

Cognizant Classic

Friday, March 1, 2024

Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, USA

PGA National Champion Course

Rickie Fowler

Quick Quotes



Q. Obviously the first question is on conditions. This is a different course from yesterday. How much more difficult was this than it was yesterday?

RICKIE FOWLER: In the afternoon we saw a little bit of breeze. Kind of maybe in the 10 mile an hour. Today was a little bit more probably 15 sustained and probably gusts to 20 or 25, going with realistic numbers. I feel like sometimes people maybe embellish a little bit on wind strength.

This is a proper day for golf in the wind in South Florida.

Q. Knowing this course and having success on this course, do you welcome that, where a lot of guys don't? Do you welcome that wind?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, I would prefer it to be windy. Partly I feel like it helps separate a little bit.

Yesterday morning, we teed off late, but seeing the conditions with it being pretty calm in the morning, definitely allows for some scores. It's still not an easy golf course, but when it's windy you can make up more ground putting up a round under par.

We'll see. Hopefully wind will stay up and that'll kind of get me back in a good position for the weekend.

Q. Talk about the people that volunteer to help take this Classic to the next level?

RICKIE FOWLER: The volunteers every week are amazing. Without volunteers, not just here at Cognizant but all the tournaments that we play, without them, it would be very, very difficult to make the tournaments happen.

The volunteers are a huge part of why everything can run so smoothly and we can go chase a white ball around.

Q. You had an eagle on 10 this morning, your first hole of the day. Talk about how that carried your momentum through the rest of the round.

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, definitely a nice start. It counts as an eagle on the card. It's hard to look at as an eagle for me because we've played that as a par-4 for so long. Still, with the wind helping a little bit, I hit driver, 7-iron. It doesn't necessarily have the feel of a par-5. I'll take it as an eagle. It definitely helps the card. But it was nice to start off with two good swings, and I didn't have to do much for the putt. Got to tap it in. That was nice to have a little bit of a buffer with knowing how hard it was blowing and knowing this golf course I needed to shoot a decent round to make sure I got into the weekend.

2-under through 1 is a nice little buffer and you can kind of cruise from there.

Q. This is obviously the closest possible golf course to your home. Now that you have a baby and everything like that, what's that been like so far this week sort of navigating the fact that you're still a family man but you're out here just down the block playing for reals?

RICKIE FOWLER: It's great. It's always nice to be able to sleep in your own bed. We don't get to do that a whole lot throughout the year.

We were home last week, and then I didn't come to the course out here until Wednesday, so just kind of, I guess, enjoying time at home while I can, and show up for the tournament. But being able to go home and have some good home cooking and sleeping in our own bed, it can be good and bad at the same time.

Q. Is it challenging at all in some ways?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, some guys don't like it because it doesn't quite have the same feel of being at a tournament. Like I said, it's hard to beat being at home.

Q. We talked about early week just you staying patient with your game, waiting for it to find a rhythm. Do you feel like you found some of that, especially early on throughout this round?



RICKIE FOWLER: A little bit. I still need to do some more work. I'm going to go hit some balls with Butch this afternoon. He's in town for the Floridian member-guest. A little bit more work. With the wind and kind of knowing this golf course, it's a bit more of hitting shots and not hitting it in the wrong spots and kind of managing your way around. Did a good job of that, and happened to make a couple putts on top of it.

I'm definitely happy with the round. I left a couple out there. But looking forward to a little bit of work and then hopefully swinging a little bit better this weekend.

Q. I know you talk with Butch a lot, but how often are you in the same place at the same time being able to work on stuff?

RICKIE FOWLER: Last year I saw him in person five times, so hopefully something similar this year, four or five times.

We're through the phone quite a bit, and then his brother Craig is also down here. We're both members at Medalist. I hit balls with his brother every once in a while. I feel like we have a good system. Obviously worked going into and throughout last year. Just got to get into a better spot. It's been a slow start to the year, and kind of looking to pick things back up and get going.

Q. I heard a few guys say yesterday that it felt weird playing here with no wind. Can you elaborate on that, why it's almost for you in your mind, you prefer there to be wind?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, I enjoy the wind. You can use it to your advantage sometimes. It does make the course harder.

It's rare to see this place without much wind. Yesterday morning, I know we weren't playing, but it was pretty calm. Yesterday afternoon was still scorable. This will probably be a little above average today.

The guys that played yesterday morning in little wind, it'll be a little different golf course, especially if they haven't played many times around here.

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