not played for three weeks and I'm excited to get in such a big event.

Q. Great shot on 18. Can you talk about the lie?

PHIL MICKELSON: It was leaning against a rock. It was touching a rock, but somehow I was able to get way underneath the ball. It was kind of on such a severe lie, I was able to hit it vertically. So I hit it off the toe and the toe of my wedge is all banged up. Not the sole, but the far end of the toe. I semi played it into the rock to kick it to the right over the pin. So I went up vertically and used the side of the rock to kind of get it to go to the right.

Q. You mentioned how something clicked for you on the back nine when you had a couple of those birdies in a row. Was there something in particular that caused you to reevaluate where your game was there?

PHIL MICKELSON: No, it was something in the setup, I just didn't feel good with the putter. I missed a couple on the first two holes, I just didn't feel good. My brother saw a little something the way I was set up, made some adjustments, and all of a sudden it started to feel better and I made some putts there in the end.

Q. Is this course harder than it used to be? (No microphone.)

PHIL MICKELSON: I don't really care either way. It's still, it's a wonderful golf course. I love playing it. It's just really hard now. And conversely, you don't have to -- I say that word a lot. Subsequently, you don't have to shoot as many under par, nobody's running away with it. The more you know the course, the more you put it in the right spots, the easier it is to play well there.

I'll give you an example. I made a mistake on 12. I needed to go at that pin on the right because if I'm right of the hole, which looks like short-side and it is, I'm chipping back uphill. Instead, I miss it left on the wrong side shooting straight downhill and didn't have a chance.

So I should have known that and those nuances of knowing this golf course are probably why I have played well here in the past and had so many chances.

Q. Playing with Tiger, comment on that.

PHIL MICKELSON: Yeah, I love it. I mean, I love the chance -- we don't get it very often. Rickie's a great complement to the group and we're going to have a lot of fun.

Q. (No microphone.)

PHIL MICKELSON: I think so, absolutely.

Q. You guys played together that Saturday (no microphone.) What do you remember from that day?

PHIL MICKELSON: I just remember that was a tough stretch of years for me playing against him. It was some of the most impressive golf I've ever seen in my life and I think ever played.

Q. How does one practice the shot vertically off the side of a rock? How do you practice that?

PHIL MICKELSON: I don't know, but I've done it. Whether it's in play or practice or whatever, I mean, I've done it growing up as a kid. I don't know, I've just done it a bunch.

Q. Jason Day looks like he's got (no microphone.)

PHIL MICKELSON: He's got a lot of parts of his game that's impressive; obviously power off the tee, he's a phenomenal driver. And he's a great putter; he's got a very deft, soft touch. He's one of the best putters in the game. So you put those two things together, and he's not lacking in wedge play, either. He's a really good wedge player. So he's got strengths in all the areas that he needs.

Q. Are you surprised that you've not played with Tiger more early? Obviously they put you on --

PHIL MICKELSON: Yeah, they explained the reasoning was for concessions and such to break up the play. I've always understood the reasoning, but I enjoy it when we get the chance.