

# U.S. Open Championship 2021

Thursday, June 17, 2021

San Diego, California, USA

Torrey Pines Golf Course

## Phil Mickelson

### Flash Interview



**Q. Phil Mickelson, 4-over. What was working well today and what do you want to work on tonight?**

PHIL MICKELSON: Gosh, it was a great setup and I had some chances to get the round a little bit better. Fought hard, made a lot of short putts to kind of keep myself in it and then I ended up bogeying 6 and 7. 2-over would have been a pretty good round and I ended up at 4, so I'm a little disappointed about that. I feel like I'm close and I'm playing -- I'm close to putting together a good round.

**Q. On your second shot on 13, I think you had to step away from the ball about three times, there were cell phones chirping all around you. Given where you ended up on the next shot how much of a factor was that in the round?**

PHIL MICKELSON: Yeah, it's part of the -- it's like part of professional golf. You have to learn to deal with it. I don't understand why you just can't turn that little button on the side into silent. I probably didn't deal with it internally as well as I could have or as well as I need to. It's part of playing the game out here at this level. Certainly I didn't do the best job of dealing with it.

**Q. Was it the sound of someone taking a photo? Was that what it was all three times?**

PHIL MICKELSON: Yeah, it's the video ding. They just kept going off.

Look, it did it the next three or four shots thereafter, too, so it's not like that's the first time, it's just that you had to ask three times. Again, it's part of the game. It's part of professional golf. You have to be able to let that go and not let it get to you and be able to kind of compose yourself and regather your thoughts and so forth, but they certainly didn't do me any favors, either.

**Q. Are you able to get home from there if you execute that shot?**

PHIL MICKELSON: No, I couldn't get there, but I was trying -- that lay-up is the worst lay-up. If you try to lay up

down there and miss it in the rough, you have nothing, and it's an awful lay-up to that elevated pin with the greens this firm, so I tried to get it in the bunkers. I'd rather be in the bunkers up there because I feel like I have a reasonable chance to get it within 15 feet.

**Q. Do you feel like your expectations have changed after the PGA win, and is that something you consciously deal with one way or the other?**

PHIL MICKELSON: I don't think my expectations have changed, but I feel like I have the confidence and ability to play well enough to get in contention, and so I guess my disappointment when I don't play to that level is a little bit greater.

**Q. A few rescues or fairway woods out of the rough today; what's the strategy with that? What are you trying to do with those rather than like a wedge or something? Was it distances or what are you trying to do?**

PHIL MICKELSON: It's a much better club to get it out of the rough because it glides rather than digs, and it just pops the ball up a lot quicker, even quicker than a wedge. It comes out just a lot better.

**Q. When you're doing that, you're not necessarily going for the green in that case --**

PHIL MICKELSON: Correct.

**Q. I'm thinking like 15 today.**

PHIL MICKELSON: I had no chance to get that close to the green. I was just trying to get it out. It was covered over the top. The rough is spotty. You can get some good breaks and you can get some bad ones, and I was just trying to get that one back to the fairway, which if I hit a wedge though and it goes up in the air, it's going to hit the tree. It wasn't the greatest either way.

**Q. Did you see that you hit the flagstick at 13 or did you have to be told?**

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PHIL MICKELSON: No, I saw it. I heard it. I hammered it. But it was going to be 40 feet -- it was going to be way past, too. It was coming in really hot. It's not like it was going to be close. So the fact that I made 6 there, that's all I was trying to do after taking a drop. I had to stay under the tree because of my point of entry.

I was very happy with 6.

**Q. How did you celebrate your birthday yesterday?**

PHIL MICKELSON: I played golf early and then hung out with Amy in the afternoon.

**Q. Who got the tickets for your parents this week, you or your brother?**

PHIL MICKELSON: I mean, does it -- I did. It's nice to see them out.

**Q. I know in the past you were not a fan of that way-back tee box. How do you feel about it now and not let it be a negative thought when you get up there?**

PHIL MICKELSON: No, it's fine. The way I want to play that hole is hit it in the fairway or first cut where I was at and get it as far up in those bunkers as I can. I feel like that gives me the best chance to score the lowest there. I didn't really factor in missing it way left. I didn't really think that that was going to happen.

**Q. Standing on 8 it looked like there may be some frustration. You hit some good shots on 7, the putt just didn't fall. Was that kind of frustration that you were feeling at that moment?**

PHIL MICKELSON: I was fighting hard throughout the round. I wasn't really getting anything going, and I fought really hard, and then to let two bogeys slide on 6 and 7 when I really shouldn't have, like they weren't that hard of pars -- you probably saw the disappointment there. Look, it's part of this tournament, and I was able to go without any doubles, I just didn't make enough birdies to offset it.

Like I said, I'm hitting enough fairways to give myself chances, and I'm optimistic that I'll put together a good round tomorrow.

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