

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW
February 25, 2021



BILLY HORSCHEL (-5)

Q. Fourteen of 14 of fairways hit, can't get better than that. Seemed like it set up the whole round, is that correct?

BILLY HORSCHEL: It did. I mean, these fairways aren't super tight but there are some tee shots that sort of will get your attention. I did a really good job of just trusting my swing, trusting what we've been working on, Todd and I have been working on. Yeah, it was a really solid day. When you hit it in the fairway, it makes it a little easier to control the shot going into the green.

Q. You're a Florida guy, you're a Gator, back on bermuda, how big a difference is that for you?

BILLY HORSCHEL: I love coming to Florida. I'm born and raised on this grass, so I feel comfortable on it. I think in years past I've put a lot of pressure on myself to play well in Florida just because I feel like the courses set up well for me, it's my home state, I want to do well. So this year I'm just sort of trying to be a little bit easier on myself and not try and force and try and make it happen.

Q. Anything that you learned in the opening round that you would take for the rest of the week, first competitive round here?

SERGIO GARCIA: You know, I don't know. That's a great question. I don't think I may have learned too much. I think my caddie, Brian Dille, and I have done a really good job of prepping over the last three days, of really understanding where the pin locations are going to be, understanding how the holes are going to play, understanding that hitting 9-iron to 25 feet on certain holes is a really good shot. So I think we're going to sort of stick to that game plan and hopefully have somewhat of the same success the next few days.

Q. When's the first time you saw the course?

BILLY HORSCHEL: Monday afternoon. Drove down Monday from Ponte Vedre and just went ahead and walked the golf course. Something I started doing late last year when I haven't seen the golf course, just going out walking it, trying to understand the tee shots, what I may hit off each tee, understanding some pin locations, understanding where I might miss on certain pins. I think it allows me in my practice round to be even more focused and diligent in my practice and not waste a hole or do too much, because you usually only play nine holes each day and that's what I did this week.

Q. If you haven't played it before, what's the challenge playing a new course?

BILLY HORSCHER: I think the challenging thing is you think you may know where you should miss it on certain pins and then you realize, well, you know what, it actually was better to miss it over there or try and be aggressive to this pin. I think that's just the thing that gets us on new courses, not fully understanding where we can get up and down if we miss a shot and so you sort of are guessing, and I think we do a really good job out here of guessing correctly, or at least most of us who sort of think a little bit about the golf course. So I think that's the thing, the challenge is understanding how certain pin locations are going to play and where you sort of put the ball to give yourself a chance to get it up and down.

Q. There are some good scores today obviously. Why do you think there's been so many blowups?

BILLY HORSCHER: Today? Yeah, this course is, I mean if you're on, you're going to have chances, you're going to be really good with the tee ball or you're going to have chances with your iron play. If you're off with your ball-striking and you miss in some tough spots, you can look pretty silly. It's grainy around the greens a little bit. It's tight, but it's still got a little grain so you can look silly with your chips.

If you get too aggressive, which certain guys that I haven't looked at a leaderboard, but there are certain guys that I know if they're aggressive and it's not working out well, they can have some high numbers.

I think this is a course that really makes you think about how to play each hole, how to play sort of from the tee shot or from the green back or maybe from the tee shot forward, whichever way people like to look at it. It fits right in my game of really being diligent and thinking about the proper shot and just not I would say caveman golf. Sometimes we play too much caveman golf out here where you're not too worried about if you hit a bad shot and miss it in the wrong spot, it still get up and down, here you can't do that.