

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
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RAFAEL CAMPOS



MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Rafa Campos to the media center here at the Mexico Open at VidantaWorld. Rafa is making his second (inaudible).

RAFAEL CAMPOS: Yeah, obviously this place is beautiful right now. Conditions are phenomenal, I won't lie. Tee boxes, fairways, greens are in pristine shape. The course, I can tell it hasn't rained in a long time so the course is perfect, they keep it in great shape. Really happy to be here. I won't lie to you, I had tied 38th I think last year. It's great to play in front of Latin fans. Me being Puerto Rican, just really happy. We don't get many opportunities to play in front of home crowds basically. Really happy to be here, really excited.

Course is playing long, it really is. It's not as windy as last year, but like I said, the course is in great shape, it's a great test for us golfers.

MODERATOR: You left last year with nice memories, two holes-in-one in one week, that's pretty unusual, one in practice, one in the second round and almost had another one in the third round.

RAFAEL CAMPOS: I like this place apparently, the par 3s. Last year I had a hole-in-one on Tuesday. I didn't want to tell anybody that I had a hole-in-one because I only wanted to give the beers and all that to the playing partner I was with. Ironically, we make that second hole-in-one on Friday during the tournament, which I don't think I actually have had. That was the first hole-in-one during a PGA TOUR event for me. That was pretty exciting. Was able to come here, celebrate with you guys as well.

Hopefully we have one more this week. I don't know, I'm not too greedy, the one would be fine. I don't need many more than that. No, it's a cool place definitely.

MODERATOR: What did you learn about this course last year that will help you this year?

RAFAEL CAMPOS: So definitely it's a big advantage for long hitters here, there really is. It's a fairly open golf course. I wish I had 20 extra yards in my bag, but I don't. I actually did very well last year. I know I struggled on the greens a little bit, although I hit it really, really good, I hit a lot of greens.

Over here, just make sure you're under the hole. Although the greens are not extremely fast and all that, once you go past the greens it's a little tougher to work. Off the tee it's not as important to hit it straight because roughs are still giving you plenty of good lies and all that.

Take advantage of the par 5s. There's two reachable par 5s right now and two that are not



reachable. Try to take advantage of those shorter par 5s, which is 18 and 14. Par 3s are great, they really are. It's hard to put a number on this course because you're going to put the ball in play a lot. We just have to make putts.

I think what I learned from last year was just staying patient. You're going to have a lot of looks and if you can play the tough par 4s, which there's like four long par 4s, which is 4, 10, 16 and I know there's an extra one. Oh, at 8. If you can play those even par for the week, you're definitely gaining a lot of strokes on the field. Once you get through those four holes and you make par, you're definitely going to have a good chance to post a good number.

MODERATOR: A few minutes ago you were telling me about some changes you're going through, so talk to me about that process, where are you.

RAFAEL CAMPOS: Yeah. So last year and a half honestly was pretty much like the worst year I've had as a professional golfer consistency wise, just missing a lot of cuts, just not hitting the ball well. It wasn't until after Farmers a few weeks ago, three weeks ago that my caddie pretty much said, hey, man, like we can't keep playing like this, we've got to make some changes. We spoke to Boyd Summerhays, Daniel Summerhays' caddie, I think he's Tony Finau's coach, in Scottsdale. Took a couple lessons with him, really understood the reason why the ball was going the way it was.

Made a huge change two weeks ago, especially the way I grip the club and how I want the club to be moving out of my backswing. I know it's going to take some time. I'm pounding a million balls right now, that's why I normally tape my wrist because it bothers it just because it's a new move that I'm making. We're working on opening the face up, I want to see the ball go left to right, but right now the big issue is by being able to hit it left to right, the ball's coming a lot shorter, so I'm not yet comfortable hitting it that short. I'm hitting it like a good 10, 12 yards shorter with every club. I think it will take time. Once I get used to that I know for a fact that I'll see a lot more consistent results, a lot more consistent scores and that's the ultimate goal for me for this year, for the second half of this year and actually be ready for the following year.

MODERATOR: This week and next week PGA TOUR players will try to earn enough FedExCup points to make it into the Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by MasterCard, but you have already locked a spot by some invites. Tell me about that.

RAFAEL CAMPOS: Yeah, got one of the best calls I've received in years. The Friday of Scottsdale I was with my wife in the morning and I see a message for Mr. Drew Donovan, which is the tournament director for the Arnold Palmer Invitational and it said, Call me.

Of course I'll call you. It's not often you get these calls. I know I've sent a million letters to a million tournaments and I've probably gotten into two events out of probably 150 requests I've sent. Out of nowhere he was extremely kind and all of a sudden said, hey, we want to extend you an invitation basically. I was outside, I started kind of crying a little bit because it means a lot to us, to me, to us, the Puerto Ricans, just being able to go and play in a bigger



event, bigger opportunity. Really motivates the younger generations back home to realize that hey, if you put in the work, if you dedicate your time and really work hard, you can really move to those bigger and better opportunities.

I was a little teary eyed and I go in and my wife was there, she's like, hey, are you OK? I'm like, yeah, unfortunately we can't play the Puerto Rico Open. She's like, did you get injured, did you fall, what happened back there? I told her we got a spot in the Arnold Palmer Invitational.

That's a blessing. It's an opportunity obviously we'll always remember. I really want to take advantage of that opportunity and at the same time hopefully it's the start of me gaining the confidence I need to start playing some good golf and hopefully being in that tournament for the future.

