

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW
November 5, 2020



MICHAEL THOMPSON (-3)

Q. Michael, great playing out there today, six birdies, I know you made some bogeys. This is a new golf course. What went right for you today?

MICHAEL THOMPSON: You know, I didn't have any expectations today, so I just went out, I'm trying to work on being a little bit more athletic and kind of use my lower body, which is where a lot of my strength is, and gain a little bit of distance here and I actually hit the ball really well. I was hitting it pretty straight, hitting my lines, which was a pleasant sight after the first few holes, and had a good feel with my putter. I think playing in the morning on these greens, they get a little bit crusty and as the day goes on they're quick, and they're undulated. So I was able to in my warmup get used to starting the ball online, which is key to putting. All of that just -- just kind of all went right.

Q. You've played this game long enough on this level, when you come to a new golf course, what's the biggest challenge for you when you play at a new venue?

MICHAEL THOMPSON: The biggest is just you don't really have a whole lot of time to figure out basically where not to miss it, where -- how to attack certain pins. You kind of have to visualize that and try to imagine what that's going to be like because most of us don't have any rounds under our belt on this course versus playing like Sony Open in Hawaii. A lot of us have played it for 10, 15 years and we kind of know where to hit it, where not to and all that kind of thing.

It's just kind of trying to create a game plan and then sticking to it, but there's always a learning curve. You're going to hit it in places where you don't want to. Fortunately, I really didn't do that today, so hopefully I can kind of keep the feel of the swing going. Putter's my strength, so I'm really confident with that right now. I'm excited to kind of be where I am and possibly have chance to play on the weekend and maybe give it a run.

Q. You took an aggressive line there at 9, you walk away with birdie. A lot of players have been talking about the hole location. Was that something you were trying to do or did you --

MICHAEL THOMPSON: No, I pulled it a little bit, kind of aiming more right in the middle of the green at the TV tower. I've been hitting a little draw all day, so it kind of set up perfect and all I was trying to do was again use my lower body, try to get a little bit extra power and make sure that I carry it far enough. Tugged it just a bit, but it sat nicely. On that putt I just told myself let's just hit the best putt of the day right here and fortunately it went in. You take those when you get them.

Q. You win at the 3M Championship back in July. It probably seems like a year ago, it was last season and you've struggled a little bit since then. What have you been challenged with and what's kind of turned around for you?

MICHAEL THOMPSON: Yeah, really struggling with ball striking. I was hitting the ball so well leading up to 3M and then 3M I peaked. Then after that I got into some big tournaments that I wasn't expecting to get into, so I just don't think I was mentally ready. I just put too much pressure on myself. I feel like you go out and win and then you're like, oh, I have to play well every week now, I have to live up to the expectation.

Really, I play my best golf when I have no expectations, I go out and just try to have fun and so it was -- it was probably a really good thing for me to play poorly over the last few months because it kind of gets me back to trying to be the best Michael Thompson I can possibly be. I'm liking where things are going right now. I actually feel like I've gained a little bit of speed, which is always great in this game, especially nowadays. Let's just keep it rolling.