

**ROUND 2 INTERVIEW: PHIL MICKELSON**  
**May 6, 2016**



**Q. You hit only nine greens and only four fairways but you put up a red number. Your feelings after this round?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I scrapped it around. I missed the ball in the right spot a number of times. My short game is sharp. I hit a lot of good iron shots, but I had to play for par a little too many times because I didn't put it in play off the tee. It's I don't want to say surprising but I've been driving the ball really well heading into this week. All last week I had a great session, so I'm a little disappointed with the driver. But I think I'll get that turned around here for the weekend and if so, the way I've been hitting my irons, I think it's going to be a good weekend.

**Q. Do you feel like you're close to having the swing you had earlier in the year?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I think it's at least that or a little bit better. I'm happy with the way I've been able to move the ball both ways and eliminate half the golf course. I haven't missed it in the wrong spot. In the past here when I would play, I've missed it left on 18, I've missed it right on 7. I've missed it in the wrong spots too many times, and today, even though you might look at the fairways and say you didn't drive it well, every hole I missed where I could keep playing and that's a big factor for me out here because almost every hole has unplayable trouble on it.

**Q. Final thing, these greens some players are saying are super fast to the point they're very defensive. You don't seem to feel that way, you seem very comfortable and aggressive on fast greens. Am I wrong there?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** When you're underneath the hole you can be aggressive on any speed of greens. I think it forces you again to miss the ball in the right spot. But I may have missed a green if I'm off the green and I've got an uphill chip, it's a heck of a lot easier than a 50-foot downhill putt because the momentum and the speed these greens are, you're looking at 15, 16 on the stimpmeter on this greens, especially downhill down grain, you get a three percent grade, the ball simply won't stop. So there's a lot of spots where the ball will continue to drift down to the bottom, but if you're uphill, in the correct spot, very playable.

**Q. A round of 70 as we take you through some of your highlights. The Green Mile today, ball striking wise out there, how did it feel?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I didn't hit as many fairways as I would have liked but I missed it on the correct side. I actually hit a really good drive there on 16 over the bunker. Even though it was in the rough, it was right where I was aiming. Hit a good tee shot there and that was a 9-iron to about six feet that I ended up making.

The best shot of the day was on 18 here. Well, you missed the hybrid, but I hit a hybrid from 237 uphill into the wind and lightening fast as you can see downhill on this green, on all the greens here. The greens are stimping out at over 15, closer to 16. You get it downhill on some of these slopes, the ball just won't stop. That ball took a while to get there but it finally went in.

**Q. Talk about on 7 for me.**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** On 7 this is the same thing. On the chip shot here I just barely have to get it over the ridge, and you can see the ball 50 feet short almost stops right there but it just drifts down and catches the slope. Again, you can see how far the pin is away but when these greens are 15, 16 on the stimp, it will just continue to roll out. All I was trying to do is just get it over the crest of that hill. I don't want to say water was in play, but it certainly would have been easy to hit it over the greens.

**Q. How much do you expect conditions to change over the next couple of days with the heat that's expected?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I think Sunday it will be firm. I don't think it will quite be there for tomorrow. I think Sunday we should have a much firmer conditions.

**Q. I was talking to your swing coach, he said you're very, very close. Great practice sections heading into this week as well. What does the (inaudible) at a place you absolutely adore?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I played better last week in preparation in my practice rounds than I played these first two days, but I don't feel like it's far off. The only bad thing is I haven't hit it in play as much as I need to. My iron play is very good. If I get it on the fairways, I'm going to make a lot of birdies. But the good news is I've missed it on the correct side on every single hole for 36 holes. There's water on 7, there's water left on 18, there's unplayable trouble on a number of holes and I've missed it on the correct side on every single hole.

**Q. As your position now on that leaderboard on a golf course where you've had a tremendous record yet have yet to win, explain the excitement level as another opportunity now presents itself to you.**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** It's a little early for that, to start thinking about that. Tomorrow and Saturday's round we're going to see a lot of people go low and kind of make their move and it's important for me to give myself a good opportunity for Sunday. But my touch around the greens, my short game is as good as it's been in a long time and I think it will save me if I happen to not strike it well. If I do strike it well, I think there's a really low round in there.

**Q. I know it wasn't the finish that you were looking for obviously at nine, but do you feel like you got the most out of that round here in round 2?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I salvaged a lot of strokes around the greens, my short game was sharp and the speed of the greens is very challenging. I hit a lot of good shots around the greens to shoot the number I shot. I've been striking the ball a lot better back home this last week heading into this tournament than I performed the first two days, but I feel like it's close and if I can strike it the way I've been, I should have a good weekend.

**Q. I know you love this place. How do you feel about the next two days coming up here at Quail Hollow?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I'm looking forward to it. It's a fun opportunity to get in some of the last groups and hopefully a good round tomorrow will get me in the final pairing for Sunday. That's really been fun.

**Q. Did you feel like you got as much as you could out of it today with your short game?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Probably, but I didn't -- I guess you could say that. I didn't birdie a couple of par 5s, I just kind of missed it in the correct spot around the course and then hit a couple of good shots to make some birdies. Yeah, it was okay. I think that my iron play, I'm really happy with where my iron game is but I haven't had enough good iron shots into these par 4s to be able to go as low as I would like.

**Q. Is that the case on 18? That's a pretty good shot you hit in there.**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Yeah, that was a really good one there to get it to that back section about 15 feet away. That was a hybrid there. But I'm looking -- like I say, I should get this thing dialed in for the weekend.

**Q. Can you talk about the 18th hole. You've kind of struggled there over the years. Did this give you some confidence?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Yeah, it's a very awkward shot for me off the tee because if I happen to lose it a little bit left, obviously it's going to go in the water. But it's coming short left for me because I'm cutting it, whereas a right-handed player, if he draws it, a lot of times it might be a little bit hotter and carry that corner so the fairway might feel a little bit wider. And that bunker, if I go right I'm hooking it so I usually run through and go right into the bunker. It's a very difficult tee shot for me. But these last two days I've just played up the right-hand side, and technically that wasn't a fairway hit but it was a first cut and I'll take that every day on 18, and then I hit a hybrid to 15 feet and made birdie.

**Q. You've been in contention here so many times. Is there something about here you know you're going to play well?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I think that you don't have to -- it reminds me a lot of Augusta in that you don't have to be perfect but you do have to miss it in the correct spots. And your short

game has to be sharp because the contours of the greens and speed of the greens are very severe, so your touch has to be on.

**Q. You talked about green speeds touching 16. I mean, is Augusta, is there any other place that nears that?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Oakmont, Oakmont was 15.6 in '07 and has similar pitch as these do around the holes, so that would be the nearest comparison. The thing about Augusta, the speeds might be comparable but the hole locations at Augusta are softer so there's less pitch around the holes at Augusta than there is here.