

THE PLAYERS Championship

Friday, March 12, 2021

Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, USA

TPC Sawgrass

Phil Mickelson

Quick Quotes

Q. You talked about reevaluating and you were expanding on that a bit. Did this reaffirm some things that you needed reaffirming, so to speak?

PHIL MICKELSON: I think that I'm seeing progress, and I have felt for a while that the parts of my game have been much better than the sum. Mistakes here and there or just areas that are lacking some focus and so forth, just little areas I need to clean up, so I'm starting to see some progress. I'm going to play four of the next five weeks. I'm going to play here and next week and I'll probably play Valero, Texas, and the Masters, and I'll have a better idea if I can clean it up at these events. But the areas that I needed to work on I feel I've made a lot of progress in, and now I've just got to put it together and shoot a number. It's just about shooting a score.

Granted, I shot even par but I made a triple and three bogeys. You just can't do that out here, you got to clean up the mistakes, but at least I'm making the birdies to offset it again, and that's a good sign.

Q. Was making the cut significant?

PHIL MICKELSON: It's progress, yeah. I hadn't played well in a while, so it's progress. Made the cut in San Diego barely. I've got to start now shooting some numbers. I feel like I'm able to do it. Like I feel like I've made enough progress to where I can start scoring again, and, quite honestly, the first two rounds I feel should have been quite a bit lower. But I have a chance to improve on that this weekend and the coming weeks, as well. So I'm optimistic that I'm going to start playing to my expectations again.

Q. And when you made the triple, was that a difficult thing to overcome and the fact that you did overcome it, is that encouraging also?

PHIL MICKELSON: I think that's a sign of the stride, the mental stride, because in the past I'd think, oh, my gosh, there it is, and today I was like, let me challenge myself to get this round back to under par. Got it back to even. In fact, I got it back to even by the turn and had a chance on



the other side, the front nine, to go low.

I'm looking forward to tomorrow's round because again, I think it's going to get better. I think I'm starting to see progress. I'm driving the ball in play with ease. I'm feeling confident with the putter. Good, solid putts. Short game is not quite where it needs to be, and iron play is improving.

The parts are getting there.

Q. Is it more of a mental issue or a physical issue?

PHIL MICKELSON: I think it's more of a mental issue. I'm just not focusing right. I'm not focusing with the tunnel vision of seeing what I want to do and go do it and letting my body react and respond to it. There's nothing physically holding me back. I feel as good and as strong and as healthy as I've ever been, and I have no reason why I cannot play at the highest level again, but I haven't been as sharp mentally, and I'm going to work on that.

Q. Priority to win again on the PGA TOUR and even be the oldest winner, is that in your head at all?

PHIL MICKELSON: No, my motivation is more of an intrinsic motivation where I just enjoy it because I enjoy a challenge.

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