

**ROUND 1 INTERVIEW**  
**October 4, 2018**

**PHIL MICKELSON (-7)**



**Q. Wow, what a round you were able to put together, especially considering the long week in Paris, a lot of headlines obviously generated by Team USA in the aftermath. You traveled from Paris all the way to Napa, the only Ryder Cupper to do that. You told me yesterday you were absolutely exhausted. Could you have foreseen a round like today?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** No. I hit it terrible, I had one of the worst warmups of the year. Well, it's the first day of the year, so that I've had in a long time. I was hitting the fence on the range right, I was hitting the fence left, I was hitting it terrible. But you throw on one of these shirts and you can dance and you can hit fairways, it's awesome.

**Q. You rip off six birdies in a row from 9 to 14. Describe what it was like being in that kind of a zone.**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I've been putting well, like I can putt and I just had -- I made some good putts on the greens, but I was surprised at some of the shots I've hit. Honestly, I hit it just terrible and today was kind of an anomaly. Don't let the good round fool you, I'm not at my best, but today was -- a few things clicked and it was fun.

**Q. Yeah, we saw some long putts go in. How big of a domino effect was that for the --**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** It's a part of it, but the big thing is making the short ones. I hit a lot of really solid short putts. I hit the 11th, really good shot on 11, the par 3, six, seven feet and it's just not an easy putt. I hit such a good roll and it tracked in there. Those are the ones that give you momentum. I followed it up with another seven-, eight-footer on the very next hole. Those are the ones you have to make to have a good round and I made a lot of the short ones today.

**Q. Phil, nice play today. You shared a little story with me on No. 10 coming off the green, you said the warmup session wasn't your best today and you played pretty solid.**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** No, I had one of the worst warmup sessions I had in years, I was hitting it terrible. I was hitting the driving range fence both left and right, it was awful. Andrew gave me a nice little simple aggressive thought and I started to -- I hit one good shot on No. 2, a nice solid little 6-iron in there, and all of a sudden it started to feel a little bit better. I putted really well. I'm putting good, I'm putting well and I made some good solid putts today. Gosh, it was a fun round.

**Q. Back at the TOUR Championship I was wondering what's going on with Phil and then I looked, it was putting, you missed a bunch of putts there. Was that just a blip hopefully, because you putted really well today?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Yeah, I had two terrible weeks at BMW and the TOUR Championship with putting and it just -- but what's happened is I've become a great putter week in and week out with a few bad weeks as opposed to in the past I've been kind of an average putter with a few spikes. I'm back to putting well again and rolling it the way I did all last year. I made some good putts today.

**Q. The sequence, okay, it ends Sunday, you get on a plane right away or wait until Monday like the rest of us?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Say again?

**Q. Coming back, coming back from France, what was your --**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** We landed late Monday and I had a solid Tuesday off and then the season started again, it was great. So look, this is -- I'm not at my best, all right? I've been hitting it terrible, I had a terrible warmup session, I'm tired and fatigued and have a hard time visualizing good shots. So this week I'm not hitting any balls, I'm not practicing, I'm not hitting chips, I'm not hitting putts. I'll have a nice 45-minute warmup and that's it. I'm trying to just save every ounce of energy and shotmaking and visualization for the course.

**Q. Your last shot in France goes in the pond and then you come out here and run off a bunch of birdies. I mean, big change in a few days.**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Well, it's a unique situation in that the way the -- the Europeans did a great thing, they did the opposite of what we do when we have the Ryder Cup here. The fairways were 14 to 16 yards wide. Ben Hogan, who is the greatest ball-striker of all time, had a five percent margin of error. So if you hit the ball 300 yards, which we all hit it more than that, you need to have a 30-yard wide fairway to be able to hit it.

The fact is they had brutal rough, almost unplayable, and it's not the way I play. I don't play like that. And here I can miss the fairways, I can get shots out of the rough up on the green and it's playable.

And I'm 48. I'm not going to play tournaments with rough like that anymore, it's a waste of my time. I'm going to play courses that are playable and that I can play aggressive, attacking, make a lot of birdies, style of golf I like to play.

**Q. One more Ryder Cup question. All the bitterness at the end, you're not involved in that, but that doesn't sound good for the U.S. team. You've always been an upbeat, positive guy. What did you think of that?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** We had one of the best weeks as far as teammates, as far as working together, camaraderie. We had an awesome week. I actually -- I don't know what to say because I didn't see any of that stuff happen. I only saw one of the best weeks and team unities that we've had in a long time.

**Q. What was the key in the middle of the round to get you going on that birdie run specifically?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Honestly, I don't -- I really don't know. Maybe the shot on 9 out of the rough that came out -- ended up about three feet and I had a nice tap-in birdie. I made a long putt on 10 and I made a long putt on 13 and those putts get your round going.

But really it was the seven- and eight-footers for birdie on 11 and 12 because those are the ones you have to make to have a good solid round. I hit really good shots to get to that spot and you walk away feeling dejected if they don't go in, and the math is you're going to make half of those, if that, and I ended up making those putts and those were big for me.

**Q. You've had a couple days to digest. Is there any one thing that you can pinpoint as to why the U.S. team just didn't get it done in Paris this time?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Well, we got outplayed. I thought that we had a great week in the sense that we worked really well together as a team in deciphering some things, and over the course of 20 years we're looking at this as a big picture thing. We were 2-8 the last 20 years. Our goal is to take the wins and take the losses and build on them, learn from them and continue on rather than having two-year sporadic start-over-again type deal. We're having the opportunity to build something special and so we'll be judged on how we do over the next 20 years and our goal is to go 8-2, but after losing this one that might not be possible. But if we can go and do above 500, 6-4 or 7-3, that would be pretty awesome.

**Q. Given how tired you were, what was your sort of state of mind on the range when you started like hitting the fences like you said?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I'm not playing well, I'm not at my best. Today I had a couple things click and I got in a nice little rhythm, but the bottom line is I'm not playing well, I'm tired and so forth. So I'm trying to save every ounce of energy for the course and maybe it will click. I mean, it clicked today, I certainly didn't expect this. I expected to be going home after tomorrow, but now I don't. Now I think I'll have maybe a good day tomorrow, who knows.