

**ROUND 1 INTERVIEW****March 9, 2018****TOM PERNICE, JR. (-7)**

Q. Are you a little under the weather?

TOM PERNICE, JR.: Yeah, caught a little bit of a bug on Saturday night over in Tucson, feverish, achy stuff. I kind of got through it there a little bit, played Sunday over there. I broke the fever somehow that night, but then Tuesday and Wednesday and Monday of this week, my fever got up to 104.8. I've been taking it easy this week and was able to come out and play the pro-am yesterday afternoon. I'm on the way to recovery, but just trying to rest up and try to recover. There's several of us who have the flu bug.

Q. Is this your low round in this event?

TOM PERNICE, JR.: I have no idea. Probably. I don't know. It's a good one, so it probably is. I don't know, to be honest with you.

Q. This isn't one of the events that you in the last several years have played, have really contended in. Is there any explanation for that, or is it a course you like?

TOM PERNICE, JR.: I do enjoy the course. I think the course is in the best condition it's been in in quite some time. I thought the condition of the golf course was pretty inferior the last two or three times we played it. They did hire a new superintendent here and obviously he's doing a heck of a job because it's remarkably better than it had been in the past. Hats off to him and the job that he's done already in the short period.

Q. What was the key to your round?

TOM PERNICE, JR.: I made a nice -- you know, I made a nice up-and-down there on No. 8, the long par 3, hit a good bunker shot. And then 9 hit a good iron in there, thought it was close, misclubbed, hit one over the green and was able to get that up and down. So two nice saves there at the end to kind of save the day.

You know, I played the par 5s well. That always helps when you take advantage of those opportunities. So I think there's three par 5s, I birdied all three of them, so that helped. Hit some good wedge shots, made some birdies.

Q. Do you remember what you hit into 3?

TOM PERNICE, JR.: I hit 5-iron. Hit it on the front part of the green and two-putt.

Q. Pretty much have to go after the first four holes here, don't you? I mean, you

didn't play them in that order, but --

TOM PERNICE, JR.: Well, I mean, the opportunities are there. They're downwind, sometimes that's -- like 10 and 11, I mean 11, you can't hardly get it close playing downwind, and 10 was difficult right on the front. So they appear easy when you're hitting 70-, 80-yard wedges and stuff, but sometimes it's hard to get it close even when you do hit a good shot. Obviously things can change if we get some rain and the course softens up. It's great to get off to a good start, for sure.

Q. Were you happy with your round, no bogeys today?

TOM PERNICE, JR.: Yeah, that's always a key. Really wasn't in any danger of making any bogeys until really 8 and 9. I hit a beautiful bunker shot on 8 and holed about a six-footer. And then just over the back of the green there at No. 9, had a tough little chip and chipped it to about five feet and made it.

Q. It looked like you really worked that chip shot on 9, looked like you could have played it any number of ways?

TOM PERNICE, JR.: Yeah, with a severe downhill lie I didn't feel like I could land it on the green and get it close, so I just tried to bump it in the fringe and it came out okay.

Q. What does it mean to you to play a southern California event?

TOM PERNICE, JR.: Well, I think it's great. It's nice to be able to play close to home, friends and stuff can come and watch. Hard not to beat Newport Beach in general. You know, they've done a marvelous job here. Purser's done a great job at tournament director, and Toshiba's been phenomenal, 20-some years as the title sponsor and we're going to hate to see them go. But I think they'll still be involved at some point. It's all about raising some money for the Hoag Hospital, and what they do for people here is amazing. So it's nice to have an event here that does so much for the community as well.