ROUND 1 INTERVIEW July 22, 2021



RICKIE FOWLER (-7)

Q. Just your overall reaction?

RICKIE FOWLER: Well, Steve, I'm happy about it. No, coming off Sunday at The Open, a lot of good stuff there, drove it a lot better. That was something that was kind of holding me back from making birdies, moving forward last week. I drove it very poorly Friday and Saturday. It was not my driver's fault.

Had to.

So today, I mean, going off of what we did Sunday last week, just needed to tighten a few things up. This golf course is fairly generous off the tee. There's a few lakes/ponds that you just need to avoid. Other than that, it's go attack for the most part. So I think we did a good job of just managing our way around since I haven't necessarily seen the golf course a whole lot before. Played 18 Tuesday and nine yesterday, but yeah, just felt good, kept it simple. It was nice to see some putts go in on top of it because that's been another part of the game that really hasn't helped me a whole lot the last couple years.

Q. What is the state of your putting and have you been able to improve because you're not thinking swing as much and now you can put more time to your putting?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, it wasn't that putting wasn't getting the attention. There's time where you go, kind of get hot and cold and I was in too long of a cold spell, and putting's something I've always been able to rely on. Felt like I was hitting good putts, sometimes it was either a little bit off on the read or speed was a little off. There's so many variables out there. Trying to eliminate as much as possible and think more about making it and not focusing about too much on line and stuff like that. I've been hitting good putts, but it's nice to see the result of the ball disappearing or not lipping out or sliding on by.

Q. Is there any sense of urgency with the FedExCup coming up? You have two tournaments left unless you win this week, you'd get into Memphis if you wanted to, to try to move yourself up that ladder as much as you could?

RICKIE FOWLER: I mean, yes and no. I know where I'm at, what we need to do and stuff like that. Really just focusing on things we've been working on, playing more consistent good golf. More days like today and things will be fine. Kind of keep things, like I said, simple and small, focus on the day to day and this week and go from there. Everything will work out.

Q. You said yesterday you would rather grind out rounds maybe than get into a birdie war, but after today and the generous fairways you've seen, do you think three more

days of that you'll be okay with that?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, I'd be fine with it. I'd sign up for a few more 64s and go from there. Yeah, there's just two sides of it. I love when you get challenging setups and it makes you kind of grind it out. You've still got to drive it well here to give yourself chances. If you don't drive it well, it's not like you're going to have a bunch of birdie putts. It's still challenging in its own way because even par is not necessarily a good score. You go play a tough tournament where it's a harder setup and sometimes even's a good round of golf. But you've got to make birdies, you've got to play aggressively around this place and pick the times when you do.

Q. You said yesterday, you talked about finding focus with so much at stake here the next couple weeks. I take it you found that today?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, I'm just trying to keep it simple. I'm not trying to worry too much about all the other. I played a couple more events over here, adding this week as well as when I played before going to Detroit, up in Connecticut. You know, I know what I need to do, but we're here this week. Like I was talking about earlier, day to day, keep things simple and small and take care of what we need to do here, things will all fall into place and work out.