

Shriners Hospitals for Children Open

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Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

TPC Summerlin

Rickie Fowler

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Rickie Fowler into the interview room at the Shriners Hospitals for Children Open.

Rickie is making his second start of the new PGA TOUR season, and his first start since finishing T4 at the Shriners Hospitals for Children Open in 2018.

So Rickie, thanks for joining us. If we could just get an opening comment on where you return to TPC Summerlin.

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, excited to be back in Vegas. Definitely nice to be here for two weeks with having the event next week at Shadow.

Yeah, I've had good success here at Summerlin being that I lived here for a year when I first turned pro. Fun place to be back to. A lot of friends in the area and some great places to stay.

Like I said, it's nice that we're here for two weeks.

THE MODERATOR: In terms of the state of your game, like I mentioned, this is your second start of the season. If you could just give us a preview for our your game is right now coming into the week.

RICKIE FOWLER: I like where it's at. I was able to get some a little bit of good work at home. I had a few shoots with stuff starting to get -- wouldn't say any more lenient, but being able to get some shoots done, makeup shoots done, in the last two week at home.

Unfortunately had some rain and bad weather over the weekend, so it was nice I was able to get out here to Vegas Sunday afternoon. Been putting some work in. I like where it's at, especially coming to a place where I've played well, had success.

I'm still working on the same stuff and trending in the right direction. It's just going to take, you know, couple solid



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rounds, good solid week, and we'll be off and running.

THE MODERATOR: All right, we'll open up to questions.

Q. Ricardo, how challenging has this been, this stretch for you, and have any doubts about what you're doing crept into your head?

RICKIE FOWLER: No, it definitely has been tough. Anyone that goes through changes or even just dealing with struggles, low points, it happens at some point for everyone.

For me, it's just going through changes. Yeah, it's definitely been tough. But, no, I've never doubted it just because there has been some rounds or some tournaments here and there where seeing the work kind of come through.

Just haven't been able to piece everything together and really put it into a really efficient, consistent form yet. But that is coming. We're just beating down the door.

Like I said, to have had at least some highlights throughout the year where -- whether it was just a good round where stuff clicked, some tournaments where I was able to get myself up into contention, and just keep beating it down, it's been a fun process.

But at the same time, it's definitely been very tough mentally just trying to keep pushing forward. You know, I know what I'm capable of. Seeing other guys struggle, I know what they're capable of. But it's part of golf. It's probably the most humbling game out there. Sometimes you just got to keep putting the foot forward, putting the work in, and keep at it.

Q. What's the most important thing -- when you do piece it together, what will be the biggest, most important change from when you started to where it would be if you piece it together?

RICKIE FOWLER: I would say most important is more the transition. If anything, I was getting -- with where I was at, if you to look at any videos or anything like that from down the line, I would be maybe a touch late off and a little deep,



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and then on the down swing I'd kind of pull the hands and try and get the club back out in front of me, which would cause the shaft to steepen; versus if the club and hands were out in front of me as I start transition, the club would lay down.

So being here, getting steep, the club being out in front of me a little bit more and then laying down. So trying to get it to go the other direction, it's a place I've been before, so we're just trying to go back and get that transition how we want it.

From there, once we get that down, we'll be able to work on some other stuff. That's kind of the main focus right now.

Q. Your scenario has always been you're the young guy coming up and trying to prove yourself. Does it give you any extra motivation to see guys like Collin and Bryson younger than you winning majors now? Is there any urgency to getting something like that done for you now?

RICKIE FOWLER: No, would say it's the same kind of outlook I've always had. I've always wanted to win a major. I've had the chances. I've been up there. It is cool to see guys like that win, Bryson being a few years younger and Colin being a few more years younger.

I enjoy seeing guys play well. You know, when you do win a tournament it gives you that satisfaction knowing that you outplayed everyone that week. So with what I'm going through right now and where I want to be, I don't have any doubt that we'll be right back where we want to, in contention, and having chances to win more tournaments, and especially majors.

That's the ultimate goal. It is a little added motivation when you do see your peers go out and become a major champion. So, yeah, they've helped maybe kick me in the butt a little bit.

Q. As far as Bryson, his style of play, what are your feelings on how he's approaching the game?

RICKIE FOWLER: I mean, with what Bryson has done in the last year or so, it's impressive to see the transformation as well as the speed he's been able to add.

I don't necessarily have the frame to be able to do something like that. I wouldn't mind having a little more distance. But for me, right now working on trying to take what I have and just make it better, more efficient, more consistent.

Like I said, I'm not someone that would be able to get up to his speeds in a year. It would take me a lot longer if not never getting there.

Q. Is it a danger that your style of play becomes harder to win with guys like Bryson playing that style?

RICKIE FOWLER: No. I mean, it -- definitely it's a challenge for all of us no matter how you play. You know, to see how much his distance has been able to be an advantage at times, yeah, it makes you kind of work harder and know that I got to be on top of things. I got to wear out fairways, greens.

I can't just play the bomb-and-gouge game. I'm not going to win in a distance contest or anything like that, so I got to work on making my strong points stronger.

And you know, one part that has let me down this year that hasn't really helped me through the transition of the swing is my putter. Putting is something that's always been a strong part, something I've always leaned on when I need to, something that's let me down.

So it's made everything a little bit almost compounded and made things worse.

Now, I'm not worried about Bryson hitting it that much longer. I know I can go and compete against any of those guys out here. But, yeah, it does set you back a little bit when -- if someone is longer off the tee, you start at a little bit of a disadvantage. There is a lot of golf to be played after you tee off.

Q. I just want to ask you about next week. Can you give me some good Shadow Creek stories? Just trying to tell people about the place a little bit.

RICKIE FOWLER: It's a special place. I've actually only played it twice, so it's been a while. One of the times I played through Doc Rivers and I remember that. He was awesome. He was just loved being out there playing golf. He's like, Man, I'm a big man fan. I was like -- I was kind of shocked in a way. I was like, I'm a fan as well.

It was just cool to see someone who is big in another sport and to -- obviously he's a lot taller and bigger than me and looking at me saying -- complimenting me about my game and stuff like that.

No, Shadow is a special place. Typically very private. Don't get a whole lot of rounds. I'm looking forward to being back. Like I said, I haven't been there for a while and only played it a couple times.

Q. Did you by any chance negligent work on your putting when you were working on your swing? Have you cut back on your work on the putting?

RICKIE FOWLER: I didn't. I'm not sure how to really like explain why it was struggling. I felt like I was hitting a lot of good putts and it was just more the fact that putts weren't going in.

You know, times where putts would tend to lip in, decided to lip out. So they're probably -- you could always say, yeah, I could have put more time in there, but I wasn't looking at it -- I was putting great at home, playing well. Get to tournaments and putts just wouldn't go in.

So definitely have spent more time over the last few months on it. But, no, wasn't necessarily something where I have enough time or didn't put the same amount of time I did before. I still go through the same drills, work in the mirror, check my setup, alignment and everything, and go through my normal checks before tournaments and before rounds.

Just kind of -- look at it as an off year.

THE MODERATOR: All right, Rickie, we appreciate the time ask best of luck this week.

RICKIE FOWLER: Thank you. Appreciate it.

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