

# U.S. Open Championship 2023

Saturday, June 17, 2023

Los Angeles, California, USA

The Los Angeles Country Club

## Rickie Fowler

### Flash Interview



#### Q. Even par-70. Kind of sum up the round a bit.

RICKIE FOWLER: A little bit of a grind out there today. Still hit some good shots, but with the firmer conditions and the pins being -- some kind of tucked front pins. When you miss the fairway, it makes it very hard to make par.

Had to accept some bogeys there in the round early on, but I feel like we did a good job of kind of staying present, moving forward, and like I said, still a lot of quality shots.

Through three rounds we're in the spot that we want to be in, and tomorrow is when the tournament starts.

#### Q. You sort of gestured at that last one that lipped out with your hands a little bit. What happened there? What did you see?

RICKIE FOWLER: Well, obviously you could see from the first putt, there's a lot of slope there. I'm not sure why it didn't move. It should have. I hit a good putt, so really can't go back on it, obviously.

Yeah, just a bummer. It would be nice for that one to go in. Really doesn't matter, having the lead, being one back, two back. You're going to have to play good golf tomorrow.

Bummer to have that one slip away, but tomorrow is a whole new day, and like I said, that's kind of when the tournament really starts.

#### Q. I imagine a lot of young golfers growing up dream of winning the sport's biggest prizes. What would winning this one mean to you?

RICKIE FOWLER: I mean, obviously it would be huge. It would be great. Especially being here in Southern California, having a lot of people, family and friends that are out here this week.

We have a chance tomorrow. I mentioned out there after going through the last few years, I'm not scared to fail. I've dealt with that. We're just going to go have fun, continue to try to execute, leave it all out there, see where we stand on

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#### Q. About the canteen that you carry, is there a special meaning to that or any of the stickers on it, and how long have you been carrying that around?

RICKIE FOWLER: I started carrying it at the beginning of this year. I drink more if I'm carrying it, and it's also heavy when it's full, so I don't want to necessarily throw that on Rick, my caddie, to tote that thing around.

I have a few different stickers on there, friends of friends or connections in one way. The real reason is I drink more water and electrolytes when I carry it.

#### Q. What's your favorite sticker on it?

RICKIE FOWLER: There's a little lightbulb logo, it's kind of a cool logo for kind of a cool brewery in St. Louis called Side Project.

#### Q. As a guy who struggled with confidence not that long ago, what has been the self-talk as you've gone through each day here, and how much have you worked on that, having to work on your attitude? You've always seemed so calm in watching you.

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, I think the big thing is the mind can wander and you can kind of do whatever between shots. It's nearly impossible to go out there and be dead focused for four to five hours.

I think the big thing for me is kind of just zeroing in, narrowing things down and trying to get very precise and knowing exactly what I want to do when I'm about to hit a shot.

I think I've done a lot better with my process leading up to shots and then not letting -- understanding there are negative thoughts or that there is trouble for missed shots out there, and just accepting I may not hit it perfect, but this is where I'm going to try and hit it and this is what I'm focusing on.

#### Q. How did your nerves feel today, and how does the

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**stress of being in the lead at a major championship compare to a normal tournament round?**

RICKIE FOWLER: I would say this week, this is the best I've felt all year and definitely in a long time. We all feel nerves at times, depending on certain shots or circumstances, but I mentioned it yesterday and then still stand by it.

This is the best I've felt, let alone in a normal tournament but especially a major, and I would say really ever in my career.

**Q. You and Rory obviously go way, way back. Over the years, has he been someone who you have found could maybe relate to certain things, the spotlight, all the fame, the expectations and all that? Have you guys had a synergy with a lot of that?**

RICKIE FOWLER: I would say a little bit. I would say Rory has got me beat in most of the areas for the most part. He's had a lot of success and he's been fun to watch, and it's been fun to be very similar in age. He turned pro a little bit earlier than I did, but we have fun.

I feel like it's been more him pushing me than me pushing him type of thing, with him having more wins and actually has majors versus me.

But to me, I always enjoy having buddies that we can go toe to toe with, whether it's here at a major or back home playing at Grove or wherever it may be.

And we just continue to push each other. I think that's how I've always gotten the best out of myself and also the people around me.

**Q. You mentioned you're not scared to fail. Was that the case early in your career even when you were playing your best golf, and why now do you not have that fear?**

RICKIE FOWLER: I would say a big part of it is just what I dealt with the last few years. I had never necessarily dealt with that big of a low for that long of a time.

I wouldn't say I was necessarily scared to fail, but having gone through what I've been through the last few years, I've seen all sides of it, have a better understanding of what I get to do and everyone around me.

So yeah, we'll just go leave it all out there, and I'm not scared to be wherever we're at.

**Q. Your swing is so rhythmic. Is there ever any music**

**in your head while you're walking the golf course over the course of four or five hours?**

RICKIE FOWLER: Sometimes, and sometimes I think I'll randomly have something that pops into my head. I would say rhythm is something I try to focus on a little bit. Sometimes my tendency is to get a little quick. I want to make sure that there's a good tempo to it.

But no, maybe I'll try and find a song for tomorrow and have that playing so I can keep my tempo on point.

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