

ROUND 2 INTERVIEW
December 5, 2019



TIGER WOODS (-6)

Q. Tiger, much better today with a 66. What led to the better round today?

TIGER WOODS: Well, I just think it was less windy. It was a little bit easier today. Scoring conditions were a little bit better. I didn't hit the ball as well as I would like starting out, missed a few greens. Other than No. 2, I missed all the -- every green in the correct spot, so I had easy chips and I had to make a couple. But I got it going on that back nine, which is nice.

Q. How different is it shooting 66, making a run like this in front of a crowd like this that's pretty intimate and smaller versus at THE PLAYERS and Bellerive where it's going crazy?

TIGER WOODS: It's different, but still at the end of the day, whether you're playing in front of no one or you're playing in front of thousands, the game doesn't change, it's low score.

Q. Do you already know how often you plan to play yourself next week and will this week make a difference?

TIGER WOODS: Yeah, I'm playing a minimum of two. Does that help you? (Laughs.)

We'll see. We have game plans for next week. We've got guys that haven't played. DJ's coming off an injury, a surgery. We're going to take it day by day, see how guys feel. We're going to communicate with one another and work through it. Just get a feel for the golf course, but also feel for other guys' golf balls. Some of the guys have been trying it already, which is nice, and we'll get a little bit more of a feel next week.

Q. Seemed like Bubba was doing some lobbying to maybe get a last-minute invite to Australia somewhere in the cargo hold.

TIGER WOODS: Yeah, there's plenty of room down there. It might be a little cold, but I guess he can suck it up.

Q. How good is it to see your captain's pick Patrick Reed playing so well, especially with a brand new set of irons in the back?

TIGER WOODS: Yeah, brand new set of irons and new putter this week. He's been monkeying around with different putters, trying to get a little softer feel, so he finally found one. He's still always going to travel with his baby, but just like me, I had different putters in play throughout the years, but this one always traveled.

Some of the guys are experimenting with different equipment. This is normally the time you do it. They've had a little time off trying new stuff, trying to get a little bit better, work your way into next year. Nothing wrong with that. The guys are shaking some rust off, working on some things, and hopefully some of these guys can make their way up the board and get ready for next week as well.

Q. Seems like a lot of improvement with the driver since you've come back from the knee surgery. Is that the biggest difference you've seen or is there another part of your game that has really been a better --

TIGER WOODS: Yeah, probably two things. I can drive the ball a little bit better because I can rotate and I can putt the ball better because I can get down and read putts again. As I said towards the end of the year, I couldn't do that, so this has been nice to be able to get down there, squat, read some putts. I don't have to call Joey on every putt because I can't get down there, so it's been nice.

Q. What part of your game had the most rust coming into this week with everybody else knocking rust off of their game? What about your game?

TIGER WOODS: I don't know, because I felt good with every aspect of my game. I worked hard on everything, felt pretty sharp. Yesterday was just a tough day with the wind blowing so hard, trying to figure out how much wind I'm going to play on a putt, trying to brace myself on certain shots, not spin the ball, to spin the ball. It was kind of a tough day and I kind of threw it out the window, like it was really hard to judge anything today, let's just go into tomorrow, keep playing the way I'm playing, I should be all right. It turned out okay today.

Q. How good does a stress-free par on 18 feel given the difficulties on that hole in the past?

TIGER WOODS: Yeah, no kidding, huh? I finally hit a ball in the fairway, which is great. Normally it's either soup or it's rocks, so finally got one in the fairway. From there it still wasn't an easy shot, I had to roast a 6-iron in there. It's just a hard hole. Yesterday the wind off the left, that's one of the toughest winds you can have on a hole like that, and there's no bail-out. Some years I've hit 3-wood off that tee because you could run the ball up the left side with driver into the water. This year it's not the case with being in. It's just a tough hole. There are certain holes on a golf course in which I think I'm sure all of us who play, certain holes just don't look right to our eye and just don't feel good. Unfortunately, this is one of them.

Q. Tiger, for the guys who haven't been to Royal Melbourne, what have you been telling them about it, about how unique it is or what to expect?

TIGER WOODS: Well, even if -- the forecast is so far for no rain, so if they get no rain, if the temperatures aren't over a hundred, the greens will be quick. They can get them over 14

very easily. Got to be very careful of where you hit the golf ball. The golf course is probably going to be playing on the shorter side. It's just fast, but still, just because it's on the shorter side doesn't make it any easier. Balls run out, fairways are sloped, they're banked. There's a lot of chase on the fairways because sometimes you get it downwind, 80 yards of chase you've got to worry about. So those are things a lot of the guys who have played Open Championships, they understand it, they know it. The only difference is you're going to get greens running like Augusta with hard, fast fairways.

Q. How many players on Tour carry a 5-wood?

TIGER WOODS: A lot nowadays. With the golf ball not spinning anywhere near as it used to, there are quite a bit of guys who use 5-woods. There's quite a bit of guys who have now gone to hybrids because the balls are just so hot. I just remember most of the guys that were on Tour when I first came out here were still using the 1-iron, Ollie was using it, Sandy was still using it, Joey Sindelar used it forever. It's just a different game with the golf ball the way it is, it just doesn't kick up. So a 5-wood is certainly a club that has been in most of the guys' bags now.

Q. Scottie said earlier this week that he doesn't want the Australian fans to cheer for you. Is that bulletin board material or is that a smart move?

TIGER WOODS: No, that's just the way it is when you play overseas. When you play against an opposing team in another person's home court, that's how it should be. As long as they're respectful, that's fine. They are supposed to cheer more for their home team, just like we expect our American fans to cheer more for us when we're at home. That's just the way it is when you're playing at home and away. As long as they're not disrespectful, you can cheer all you want.

Q. Thanks, Tiger.

TIGER WOODS: You got it. Thank you, guys.