

**ROUND 1 INTERVIEW**  
**May 2, 2019**

**PHIL MICKELSON ( E)**



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**Q. Phil, with everything that happened here this week with the shooting at the school, you're wearing the school colors. Was that on purpose to wear the school colors today?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I don't know, I just -- I empathize with what's going on and I'm sorry that all that happened.

**Q. Phil, you always take time with the fans out there and especially the kids. What does that mean to you, because you're known for sticking around and being there for those guys.**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** This tournament has more kids on Wednesdays than I think any tournament that we ever have. It melts me to see these kids come out and enjoy the game because they're our growth opportunity, right? So to see them out here enjoying the tournament and being exposed to the game of golf is really special. I love how the people here in Charlotte really make an effort to bring their kids out here and really make it a family environment.

**Q. Phil, where are you right now with your game? How are you feeling?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** So, my game feels a lot better than my score today. I shot even par. It was kind of a lethargic, lazy, unexciting round. Hit a lot of greens and didn't make many putts. I had a couple three-putts. But I came in here fresh. I had two weeks off, I came in here fresh. I think the next three days it's going to get better.

**Q. When players get in trouble with the finishing holes, what is it about those three that is hazardous?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** They're just really hard holes. Balls are running towards the water, the ground is kicking balls into the water so you have to be extra careful, but it's a very difficult three-hole finish.

**Q. You performed well here over the years. What is it about this test that makes it a challenge?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I think there's a couple things about it. It's very much like Augusta in that the grasses are very similar and the rough is very low, so I love that. It gives me a chance to recover if I hit some poor shots.

I also find that the par 5s are reachable but hard to get on the surface, so you end up having a lot of chips, and my short game's been able to make a lot of birdies on those holes.

And then you've got two short par 4s with 14 and 8, so you have enough birdie holes that I seem to make enough birdies to get in contention here and it just fits. The course just fits. But I've never won, either, so hopefully I'm going to change that.

**Q. Speaking of fits, we're heading to Bethpage, another incredibly difficult driving golf course. How much does this tournament sort of test where you are with the driver?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** It gives you an idea. I've been driving the ball well, but I didn't today, but it gives you an idea here at Charlotte of how it's going to be. Bethpage, there's enough room, you can swing the driver and not be handcuffed. There's enough room out there to play it. It's a fun, hard golf course as well.