

U.S. Open Championship 2017

Saturday, June 17, 2017

Rickie Fowler

Flash Interview



Q. Talk about the back nine, Rickie, and putting yourself in great position. Talk about the round and your position going into tomorrow.

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, it was a great day. Really got out of position on a couple holes, 8 and 13. Other than that, I felt like we managed our way around well. Hit a lot of good shots. Felt like I had a good feel for the speed of the greens today, hit a lot of good lag putts.

Then to actually make a good up-and-down for the bogey on 13 to kind of get myself going a little bit, knowing that we had some scoring opportunities in front of us, and to take advantage of 14, 15, 16, that was big.

Then to find a way to just make some good pars on the last two, we're definitely in good position for tomorrow.

Q. To see the scores all throughout, you see Justin Thomas put a 63 up there and an 11. Does that factor into what you're trying to do as you're working the back nine at that point?

RICKIE FOWLER: Not necessarily. I mean, I know going into the day with the rain we had last night and seeing that the course was going to play probably similar to what we saw Thursday morning when I went out, and if you played well and executed, that birdies were out there.

9's pretty darn good. Wasn't exactly seeing that, but I'm looking forward to hearing about that when I get back to the house since J.T. and I are staying together.

But that was cool to see. Definitely inspiring in a way to see him get off to a good start and kind of motivating to want to get myself to go out and play well. And to see him get the eagle at the last, pretty cool, a special round for him.

Q. How do you think (inaudible)?

RICKIE FOWLER: Tonight, we'll have a good time. We've been eating well. I think we'll be able to sit back, relax.

Q. (Inaudible)?

RICKIE FOWLER: No, not too many elbows. We're separated by a floor. He's upstairs and I'm down in the basement area. So shouldn't get too physical.

Q. You've been a part of a lot of leaderboards, but

how unique is this one at a major to have so many guys that are in contention looking for their first major like this?

RICKIE FOWLER: It's going to be a really cool day for someone tomorrow. I'm looking forward to my shot at it, and I know it's going to be -- it's not going to be an easy day, for sure. I've been there a handful of times and had some good finishes. But I'm looking forward to getting the job done.

But looking and seeing the leaderboard, a lot of young guys, lot of great players. Someone has a very good chance of ending up with their first major tomorrow.

Q. Do you think it's going to take another 7-under performance, 9-under performance like we saw from Justin today?

RICKIE FOWLER: I'll take it and sit in the clubhouse and see where that puts me. We don't know. Hopefully we don't get any water on the course. See it dry a little bit.

I haven't looked and seen what potential the wind is tomorrow, but it would be nice to see the course dry out a little bit and just make it to where it's going to take a quality round of golf. But you never know. I mean, you've seen five, six, seven, nine under out there. But you've got to golf your ball around here still.

Q. Given the leaderboard, what you just talked about, does it almost thrill you up a little bit to be two back instead of being the guy with the bullseye on his back? You won THE PLAYERS like that, you won Quail Hollow that way. Does it sort of free you up in a weird sort of way?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, I've enjoyed both sides of it. I've had an opportunity to get a couple wins from being out in front. I haven't had that as a pro up until just the last couple years. My wins have been from behind. Then to see what it was like to be out front and play with a couple-shot lead, it's sometimes nice being out front because you can afford to make a mistake.

If you're playing from behind, two, three back, or even more, you feel like you can't make a mistake, just because you don't want to lose ground. You don't want to give up anymore shots.

So there are pros and cons to both sides. But I'll take



exactly where I'm at. This was the goal going into the week to put ourselves in position to be in contention on Sunday. Whether that was two back, two up front or tied for the lead. Let's go.

Q. From recent majors when you've been in contention, are you able to build a game plan for tomorrow?

RICKIE FOWLER: The big thing is going to be just driving it well tomorrow. I needed to hit a lot of fairways, and if I do that, I'm going to play well.

But the big thing is just staying within myself. It's kind of -- all of it sounds kind of cliché. Just walking a little slower, going through the process. Making sure I just don't get ahead of myself. I mean, it's literally one shot at a time trying to pick this golf course apart, just like I did Thursday morning out here.

Q. Do you expect this to play like a U.S. Open course tomorrow, with the wind and dry out? Would you rather have those conditions?

RICKIE FOWLER: No, I would. I would definitely like to see it dry out a little bit. In a way make it a little bit -- make the lines a little tighter just as far as off the tee and into some greens where you have to hit your spots just a little bit more. It makes it to where you have to be just a little bit more precise. But we'll take what we can get.

Q. Yesterday was a grind. Today it seemed with your three birdies that got you going, got you stabilized. Was that a big factor in closing up the round?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, I had a couple bogeys, but I was able to rebound from those and definitely making the three in a row on the back nine was what put me in a good position for tomorrow.

I'm happy. I'm happy about the day.