ROUND 1 INTERVIEW May 5, 2022

RICKIE FOWLER (-4)



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

RICKIE FOWLER: Interesting. Yeah, obviously still going through -- working on different stuff to ultimately be in a better spot. I feel like I made little steps of, you know, making the lower body work better and then working on arms, upper body. This week we've been focusing on getting the better turn through takeaway and not having the arms drift and get away from that. So lot of good stuff, just trusting. And yeah, there was a couple that were a little offline and cost me a little bit early in the round, but other than that, a lot of good stuff. Definitely happy with today.

Q. Talk about that hole-out on 6 for bogey.

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, it was a good 5. Just didn't really fully commit to the tee shot. I mean, there's plenty of room out there and we had a little breeze off the left and just started well right of where I was trying to and then drifted from there. Probably just got, like I said, a little away from the shot I should have been hitting. Same thing on the next shot, dropped on the front tee and was hitting 5-wood from there, chipped out, had a good number with wedge. Actually had a little bit of mud on the ball from hitting in the hazard and played it perfectly. It drifted right for me and I was just hoping to make 6 and get out of there, but 5 was a bonus.

Q. Is it tough to commit to some of the stuff you're working on when you see some bad shots, just to keep that commitment going?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, and that's been a big focus for me the last really like month or so, not trying to -- not really getting away from what we're trying to do and continuing to trust, which, yeah, can be tough when there's a couple that may be a little off, whether it's a poor shot or poor swing offline and then just kind of continuing, like hey, we're going to stick to this, this is our game plan, we're not moving away from it, just try and put that behind and like, all right, this is a new challenge, this shot, what do we need to do, let's execute.

Q. As we go through this process, how much is trying to get back to what you were in 2014 issue or whatever or is it a new version of yourself?

RICKIE FOWLER: It's not even getting back there, I'm trying to be better than I ever was. No one's ever trying to go through changes to just get back to what was there or to kind of continue to stay the same, everyone's trying to get better. Unfortunately, yeah, it's been longer than any of us have wanted. It's kind of been putting little pieces together here and there and starting to see things come together.

Unfortunately, through those last couple years, a club that I've been able to rely on for most of my career, putter, I've putted poorly, very poorly. So when I have had some decent ball-striking days, I haven't really been able to capitalize, and then if I'm a little off and not making anything, it looks a lot worse than it is. So I feel like I'm in a really good spot, at least heading in the right direction. Yeah, it's been a long road.

Q. The tee shot at 14, could you -- is that exactly how you pictured it?

RICKIE FOWLER: Roughly. I was aiming at the left edge of the bunker behind the green, which is exactly where my ball ended up, so I was just trying to hit a straight ball there. So if you looked at what it did exactly, I mean, it started kind of at the pin and just drifted right, so it was a slight pull cut. But if that happened every time, I'd be fine with it.

Q. Do you feel like the regression, I suppose, in putting could be due to so much work on the swing?

RICKIE FOWLER: Not necessarily. Putting is something I've never really had to spend a whole lot of time on. I've always had great hands and feel and saw the greens really well. There's been times where I feel like I've struggled starting the ball where I wanted to, but I was also not seeing the greens properly. So good luck making putts if either one of those are off, but that's just kind of just hitting it and hoping. No, I'm in a lot better spot now with seeing the greens better and starting balls online.