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Phil Mickelson Champions debut looks promising

By Jess Smith

The Phil Mickelson Champions debut looks promising if he continues on his wave of good game performance. You can say that his tour on Tuesday at Ozarks National wasn't the most skillful performance, but overall Mickelson came out on top. Everything seems to be turning out well for the lefty player as he slowly makes his way to more wins.

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From what would have seemed to have a potentially disastrous predicament, he manages to pull off an excellent birdie and then goes along to save a bogey, which might have caused damage to his card. He ultimately backs up his great opening round at Charles Schwab series with a seven-under-par 64. Mickelson

Meanwhile, Tim Petrovic ends up bogeying the 18th hole using a short iron from the fairway, the gold star ultimately leads with four shots. On the onset of the final round, he end up placing that margin in dominating with 19 birdies against two bogeys.

Mickelson's shot happens to be the best score in a Champions debut, not to mention that his 36-hole total of 125 is second after Bruce Fleisher's 124 during the 2002 RJR Championship. However, it can be said that Mickelson has arguably been better. He had a 17 under at par-71 at Ozarks National, while on the other hand; Fleisher had a 16 under on par-70 when he was featured at Tanglewood Park in North Carolina.

Bruce Fleisher still holding onto Champions record

There still is a record that Fleisher owns the tour's 54-hole record of 191, but this is a score Mickelson can match up to with a closing 66. Mickelson, who is now 50, had his first championship about 30 years ago when he was still an amateur during the 1991 Northern Telecom Ope.

"I didn't drive it the way I've been driving it," Mickelson complains during the round. "I hung on to a few drives, [and] haven't been doing that. I'm going to try to fix that on the range, and I think i should be a bit more aggressive with my driver and make more birdies."

Derek Uyeda gets Mickelson's approval

The golf star gave credit to San Diego putting guru, Derek Uyeda, who also works with world No. 10 Xander Schauffele for his recent improvements. "I have been getting the feedback [that] I have expected, the strokes, and the launch of the ball, with all other little details," Mickelson comments.

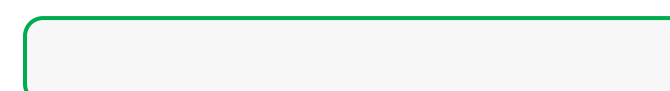
In the long run, it is not like one will think that other Champions players will let Mickelson waltz away. Petrovic, 54 years old, ties for second alongside Rod Pampling. They are both hungry for their own first Champions victory and both hold an excellent score record of 64-65. There is also Rocco Mediate, 57, who has won four Champions titles and is at 12 under (64-66).

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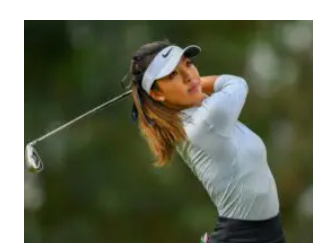
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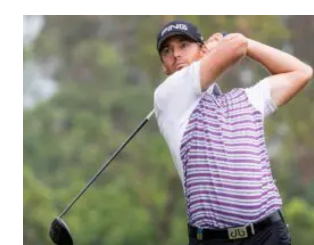
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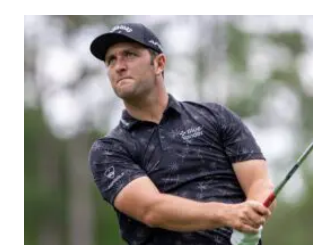
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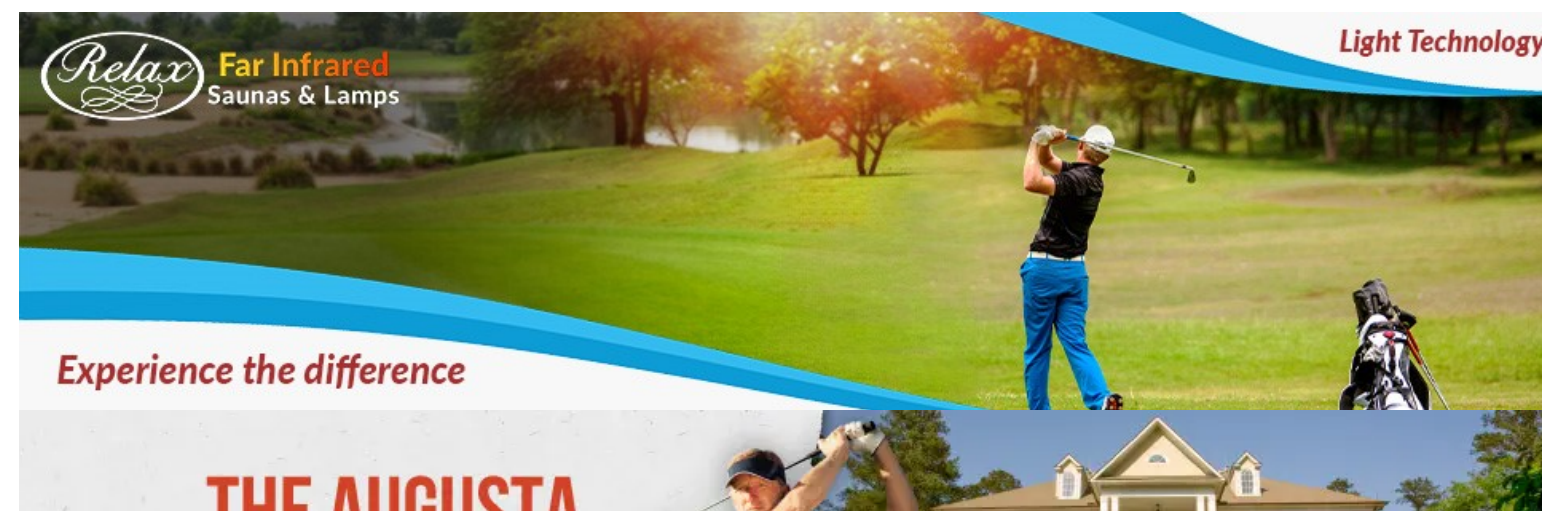
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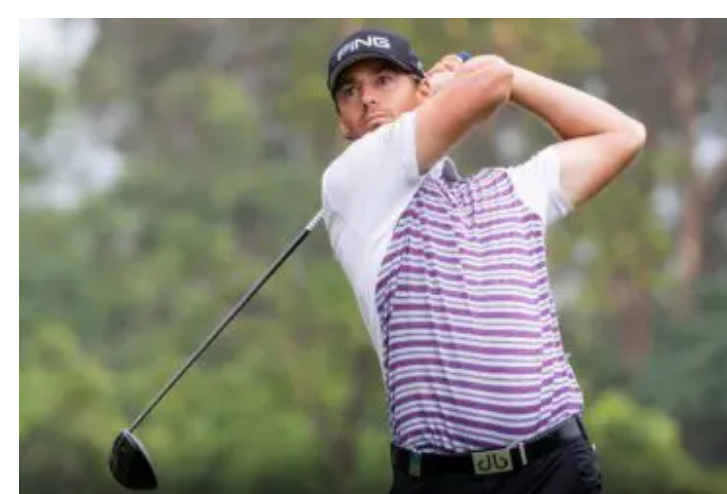
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