

**ROUND 2 INTERVIEW**  
**October 5, 2018**

**PHIL MICKELSON (-10)**



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**Q. I was more concerned about the turnaround than the golf today, but got off to a solid start this morning, short turnaround?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Yeah, I birdied the first. I ended up having three bogeys there on the front, but played a good back nine, which was the front. Shot 4 under to kind of salvage the round. I'm surprised, I'm hitting a lot of good shots. I didn't expect that. What I am doing well is putting, like I can putt and I'm making some nice putts.

**Q. That's the thing, your reads are really spot on, you're paying attention and holding on to even the long ones for a long, long time.**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Yeah. I grew up on poa annua greens so I feel comfortable with these, but more than that, I'm really solid on the short ones, which I've been working on. In the last three years or so it's been a nice turnaround, but to get on these greens, they're not a gimme, they're not easy. But I'm hitting them so solid, I've made a lot of them, not throwing shots away and I'm surprised to be where I'm at.

**Q. The putt you had on No. 8, that's a perfect putt for the average guy not to make because he's not going to hit it very hard. You hit that with pace so it holds its line on poa annua.**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Exactly, and the reason I'm able to do that is I'm confident that I'll make the three- or four-footer coming back.

**Q. Phil, you're at 2 over through eight holes on your round. How do you salvage things the last 10 holes and get in with a 69?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Well, in that 2 over I hit a lot of good shots. I hit a lot of good putts that were catching lips and I just felt like there's some birdies out here, eventually some of the putts would drop. I'm putting too well not to make putts and I ended up making some good ones the last 10 holes.

**Q. You've made over 100 feet of putts both days in a row. What's the comfort level like standing over the ball when you're on that type of run?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Certainly growing up on poa annua greens, I'm comfortable with that, but it's more than that. The last three or four years I've become a really good putter week in and week out with a few bad weeks as opposed to having average putting with a few spikes, so every time I show up, I feel confidence that I'm going to make them. And I've made a lot

of the short ones here, the three- or four-footers, which allows me to be more aggressive on the 20-footers.

**Q. You tried selling us that was fool's gold yesterday with that 65, now you're at 10 under par going into the weekend. How's the mindset shift when you have a legitimate shot of winning the tournament?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Well, I'm cautiously optimistic. It's certainly turning from pessimistic because I didn't think that I was going to be here on the weekend and the next thing you know I'm up on top of the leaderboard. So it's a crazy game because I had the worst warmup session yesterday. I didn't have a great warmup session today, but it was certainly better than yesterday and my expectations were nil. I've hit a lot of good shots, I'm really surprised.

**Q. Phil, (inaudible) flat and punched down fairway in the landing areas?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Yeah, I don't know what to say. I'm as surprised as anybody that I'm playing this well. I've hit a lot of good shots. I'm not surprised I'm putting well. I've been putting really well, but I had a few weeks there at the end at BMW and East Lake that I didn't putt well, but that's more of an anomaly now. I've been putting so well week in and week out that I've had a good week putting and I'm just surprised I'm hitting this many good shots. I'm surprised I haven't hit some huge drives offline. The ones that were in the rough are very solidly hit and just off. I'm surprised I haven't hit any out of bounds, to be honest.

**Q. When was the last time you played this many weeks in a row and are you planning to have a nice downtime after this?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I am. I probably won't play much until our match on Thanksgiving with Tiger. I've learned from this, you know, at 48 it's not a smart thing to do. I won't do it anymore, I won't do it again, playing this much golf. I'll pace myself much better because I'm able to play at a high level, but it's so difficult without physical and mental sharpness to play at a high level. It doesn't come easy anymore, I need to recover and so I have to pace myself better.

**Q. That's the second day in a row you've mentioned 48 and how you view things differently. Yesterday you talked about the rough. How do you maybe compare to five years ago, how do you approach your job and golf and life differently?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Yeah, I love what I do, but now as opposed to playing the tournaments you're expected to play in or whatever, I'm going to do what's -- play the events that I like that are best for me even if it doesn't make sense or if people have a problem with it because I'm going to have to start limiting the number of tournaments I play so that I can play those at a higher level because I'm getting a little bit more mental fatigue and not able to focus and see the shot as clearly as I'd like for so many weeks in a row.

**Q. More mental than physical?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** Yes, because I'll tell you, I physically feel great.

**Q. Will you play more of a reduced schedule that people will actually notice this coming season?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** I think there will be -- as I looked at my schedule next year and the way some of the tournaments are, yeah, I think there will be some that I miss that will -- that people will be upset about, but I'm not going to worry about it.

**Q. How long in your mind do you plan to be out here? How long do you want to be out here?**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** As long as I can win. I won this year and I'm top of the leaderboard without my best stuff, so as long as I feel like I can compete at this level, I enjoy the challenge.

**Q. Will you allow yourself to think about the W word yet here at Silverado or do you wait until maybe --**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** No, not until Sunday, not till Sunday, yeah. Look, I'm not --

**Q. I know your expectations are awfully low.**

**PHIL MICKELSON:** My expectations are starting to come up, so I don't want to get overly confident here because I know that I don't have my best stuff right now.