

**RICKIE FOWLER (-5)**

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**Q. Rickie, how would you assess the round out there today?**

**RICKIE FOWLER:** I'm happy with it. Anytime you make seven birdies, it's a good day. It allows you for some others, which there was one other that happened. It would have been nice to get through without that, but I'm happy with it.

I just need to clean up the driving a little bit. Iron play was great. A couple -- I missed one short-sided, but I got up and down on 17, my eighth hole. It's nice to see the ball rolling off the putter how I want it to. Been putting some work in there. Other than that, we'll just tighten the tee ball up and I'm happy with the start.

**Q. You only had one slipup today, on 18. How thick was that rough and how tricky was that shot?**

**RICKIE FOWLER:** Yeah, there's that little ditch that runs in front of 18 green and a lot of spots really aren't too bad, but I think it one-hopped into a thick area and it went all the way to the bottom. It was basically sitting on dirt, but there was probably, I don't know, eight inches of grass there and I thought it was going to kind of just pop up when I hit it and it kind of came out low and left, which was not where I wanted it to go. Next time we'll just hit it in the fairway, won't have that problem.

**Q. You mentioned some swing changes, at least a couple minutes ago, at least with your grip that you changed recently?**

**RICKIE FOWLER:** I was working on some stuff. Colonial, Hilton Head, unfortunately I got some pretty bad blisters and so yeah, last week at home -- I mean Friday at Hilton Head was not fun trying to fight through that. Felt like I did okay, but not good enough.

So last week at home I wasn't able to play interlock, which is my normal grip, so just kind of had to hit balls overlap and work on some fundamentals and not really worry too much about how I was hitting it and stuff like that. So once I got here, Tuesday was the first day I was actually able to start hitting balls somewhat interlock. It was still bothering me, but they're healing, so today was the first day that it felt at least good enough to go ahead and go.

**Q. With your swing changes you've been making with John Tillery over these last bunch of months, you had those couple missed cuts coming back out after the break. Do those frustrate you, do they discourage you? Do you feel like you can have a little patience?**

**RICKIE FOWLER:** There's a lot of positives I could take from it. I know it kind of is weird saying that, missed cut and taking positives, but it's not like the cuts were, I mean, easy to make; 4 under. I know we're not playing, you know, the hardest set up golf courses in a way, and to me, I mean, it's some of the worst I've puttied or maybe the most inconsistent. To be where I was and know that there were a handful of shots that were either mental mistakes or putts that missed and changes the course of the round, yeah, it always sucks not being there on the weekend. You've got to take the positives from it, which we've done. It's nice to get off to a good start here in Detroit. Go rest up and ready for tomorrow afternoon.

**Q. You talked about having the ball feel like it's rolling off the putter very well today. what was the work that you put in with the putting?**

**RICKIE FOWLER:** I mean, to simplify it, if anything, I was standing too close to the ball and the putter was going a little outside on the way back, and then with that it was causing me to have to back out or my head moving backwards through impact. I was pulling a lot of putts, and once you do that, you start getting two-way misses because you're trying to match it up. So standing a little further from the ball, ball position a little bit back, it was getting a touch forward. So just cleaned up some fundamentals to allow me to actually go ahead and stroke the ball and not try and manipulate it.

**Q. When did you start working with Tillery and how drastic was the change?**

**RICKIE FOWLER:** We first worked, first saw him would have been last September. I was only able to see him a couple times last fall just with travel and different tournaments, what he was doing, and I would say towards the end of last year and really through the beginning of this year is where the most work has been done.

At first it was pretty different because I was trying to change some of my sequencing. I felt like the way my body was working, you know, at the top of the swing you want the legs to kind of drive everything, the torso and then the arms follow, and with the club being -- I was just getting too deep and behind me and having to kind of pull the club back out in front of me, so the hands were starting before anything. So I was just out of sequence, so that's kind of been the biggest thing is kind of almost reprogramming and at the same time working on getting the club more out in front of me.