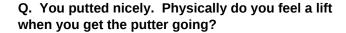
# Chubb Classic presented by SERVPRO

Friday, February 16, 2024 Naples, Florida, USA Tiburón Golf Club

#### **Ernie Els**

**Quick Quotes** 



ERNIE ELS: Yeah, yeah, always. There's a saying that you never really see a good putter with not a very good sense of humor. Good putters always smile. You'll see a lot of smiles from good putters. But all that's nice. I'm feeling comfortable. I'm struggling a little bit with my lower back, but I'm keeping it in play. It was okay today. Just those longer iron shots, the big swings, it pinches a bit, but I'll get treatment and keep going.

#### Q. What was the best part of your game to get to 6?

ERNIE ELS: I started off nice. I hit a couple of solid shots out of the gate, and I birdied the second hole, hitting a driver and a 9-iron to about eight feet and made the putt. Kept it in play, and then I birdied the par-5 -- I birdied all the par-5s. I guess that's the key out here. Par-5s, playing them in 4-under was key.

17 could have been a bit of a disaster, but I made 5 in the end, which was good. Then making that putt on 18. It kind of worked out.

#### Q. How long was the putt at 18?

ERNIE ELS: It was about eight, nine feet. It was a solid putt to make.

Let's see what happens tomorrow. I'm sure we're going to play golf on Sunday. I guess we're going to play real early Sunday and see what happens.

### Q. What kind of lift would it give you to do something big early?

ERNIE ELS: Well, always great. Are you kidding me? I've won three events out here. Been in contention quite a few times. But some of these guys, when they get hot, they go low. There's a handful of guys that go low, that are really



in fine shape. I've just got to try and get one better than them at some point and get some confidence.

## Q. It's hard out here to really space yourself out in the lead. Rocco got to 9. When you saw that, what did you think?

ERNIE ELS: It's out there. There's no wind. Although I made some good putts, more missed putts. I missed about four or five makeable putts, and obviously Rocco didn't make any mistakes. But it's out there. I think there's going to be another one out there today.

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