

MAVERICK McNEALY (-11)

Q. Maverick, nice playing out there today, 5 -- I know the finish at 18's tough, we'll get to that later, but the hole-in-one at 8 today, obviously it's a challenging hole in a sense it's uphill, you can't see the green surface. When did you know it was in and when did you know you hit a good shot?

MAVERICK McNEALY: Well, that was a really tough hole. I knew the long left bunker was really dead and it was a little downwind playing short and it's always tough to judge those when the ball's coming in so flat. I knew I couldn't land it past the crest, which is about four steps short of the hole. Just took an easy swing with an 8-iron, right ear to right ear to take some yardage off and it came off perfect, tight little draw right at the flag, took one hop. It looked really good from my angle. Had about 25 family and friends around the green up there and it went nuts. It was so much fun.

Q. Let's talk about this golf course. Obviously conditions out there favorable in the sense without any wind, comfortable temperatures, but talk about the challenge if you miss fairways like you did at 18 and then the layup. I mean the rough is really challenging. What do you have to tell yourself and what do you need to do to be able to escape from the rough here?

MAVERICK McNEALY: The rough is tough and it's even tougher because the greens are so firm. That's one of the things you get with these nice warm temperatures and no rain is the greens are hard to hold, so it really shrinks your landing area in half. Even on No. 8 you can't land it on top or it's over the green. In that right rough on 18 today I had to take one extra club just in case it came out slow out of that rough, I didn't want to be dropping back hitting my fourth. It's difficult, and I left it in a good spot and just unfortunately missed a simple up-and-down, but I executed a good game plane from the right rough but unfortunately didn't play enough break on that putt.

Q. You were born in California. Obviously the leaders aren't too far ahead of you. There's a chance. You live in Las Vegas now. As you go into Sunday, obviously one shot at a time, that all comes in play, but what are you going to focus on tomorrow?

MAVERICK McNEALY: Well, right now I've got a few items on my agenda. I want to go just try and hit my driver a little more in the center, I was missing it off the toe later today. Probably hit a few shots with right-to-left wind and then just doing the putting drills I've been doing and dial those in and get ready for tomorrow. At this point it's routine. I've played a lot of rounds out here, I've played a lot of late Sunday rounds out here and it's just about doing what I've been doing because it's working and really confident in my process right now.

Q. Maverick, can I ask just real quick how many aces have you had, how many aces have you had in competition, how many aces on Tour?

MAVERICK McNEALY: That's six, third in competition. I had one in college at Olympia Fields and that's two on the PGA TOUR, John Deere hole 16 and then this one. I guess I make aces on Fridays.

Q. And it wasn't that long ago when you were contending up in northern California just last fall and now you're doing it again. A lot of guys say you just have to keep putting yourself there, you eventually sort of learn your lessons. What were your takeaways from Silverado?

MAVERICK McNEALY: Well, I think I actually learned a lot from the way Max Homa won that tournament. Relentless is kind of one of his mantras. If you keep putting yourself up there, you never know what's going to happen. You might hole a wedge shot from the rough like he did, make a couple 30-footers and all of a sudden you're right there. You're never out of it until you're out of it and I'm just going to go out there and play the best round of golf I can tomorrow and you literally never know what could happen. You could hole a wedge shot, you could make a couple long putts and pick up a lot of shots really quick, especially on this golf course.

Q. And are all the trophies that you won at Stanford, are they all in Vegas at your house or where are they?

MAVERICK McNEALY: I'm not sure where they are. I think Grammy has a couple of them. They're all in the memory bank though, that's for sure.

Q. You mentioned earlier a lot of family out here, so to have a hole-in-one in front of them and just kind of the support, what it means to have them following you around this week?

MAVERICK McNEALY: That was so much fun. My uncle runs a dental office here in town and they all took the day off. There's about 25 people out watching today and all wearing Team Mav hats. They were going nuts. I made a couple birdies, the hole-in-one was in there, too. I'm glad it was a lot of fun for them to watch because it's great for me to have them out here. It's a really special week for me because I get to stay with friends and family and have home-cooked wheels.

Q. What's your uncle's name?

MAVERICK McNEALY: Bob Randolph. So actually his dad, George, was a dentist in the Army in World War -- sorry, Vietnam, and yeah, so he started his own dental practice and my uncle Bob took it over. It's actually funny. I was wanting a way to like grip my putter consistently like a grip trainer, so I was talking to him about that stuff they use for impressions. We wrapped some of that around my putter grip on like Monday, so I saved my

putter grip the way my hands go on the putter on a backup putter on Monday with like the dental --

Q. Dental tape?

MAVERICK McNEALY: So the Callaway guys have it, we're going to scan it and like replicate it, just have it as a grip trainer. It's great because I'm playing great this week, so I want to remember how my hands go. It's just a funny cross-section of dentistry and golf.

Q. Good oral hygiene is important.

MAVERICK McNEALY: Absolutely. Floss every day.