

PGA Championship

Friday, May 21, 2021

Kiawah Island, South Carolina, USA

The Ocean Course at Kiawah

Phil Mickelson

Flash Quotes

THE MODERATOR: We're pleased to be joined by Phil Mickelson, who posted a 3-under 69 today in extraordinary conditions. He's 5-under par for the championship, currently on the top of the leaderboard.

Q. How often have you been able to utilize the 2-wood? Has that been what's helping you? How have you been able to find these fairways?

PHIL MICKELSON: I have been using it a reasonable amount. Certainly on holes like 1 and 3 and holes that I want to keep it down and don't have a lot of forced carry. But into the wind on the holes coming back, like 15, 16 and 18, I've had to use driver because I need a little bit more carry out of it.

It's a nice club for me to have when I feel a little bit uncomfortable because I can get it on the ground quicker and the miss isn't too bad.

I've driven it well, but I think the thing I've done the best is my brother Tim and I have done a really good job of judging the wind, judging the flight and picking clubs with the right flight to get the right distance, and so we've hit a lot of iron shots pin high.

Q. The last two back nines, yesterday and today, what is it about those? Was it getting into the round? There were completely different circumstances with the wind and everything like that.

PHIL MICKELSON: I don't know if I have a great answer for you. I think that I was patient even though things weren't quite going well at the moment, and I had a few shaky strokes on 16, 17 and 18 where I was very tentative.

I was able to make an adjustment on the front and ended up making some really good putts. I putted very well.

I've been able to make some adjustments and not let a couple of the poor shots or poor strokes affect the overall round, which is something I haven't been doing as well, certainly not as well as I've been doing the last two days. It's been nice to make those adjustments and be able to



get those strokes back.

Q. Two weeks ago you were up there after one day and then fell off, and you've lamented these focus issues some. I'm curious what's changed. How have you addressed it? How are you handling it, and maybe in conditions where that is required even more?

PHIL MICKELSON: So I'm working on it. I'm just making more and more progress just by trying to elongate my focus. I might try to play 36, 45 holes in a day and try to focus on each shot so that when I go out and play 18, it doesn't feel like it's that much. I might try to elongate the time that I end up meditating, but I'm trying to use my mind like a muscle and just expand it because as I've gotten older, it's been more difficult for me to maintain a sharp focus, a good visualization and see the shot.

Physically I feel like I'm able to perform and hit the shots that I've hit throughout my career, and I feel like I can do it every bit as well as I have, but I've got to have that clear picture and focus.

So these first two days have been much better.

Q. How satisfying is it right now to be in the position you're in after all that?

PHIL MICKELSON: I'm having a lot of fun, and to play well, to know I'm playing well heading into the weekend, to be in contention, to have a good opportunity, I'm having a blast. I'm excited for the weekend. This has been a lot of fun.

THE MODERATOR: Phil, thanks so much for being with us.

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