

2015 US Open Championship

Thursday, June 18

Quick Quotes

Phil Mickelson

PHIL MICKELSON

PHIL MICKELSON: I'm very pleased with the way the round went. I hit a lot of good shots today. I shot under par the first day of the U.S. Open. The first round was the round I was going to be most nervous at, getting started. You don't want to have to fight to come back all the time. You want to get off to a solid start around par. And I got off to a good start and shot 1-under. Made a couple of bogeys coming in. The one on 14 was a good bogey, I'll gladly take that. Missed a couple of birdie opportunities on 16, 17 and 18, but really pleased to be under par after the first round.

Q. (Inaudible.)

PHIL MICKELSON: I thought it played terrific. I thought it played as we expected. I thought there was nothing hokey or crazy with any pin positions or how it played. I thought it was difficult. I think the biggest challenge is that the green speeds are different from green to green. That's going to wreak havoc on our touch. And that's the only thing I could possibly think of that is not really positive, because I think it's been very well done.

Q. (Inaudible.)

PHIL MICKELSON: What I found is that they're not the most true surfaces downhill, because you can't hit it hard enough to hold the line. But uphill they seem to hold the line just fine. I might have to factor that in in how I play some shots now, because I think the percentage of made putts uphill from 3 to 9 feet is going to be quite a bit higher than downhill.

Q. (Inaudible.)

PHIL MICKELSON: I don't know. I just think maybe the elevations. Like the greens down by the water were significantly faster. You get 15, the par-3, was quite a bit slower than 14, which was probably 3 feet difference on the Stimpmeter. I don't know why that is. You can kind of see it in the color and so forth and maybe make some adjustments, but that's the only -- that's a big challenge for us and it's the only thing that I could possibly say is not just wonderful.

Q. (Inaudible.)



PHIL MICKELSON: Oh, yeah, that's the best way to wreak havoc with us, change the speeds of the greens from green to green. No question.

Q. That first putt on 10, where you were trying to go way out right. Are there different angles you can take on that and how did you size that up?

PHIL MICKELSON: Well, I couldn't go left, because it would have been way too fast. I couldn't go at it and get close. And that was a pin that I had not spent time on, and I didn't know how high up the ridge I needed to go, so I was guessing at the time because I hadn't hit that putt from back there. I knew that I needed to be long, because short was going to roll quite a bit down the fairway if I didn't get it past the pin. I thought I hit a pretty good shot, but I hit it in a spot that wasn't good. That's my own fault for having not known that and practiced that putt to that pin.

Q. Have you ever had a putt like that at a U.S. Open where you were aiming 20 feet from the pin?

PHIL MICKELSON: Certainly in the British Opens we have, yeah. And I think we have to equate this week to that from past championships.

Q. At 12, laying back there, will that be a plan all week?

PHIL MICKELSON: I felt like the left pins were going to be difficult for me to get driver up on the top section. I was going to be on the low section with a very difficult putt. I felt I could get a wedge every bit as close as I could a putt from the front of the green. And I also felt at 3-under I don't want to have one hole ruin my round. If I hit one bad drive and go in the junk and I make a 5 or a 6, it just hurts the round. I didn't want one hole to come up and bite me. I hit the wedge too hard or not hard enough, depending on how you look at it. I flew it too far past the hole.

Q. (Inaudible.)

PHIL MICKELSON: No, no, just tried to keep it with good shots.

Q. How have the elevation changes affected you, compared to Augusta?

PHIL MICKELSON: I think it is one of the more difficult holes to walk, but that's part of the test, that's part of the challenge of playing well here and part of the overall test of the players.

Q. 6-under, is it surprising, or do you think we might see lower scores out there today?

PHIL MICKELSON: Out of the 156 guys, best players in the world, somebody is going to play their best and shoot under par. But over four days it's difficult to do that.

Q. (Inaudible.)

PHIL MICKELSON: Or that he's just good, you know (laughter).

Q. Were you adjusted after playing 18 holes at all?

PHIL MICKELSON: I'll look at it a little bit differently on some approaches and some short shots, instead of using the slope like I did on 18, I was trying to use the slope just left of the hole to get it down, and I left myself with a putt that was so fast and I couldn't hit it to keep it on line. Had I played to the right and maybe been 10 or 15 feet I would have had a better chance of making it, that's something I've got to start looking at.

Q. How do you feel about your driving, you had the three fairway bunkers on the back, where is it at?

PHIL MICKELSON: I'm not concerned with it, I feel like I've been driving the ball pretty well. I don't feel like that's an issue, no.

Q. The crowd reactions, is it U.S. Open-like?

PHIL MICKELSON: It is different than a normal Open in that it's so spacious that we don't have the same feel, because the people aren't close like they normally are. They're so far removed that it has a more spacious feel. But there's been a lot of support out here from this community, a lot of people out here, it's cool to see.

Q. A couple of holes with no spectators, is that a little odd?

PHIL MICKELSON: Yes, it is.

Q. (Inaudible.)

PHIL MICKELSON: Well, like No. 8 I know doesn't have people. See, I thought that was -- it's early in the round, it's on the front nine, you don't notice it, but at Merion on No. 16 it was very awkward to play the 70th hole of the championship and not have a soul around the green, that was really weird.

Q. Is that the kin of thing that tells you this really is in your wheelhouse, that you can do very well here this week?

PHIL MICKELSON: That's not necessarily the only thing that made me feel that way, no, there's a number of things. But I think that the shot, like the shot I hit on 1 for a par, where I hit it up there from down that low area up to a foot, that's the type of -- that's the shot that

I feel like will allow me to do well here.

Q. Can you expand on that putt on 14, just to kind of keep --

PHIL MICKELSON: Yeah, that was a big one. It was a 15-footer for bogey. You're going to make bogeys, everyone is going to make bogeys, it's the doubles you want to try to avoid. To make that one and not make any doubles, that was a big one for me.

Q. You have galleries that follow you around the course some places, that's hard to do that here. Is it different to not have that?

PHIL MICKELSON: Yes, it's weird. Amy wants to come out and follow and she simply can't, she just can't come out and first of all see. And I'll tell you, the golf spectators are probably the most dedicated fan, when you think about it. Any other sport you buy a ticket, you sit in a seat and you watch a hundred percent of the action. In golf you buy a ticket, you've got to walk miles in rough territory and you see but a fraction of the event. So I give a lot of credit to the people who are out here.

Q. Did you have to contend with the noise of the train at all on 16 and is that a factor, possibly?

PHIL MICKELSON: It's not, no. There was a train going by as we were playing. It was slow, it was quiet, it was not a problem.

Q. Are you going to wear soft spikes, where we normally see you wearing traditional spikes?

PHIL MICKELSON: I haven't worn traditional spikes since '07. If you want to go back eight years, yeah (laughter).