

**ROUND 1 INTERVIEW**  
**August 20, 2021**

**ERNIE ELS (-6)**



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**Q. Can you talk about your round today?**

**ERNIE ELS:** Yeah, I had a nice round. That's it. I felt like I was in control of my golf swing, which is nice. For me, I've got to really get the tee shots in play, which I did most of the day. I did have two three-putts. It's difficult to judge your speed on long putts because I see them as they slow, but actually they're fast, I hit a couple past. But it felt good. I had a nice start and kept that going. As I say, I just three-putted 9 and 12, those are two mistakes. So I feel good. It's going to be interesting to see what happens. It's going to be a very bunched leaderboard. Seems like the guys are really playing well this week.

**Q. So I apologize, how satisfied are you with a 66 today?**

**ERNIE ELS:** Yeah, it was nice, thank you. It was a nice start. That putt on 18 is obviously a huge bonus, so that was really nice to finish with 3. I felt like on 15 I missed the birdie opportunity, and on 16, and the three-putt as I said on 12, so I had a couple of demons flying in my head, but the 18th was --

**Q. How far was the putt?**

**ERNIE ELS:** I don't know, 50, 60 feet probably. When those go in -- it's all happening on 18. I'm satisfied, yeah.

**Q. What did you think about the course today?**

**ERNIE ELS:** Great shape. Fairways started running out a little bit, which is nice. They were very soft in practice. And the greens are in unbelievable shape. For poa annua greens, these are the best poa annua greens you can putt on. As I said, they've got a lot of speed, so I've got to judge my speed a little bit better, but so far, so good.