

**ROUND 1 INTERVIEW**  
**May 6, 2021**

**PHIL MICKELSON (-7)**



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**Q. Did Joel Dahmen poke the bear?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I mean, I love the banter. I think it's funny and it kept the atmosphere in our group really light. We laughed a bunch. We had some fun things to talk about, but we were laughing even before we teed off.

I like how he's able to laugh at ourselves and have fun with the game of golf and not take it too serious. Lanto's the same way, so we had a really fun group.

**Q. Can you explain the 2-wood?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** It's just kind of a mini driver head that I use as a strong 3-wood, and out here, because the fairways are so firm, if I hit it low enough, I'm able to get a lot of chase out of it and I don't feel like I'm sacrificing any distance. So that allows me to kind of keep my misses a lot tighter. Today I hit it very successful, I hit a lot of good shots with it. My misses that I did miss weren't as far offline and I was able to salvage pars. But that club has allowed me to kind of get it in play and then let my irons take over. My irons has always been the strength of my game, I just haven't been able to use them enough. But that club's working really well around here.

**Q. Have you been able to use that club in other places? You said it works on this golf course.**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Yeah, but I really couldn't use it like last week at Innisbrook that much because you're trying to fly bunkers and fly the corner. I made had two or three holes that I was able to use it. This course sets up very well for it. And then the holes that you want to hit that are a little bit more open, like 15, 16 where you can try to carry the bunkers, No. 1 sits well for me and I can kind of open it up with a few drives, but I don't have to do it every hole.

**Q. What's the improvement from last week to this week?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Just focus. I'm just present on each shot. This course holds my attention. I've been doing some like, you know, some mental exercises and so forth just to try to get my focus to elongate over five hours and so forth. That's been a real struggle for me the last few years because physically, there's nothing physically holding me back from playing at a high level, but you cannot make mistakes at this level. The guys out here are just so good, and I've been making a lot of errors, just simply not being mentally sharp.