

THE PLAYERS Championship

Thursday, March 12, 2026

Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, USA

TPC Sawgrass

Maverick McNealy

Quick Quotes

Q. What do you think about Pete Dye golf courses?

MAVERICK McNEALY: I think every time I play a Pete Dye golf course, I think I like it more. I think it's one of those unique tests where it doesn't favor any particular type of game, and it's definitely not one that you stand up on the tee and try and swing as hard as you can.

The shot value is really important. You've got to hit every club in your bag, every shape imaginable.

I think that's what people love to see and love to see professionals do with their golf ball. There's a lot of the game that has to be shaped in the air, and I think Pete is a master at that.

Q. Did you like it at first or did it take some time to like Pete Dye?

MAVERICK McNEALY: The first time I played TPC Sawgrass I didn't really understand the hype and now this is my fifth or something players and it's probably top three courses on TOUR for me.

It grew on me every single time I play it. I notice different features, and I think every hole is just awesome.

Q. What did you do best today?

MAVERICK McNEALY: I think today I just mastered the variability of what the golf course threw at us really well. It was a mixed bag of everything, felt like four different seasons out there.

When that wind flipped I knew 16 was going to be kind of my last birdie opportunity, so I had 8-iron into that hole and I was glad to take advantage of that, and then hung on really well the last two.

I think Scott and I talked through that par save on 18 really well, and he said he was going to push me in the water if I tried to cut one onto the green, so I decided to punch out.



Q. How do you spend your time after a round like this where you're in a good spot? Do you try to take your mind off it or try to stay locked in?

MAVERICK McNEALY: It kind of depends. I've got a little bit more time before my afternoon tee time tomorrow, but it was a pretty long, taxing day.

Definitely want to hit a few putts. The greens slowed down a little bit, make sure I have my speed and my timing for the new green speeds that we'll see tomorrow.

But just really get some food in me, put my feet up. Probably have to relieve my wife of baby duties here for a little bit, and it'll be a great way to take my mind off golf.

Q. Are you still with the putter change?

MAVERICK McNEALY: No, last week I switched back to the Odyssey Toulon blade that I won at Sea Island with.

Q. What was the biggest condition change out there? Was it the wind flipping or was it actually on the ground?

MAVERICK McNEALY: So we went from very gusty and crispy on the first kind of 10, 11 holes and then we got a good amount of rain, greens softened up, had a little bit -- probably two or three holes of perfect scoring conditions where you're almost overplaying the wind because you know it's supposed to be from the west but the ball is not getting hit by anything.

Then felt that wind start gusting out of the north, temperature dropped, got dry. Like I said, 16 played easy. The par-5s other than 9 play really easy with the north wind. But you've just got to hang on the rest of the golf course.

Q. Are you in favor of match play for the TOUR Championship?

MAVERICK McNEALY: I'll be honest, we haven't discussed that yet. But I think the answer is I don't know, and it depends on what's going to make the best competition. At the end of the day, what you're trying to do is put the.



Best competition in front of fans and media and TV and everybody. The players want to be a part of the best competition. I think you've seen that with the different playing options, I would say, that professional golfers have. We all gravitate towards the best competition is.

That's our job is to figure out what that is, and if enough people think that match play is going to be the best form of way to decide our playoff champion, then that's what we're going to do. We haven't gotten that far in our discussions yet, but I think it could be a lot of fun.

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