

PHIL MICKELSON TALKS ABOUT HIS WIFE AND CHANCES AT THE US OPEN:

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One of the biggest plot lines heading into the first round of this year's US Open is Phil Mickelson. Since the news broke that his wife, Amy was diagnosed with breast cancer, its consumed the national and international airwaves. It remains to be seen how well he will play in what many consider to be the hardest test of the playing season. Lefty acknowledged he is hoping to get some help this week. "The fact that my normal support system, Amy and the kids and so forth, aren't going to make the trip this week; I'm kind of hoping to have that or feel the support to kind of help me through the week," Mickelson said referencing the crowd.

While his personal world has been turned upside down, he remains confident that his game is ready to go when he makes his opening swing at Bethpage Black.

"I've actually been hitting the ball better than I have in a long time. And possibly ever," Mickelson said. "I know it doesn't seem like it after my score at Memphis. But I'm really excited about how things have come along, ball-striking wise."

Despite having bigger priorities in his life, Callaway Golf's most recognizable endorser remarked that his mind would come back to his game, while he was waiting to learn more about his wife's health. "When Amy is going through tests and I'm sitting in a hospital for 10 hours, I was thinking about a lot of things. But I would take a break and think about my golf swing. I would talk to Butch (Harmon)," Mickelson said. "Even though we didn't hit any balls, I actually got my swing to where we wanted it to be able to hit little cut shots, control my misses, and I'm very optimistic about my ball-striking this week," he continued. "I think the key for me will be on the greens. I putted these greens very well in '02, and if I have a good putting week, I expect to be in contention on Sunday."

Under normal circumstances, players don't require any additional motivation when pursuing the national championship in golf. However, the two time Masters Champ did said he arrived at the venue with a few more instructions from home. "She's (Amy) left me a number of little notes, texts, cards, hints, that she would like to have a silver trophy in her hospital room.," he said. "So I'm going to try to accommodate that."