

LIV Golf Virginia

Friday, 6 June, 2025

Gainesville, Virginia, USA

Robert Trent Jones Golf Club

HyFlyers GC

Phil Mickelson

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: HyFlyers GC captain Phil Mickelson with us today. 4-under 67, puts you right there among the leaders. Tell us about your round.

PHIL MICKELSON: It was really a fun test of golf and a fun round. Course is in incredible shape. I hit a lot of good shots. I had a stretch where I drove it really well in the middle of my round and I was able to make a bunch of birdies doing that. That's really the key here is getting the ball in the fairway.

Then I hit a couple, I hit two or three that were uncharacteristic actually that I'm going to have to clean up for tomorrow and the weekend.

I'm having a lot of fun. It's really fun. I'm starting to play well. My short game is starting to feel great, making some putts, and I'm just having a lot of fun.

Q. Phil, you're enjoying your best performance this season since joining LIV. I looked it up, this is your lowest round relative to par in your last 16 LIV Golf starts. You must be really feeling good about the way your game is trending as you're approaching 55.

PHIL MICKELSON: With only 54 holes, there's more pressure, like I feel more pressure on the first round because you really need to get off to a great start because you don't have that extra round to make up the difference. I haven't played well in the first round, and I put myself behind. I'm always playing catch-up and fighting just to gain some ground.

Whereas it feels really good -- today I had a couple rounds -- like maybe Hong Kong or earlier in the year, I just played a good, solid round and didn't put myself too far behind. That's a really important thing. First round in these tournaments, you feel a lot more pressure because it's important to get off to a good start. You don't have as many holes to catch up.

Q. You talked about at the broadcast you're really

 **GOLF VIRGINIA**

PRESENTED BY

 **MAADEN**

feeling good about your short game. It hasn't been there the last couple years obviously. You found something this year.

PHIL MICKELSON: It's really been -- it's always been the best part of my game. It's always been the easiest part of my game. Last few years I've really struggled with it. Because I've never had to think about it or analyze it, I've been able to force myself to look at what it is I'm really I'm doing, what am I missing? I figured it out, and it feels great.

It allows me to articulate it better, so I just shot a short game video because I feel like I can articulate it better so others can understand and relate. It saved me a few shots.

Very first hole, I hit a poor drive. I was able to get the ball in front of the green. I'm 43 yards away, and I'm able to get it down there three, four feet away, and I make par. Last hole I hit a bad drive. I was able to get it up by the green in the rough and hit a great shot to tap in.

Saving those shots are critical. I've been costing me strokes, I've been losing strokes lately around the green. Now I'm gaining strokes, and it feels great.

Q. Phil, what's kind of your routine when there's a weather delay? How did it impact you for better or for worse upon resumption of play?

PHIL MICKELSON: The day after next week's U.S. Open, I turn 55. As you get older, my body locks up a little bit when I shut it down and stop moving. When I have to wait on a tee for 20 minutes, it's harder.

We have an incredible physical therapist here, Gino Cinco, and I went and saw him before we restarted. I went and did another kind of speed session to get me activated again, get me moving, and I was able to come out and hit some good shots.

I hit a great drive on 18, on hole one. I hit a good shot into 18, made birdie. So I was able to get my body moving. That's the biggest challenge for me.

Q. You've talked with a lot of reverence about RTJ this week. Was there any muscle memory from some of

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

those Presidents Cups as you were going through the track, and maybe that helped your score out this round?

PHIL MICKELSON: There were a lot of points on this golf course where I recalled certain stories or events that I recalled over those four events, four Presidents Cups. I have a lot of great moments, a lot of great special memories from this place. It's fun for me to come back and relive it.

It's been a long time since I played here. 2005 was the last Presidents Cup, and I remember in 2000, when Ken Venturi was the captain, having some incredible moments with him, where this was one of his last big deals in the game of golf before he retired, and I really cherished the time that I spent with him. He was a very interesting and fun person to be around, very charismatic individual.

In 2005, I've been fortunate to spend a lot of time with Jack Nicklaus as captain. I've really enjoyed my time with him. We've had a lot of great memories we shared.

For me, a lot of great memories have taken place at RTJ. I love the golf course, but I really love coming back here and remembering a lot of those special life moments.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports