

ROUND 2 INTERVIEW
February 22, 2019



RICKIE FOWLER (+2)

Q. Did you even know you were --

RICKIE FOWLER: I didn't know until down at the green.

Q. Who told you?

RICKIE FOWLER: Patrick mentioned it. He never -- he didn't even see my first shot, which was pretty amazing. I don't know if you guys saw it.

Q. I saw it.

RICKIE FOWLER: It was pretty good. It's hard to hit a high shank, but I did. You can't teach that one. So, he didn't even -- he said he heard a sound, he didn't know I hit. He heard the second one and thought that was wrong hit and looked back, so he didn't know. But someone had told him that I had maybe dropped from shoulder height. He mentioned that to me. I was like, oh, yeah, I did. So, I mean, immediately there, there was nothing I could do. I know I didn't drop properly, but just going through the natural kind of progression of what you do with the drop, that's just what you're used to. I have done that for 30 years. Well, I guess not that long. I started playing at two, so 28. So, yeah, got an extra shot on that.

Q. Do you think the shank had anything to do with that? Because you immediately asked for the ball and you immediately dropped. Do you think if you had hit something other than a shank that might have gone out of bounds and you would have to drop, you would have had time to regroup?

RICKIE FOWLER: No, that's just what you, like -- I heard Rory dropped one shoulder today. When you have done something for so long -- I'm not sure, like, already thinking ahead of time, type of thing, or there's guys around. Like I said, Patrick didn't even see, Ron didn't see me take a drop. Joe was looking at the book. So, it's on me. So, I mean, I took the shot. It was no big deal. But I think, with the new rules that have been put in place, it's not doing any favors for our sport.

Q. Was it a camera person who --

RICKIE FOWLER: I'm not sure.

Q. -- pointed it out? Because that's what Joe thought.

RICKIE FOWLER: I think so.

Q. It's a valid question.

Q. You didn't do anything.

Q. Yeah, like going like this.

Q. Rickie, you have only played a couple events this year. Have you had a situation where you have had to take a drop this year under the new rules?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, I've taken a handful, yeah.

Q. Did you ever drop from shoulder length in any of those and then --

RICKIE FOWLER: Like -- not the first time, because you're like kind of thinking about it in a way, like -- I don't know. Like the first one would have been Torrey. I can't remember where it was. But, I mean, we have been making fun of the knee drop for so long that it was ingrained at my first -- my first drop was going to be from knee. Like, this is an iconic moment. I get to drop from my knee and look stupid.

So, no, like I said, it was on me, but I think it's a terrible change. They have made -- they made two changes on the drop. One being at knee height and then the other that the ball can't roll out of the relief area. There used to be a wiggle room, depending on what it was, club to two clubs. So, my thought is that it should be one or the other. If you take away that extra area that the ball can roll, then why -- what's wrong with there being any drop height? Maybe there's a minimum at the knee, you can drop from shoulder, wherever, I mean, it's not like we're trying to gain some sort of advantage. I ended up with a terrible lie on the next one. But so it's --

Q. Why do you think they went to knee drop, knee high?

RICKIE FOWLER: They did that so that the ball wouldn't roll as much, but that's why I was saying when they took away those extra clubs, you do one or the other. Because if you're doing that to take away the -- where the ball could roll, yes they're trying to simplify things, but it's obviously, like, we're seeing it's making it for complicated.

Q. When they say that there is nine different things that can happen when you drop it, did you know what those nine were?

RICKIE FOWLER: No.

Q. Rickie, is it -- when you say it's not doing golf any favors, is it because it's just complicating it for the players, or do you think there is a public perception that this --

RICKIE FOWLER: Well, for one, like I said, we were laughing at guys, like the first couple weeks when I didn't play, seeing guys trying to drop from their knee. It just looks -- it looks funny. I get why they went to knee. I don't understand why there can't be an area maybe, whether it's waist to knee, or leave shoulder in there if you take away the extra area of relief area that was always there.

Q. Right.

RICKIE FOWLER: So, yeah, it's interesting.

Q. Is it too crazy to just suggest you could place the ball and get rid of the drop altogether?

RICKIE FOWLER: I mean, it's near that point with the knee.

Q. Right.

RICKIE FOWLER: I think you just drop the ball, put it back in play.

Q. The shot that preceded the drop, when's the last time you had something like that happen?

RICKIE FOWLER: The lateral? I actually -- I was laughing about it, because I was -- after I hit and my second one from there, I told Joe, was like, I can't remember the last time I hit a good one like -- the thing is, the ball was sitting up so high and I was trying to hit -- catch it on the upswing and catch kind of a flyer, and that was kind of the main cause of why I shanked it.

Q. Wedge in your hand?

RICKIE FOWLER: That was a wedge, yeah, I think because we have it 185.

Q. Rickie, when you walked off the 10th green, you said -- I don't know whether it was to Joe or the rules official -- we'll get the rule changed.

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, I definitely think it will get changed.

Q. Okay. So in a perfect world, you just want to give a -- do you have a -- you have some kind of a --

RICKIE FOWLER: Well, like I was saying, since the --

Q. -- that you can --

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, you can drop it shoulder, minimum of knee. To me, I just really

think it looks funny when guys are dropping at the knee. And like I said, the extra area, the two clubs that the ball could roll previously, last year and before, that was already taken away as well. So, you're not really gaining any advantage or anything if there is an area once the ball goes out of the relief area, you're just redropping.

Q. Outside of Phoenix, on the slope, have you had -- dropped it to a level of the two club lengths until?

RICKIE FOWLER: It's rare. It has to be in a pretty baked area. And that's another thing, I know that they're going to bring up that rule as well, when you're guessing assessed penalties for nothing really.

Q. On the baked area.

RICKIE FOWLER: The water and -- but, yeah, I haven't heard anyone -- I haven't heard many of the guys say that the drop from the knee has been a good thing, or that it looks good.