

ROUND 4 INTERVIEW
July 26, 2020



MICHAEL THOMPSON (-19)

DOUG MILNE: I would like to welcome the winner of the 2020 3M Open, Michael Thompson.

Michael, congratulations on your second career PGA TOUR win. I know you've been fighting hard for that second win for a long time. Incredible day today, 4-under 67 to get the job done with a convincing last hole, 72nd hole. Just a few comments overall, your thoughts.

MICHAEL THOMPSON: Yeah, an unbelievable day. I played really solid golf. I think I only had three bogeys all week. Just really stuck to my game, played Michael Thompson golf, allowed my putter to speak volumes, I think. To hit those shots coming down the stretch, those last two holes are not easy. I mean, you've got to step up and hit a good tee shot and even the layup you've got to hit a good shot, and then to put myself in a position to have a 15-footer where all I have to do is lag it up there, uphill right-to-left putt, I mean, I couldn't have asked for a more perfect scenario to finish a tournament. To see that go in was just relieving.

DOUG MILNE: With the win, you jump up to 39th in the FedExCup standings, so obviously the win was a huge win for you. That's 39th in the FedEx as I mentioned for the FedExCup Playoffs, you're headed now to Memphis for the World Golf Championships FedEx St. Jude, U.S. Open, PGA, Sentry Tournament of Champions, PLAYERS, the list goes on.

Looking at the big picture, can you kind of talk about how significant this 3M Open win was?

MICHAEL THOMPSON: Oh, man, it's job security for two more years, it's benefits of the sponsors that I have and it gives me the confidence to know that I can compete on the biggest stage in the world in this game and that I can do it again. To have the opportunities to play in some of the bigger tournaments, to finish the year and put myself in a chance to make Atlanta, I've never been in a better position, I think, than right now on the PGA TOUR. Man, I am champing at the bit to go prove myself again really. Next week is another opportunity on a golf course that I absolutely love. Winged Foot for the U.S. Open is my favorite golf course in the entire world. I mean, you couldn't have written a better script for where I'm at right now.

Q. Michael, congratulations, first of all. Could you talk a little bit about you were pretty emotional out there. Can you just talk a little bit about how you're feeling right now, and I also wonder if you've had a chance to talk to your wife and your son.

MICHAEL THOMPSON: Yeah, I'm a little calmer now, kind of come down from the high. I actually just FaceTimed my wife and before we even said anything we both started crying.

My son, Jace, was, you know, bouncing off the walls like every three-year-old does and excited to see me on the TV. My daughter, Laurel, was sitting in my wife's lap crying. Typical FaceTime with the family. They were just so excited.

My wife, my wife is so excited for me. She knows the work that I've put in, the early mornings going to the gym, the time I've spent with Justin Parsons, my swing coach, practice, being away from the kids. This is what we do all that work for and so it's just so exciting that I now get to celebrate that with them. What a week.

Q. Does this one feel better than the first?

MICHAEL THOMPSON: It really does, because I felt -- I feel like I -- it was kind of similar in the sense that I played my own game coming down the stretch the last nine holes. I feel like I was really swinging the club well and putting very well, so I had the confidence. But this win validates the first win. It solidifies kind of my presence on the PGA TOUR and proves to my peers that I'm a threat every week and that's what I want to be.

Q. Yesterday late in the day your caddie said to you, "It's time to step up and play the game." Was that time today that bunker shot on 16?

MICHAEL THOMPSON: Yeah, absolutely. He actually said that several times throughout the day today, "It's time to step up and hit the shot, commit to your target."

And that bunker shot, actually, I love bunkers. that was the one thing I did when I was a kid after I got home from school was I would go sit in a bunker for a couple hours and just hit bunker shots. So I have really good feel in the bunker and good visual for how I want the shot to come off, and for that to happen on the 70th hole, you know, potentially give me a one-shot lead if I make birdie there, it was perfect timing.

Q. Where was the bunker that you would sit in when you were little?

MICHAEL THOMPSON: It was actually at 49ers Country Club. That's where I grew up. My parents moved us out there around 8th grade and I would come home from school and just practice for five hours until it was dark. I used to walk to the golf course and then go hit a few balls, but then go putt and hit bunker shots. That was kind of my favorite thing to do.

So when I got in that bunker I was nervous, but at the same time I knew the shot that I had to hit and I relied on a lot of those memories for just being in the bunker for hours and hours on end in high school.

Q. You spoke yesterday about how you felt like it might benefit you to play on this course without fans and just be able to relax a little bit more. I'm wondering if that played out the way you thought it would and whether you felt any nerves at any point?

MICHAEL THOMPSON: Yeah, I was actually more nervous than I thought I would be throughout the day, even without the fans. I mean, we're playing for a lot, you know, every week. It means so much to get a win and it gets you into so many different tournaments and solidifies your job for two more years. I mean, that's enough pressure for anybody let alone having fans out there.

It is a little sad that there wasn't anybody out there to cheer on some of the great shots that I hit towards the end, but I know everybody who's rooting for me at least was watching and screaming at their TV, so this is definitely a win for everybody who supported me throughout the years. It doesn't diminish the excitement, I think, that the tournament holds.

Q. You had two putts to win on the last hole. How satisfying was it to do it in one?

MICHAEL THOMPSON: Oh, man, you can only dream of making a putt on the last hole to win a tournament. definitely nice to know that I had a one-shot cushion, so I only had to two-putt, but had such a good read, it was an uphill right-to-left, exactly what any right-handed golfer wants. And I've been putting good all day today, so I just said -- I said to myself before I hit it, "Best putt of the day here, best putt of the day," and sure enough I hit it absolutely perfect and it went right in the middle.

DOUG MILNE: I've got one final question for you. One thing that really stuck with me from outside was that you said that you had peaks and valleys, but you never lost confidence in yourself, you never doubted yourself, and you said something to the effect of you know you belong out here. How validating is that perseverance with a win like that at the 3M Open here?

MICHAEL THOMPSON: It's amazing. To win the 3M Open this year, for all the hard work that I put in, my wife has been a rock for me and continually telling me that you're good enough, you belong out here, you're supposed to be out here. Just hearing that day in and day out even when I'm not feeling it is just -- is just incredible to have somebody like that in your life.

This has been my dream ever since I was 7 years old, to play on the PGA TOUR. I never got past maybe winning one time, and to have it happen and to have it happen at such a great event on such a great golf course under these conditions with the field that we had this week, it was a shootout today. I mean, anybody could have won. It just means the world to me because it solidifies in my mind that I'm one of the best golfers in the world and that I can compete every single week out here.

DOUG MILNE: That's a strong lead-in right there, Michael. Congratulations. Going forward, you're going to be a busy man.

MICHAEL THOMPSON: Yes. Thank you very much.