

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
September 8, 2022



TIM O'NEAL

Q. Tim, first chance event. How are we feeling going into this week?

TIM O'NEAL: Excited, you know. When I received the exemption from Ascension, I was excited about getting the opportunities to come out here and play, you know, meet some of the guys that I haven't seen in a while. Very excited. A little bit of nerves probably tomorrow when I get started, but yeah, I'm very excited and just glad to be here.

Q. Tim, you've been around this golf course yesterday. What's it going to take for you to play well?

TIM O'NEAL: Well, keep it in the fairways, for one. The greens are a little slopey, just a matter of just hitting fairways and greens. You're really just trying to keep it simple and obviously just trying to make as many birdies as possible. At the end of the day, there's a lot of good players out here. I know the scores -- I saw the scores from last year, so it's a tough golf course. Driving it and controlling your irons is definitely going to be key.

Q. What's the long-term picture for you after this week?

TIM O'NEAL: Well, yeah, you know, hopefully I'll -- I've written for a few exemptions, so I don't have any control of that. If not, I'm getting ready for Q-School in November and just try to get status out here.

Q. In terms of difficulty of not only playing professional golf regardless of what it is but in getting to this level, how has this journey been for you? How much of a grind is it? Can you describe that?

TIM O'NEAL: Yeah, it's been a grind for me. I've played everywhere, I've played PGA TOUR Latinoamerica, I've played mini tours all over, I played well on the Nationwide Tour. The competition, everyone's good, especially getting to this level. I'm always trying to get better every day, so it's just one of those things where you're just trying to improve every day and keep your head down and practice hard and try to stay in shape and keep up with these guys.

You know, not only that, but just getting better mentally prepared for courses like this. I don't know, these guys are really good still and I know it's going to take a lot to try to win this tournament, but the grind is definitely, it's always been there for me and still grinding hard.

Q. This may be an unfair question. I'm sure you would love to improve in every aspect of your game, but is there one thing that you feel is holding you back from

taking the next step?

TIM O'NEAL: I don't know. I guess maybe just, I mean, what's holding me back, I don't really know, just a putt here or there. It's little things. There's a small margin of error. Like I said, these guys are really good and you have to be good at every aspect to win out here. So for me it's just being ready mentally and just being ready to go.

Q. Is there any part of your game that you've really focused on going into this week that you're like, OK, I really need to improve on this?

TIM O'NEAL: Short game stuff, you never can get too good at short game. At the end of the day, you still have to get it in the hole. It's just a matter of making putts. You want to drive it well and all that, but you still have to putt well and all that, you still have to have a good short game, so that's really been my main focus.

Q. The flip side of that question, is there a part of your game that you feel is a big advantage for you out here this week?

TIM O'NEAL: I feel like I drive it pretty well, so that kind of sets you up for everything else. If you're driving it in the fairways here, then you can have chances at making birdie. If you're driving it well, but that's pretty much everywhere, if you're driving it well and you hit your irons pretty solid, you're going to have a lot of looks for birdie. That's really been the main thing for me.

Q. It's certainly a big grind, we've talked a lot about the difficulties of golf. Is it easy despite kind of the nerves you have coming into this weekend to look back and be like, I'm playing a professional golf tournament, this is pretty fun, especially with a lot of kids looking up to you? Is it easy to remind yourself that, hey, we're playing a game, this is a lot of fun out here?

TIM O'NEAL: Yeah, you know, definitely humbling where I'm blessed to be able to still be able to play golf for a living. I'm 50 now and having a chance to compete out here and beyond is definitely a true blessing, so yeah. And having kids look up to me, especially kids who look like me that want to aspire to play, hopefully I've give them inspiration to do the same thing I'm doing.