

U.S. Open Championship 2020

Thursday, September 17, 2020

Mamaroneck, New York, USA

Winged Foot Golf Club

Matthew Wolff

Flash Interview



Q. Matthew Wolff, 4-under 66. Matthew, can you walk us through your round a little bit.

MATTHEW WOLFF: It started off pretty strong. I've been working a lot on my putting, which has probably been the weakest part of my game lately.

Started off, got a little unlucky with the break, with the second shot staying up on top on 1, and then made a good 20-footer for par. So that kind of jump started the day. Kept a level head out there. I had a really good group with Viktor and Rickie, even Skov, Nick, my caddie, and Shay, Viktor's caddie, were all just having a good time. I think that's what kept me the most calm out there to not really make this tournament even bigger than it needs to be.

Q. You mentioned not making this tournament any bigger than it needs to be. Are you a golf history guy? Have you read about Winged Foot? It's meant to be this big, really hard golf course, but I think it's just a golf course at the end of the day.

MATTHEW WOLFF: Yeah, I'm not huge on the history part. I do play golf, but there are a lot of things that I'm pretty unaware of until people tell me about them, especially with the history of the game. I think it's because I'm so young and I played so many sports growing up that I didn't follow golf as closely.

Being around here, the atmosphere around it, the clubhouse, all the pictures and the trophies and everything like that, it does kind of come at you all at once. I'd be lying if I told you I didn't think about it at all. I think, when you're out there, you have one goal in mind, and that's to hit every shot as well as you can and play the best.

At the end of the day, it is one of the hardest golf courses I've ever played. So it is what it is. You have to roll with the punches. I just hit the ball really well today, and my putting cooperated, which was pretty nice.

Q. Did you watch the coverage this morning? Did you know the greens were going to be soft? How do you

judge that?

MATTHEW WOLFF: So there was a couple shots that I saw this morning, but I really didn't watch the coverage. I don't really like to look at the leaderboard before I play, just because I feel like, giving yourself expectations or doing anything like that before the round only makes it harder for you to play well.

If you expect the scores to be high and they're as low as -- they're not low, but they're still lower than you thought they would be, you go out there and make a couple bogeys, and you're like, oh, shoot, this course isn't playing as hard as I thought.

Or if you just give your all to every single shot and make sure to not really get ahead of yourself or look too much into the scores, I feel like it's a lot easier to score better.

Q. How confident -- how good is the game right now? George is hyping you up, but George is always hyping everybody up. It can be hard to tell. Your results recently have been very strong.

MATTHEW WOLFF: Yeah, George, he's great. It was nice to have him out here for the first couple days. My game's been really good. I feel like he came out here, and we kind of just -- it's more off the course for me. George is like a 12-year-old inside of a 50-year-old body.

Yeah, I know, he looks like 80, but it's fine. Yeah, just getting off the course with him -- even on the course. When I'm out there, it's just a lot easier to keep calm. He brings such a good vibe out there and lets me relax, and like I said, make this tournament not as important as it needs to be, even though it is the U.S. Open.

Q. Matthew, you mentioned that you were able to attack certain hole locations. Is that what propelled you on that three-birdie run on the back? Or were there some other things that happened in that run from 11 to 14?

MATTHEW WOLFF: I think putting the ball on the fairway is the most important part. Obviously, U.S. Open, fairways are narrow. Rough is extremely thick. I thought they did a



really good job of graduating the rough into, like, if you barely missed the fairway and you were in the rough, you could still advance it pretty good, but if you missed it by quite a bit, that's when you were going to get some really bad lies.

I think the biggest thing on the three-hole stretch was just putting the ball in the fairway on I think -- was it 11? I hit a nice iron into the fairway and hit a nice shot close because the greens were receptive.

12, I just absolutely ripped a drive. It sounded different when it came off. I looked at my caddie as soon as I hit it, and I was like, whew, that was pretty nice. Then the hybrid I hit -- both of those shots back to back were probably some of the best of the day. Then I hit a really nice 5 iron on the next hole to about four feet. Just kind of seemed like things were clicking at that point. Like I said, I had a lot of fun out there and kept it calm.

Q. I know it's your first U.S. Open. What tournament or what group of tournaments may have prepared you for this moment? Because everyone it says, when you play in an Open, whether you have spectators or not, it's different.

MATTHEW WOLFF: It is different. I've never played a U.S. Open or even a Major with spectators. I don't know how different it would be, but I think Olympia Fields was a really good test for the U.S. Open at the BMW Championship just because of how firm everything was, and the rough was really long.

Going out there and knowing that, if you shoot under par, you're very happy with your game. So there's a couple courses that I've played that are like that, but most recently, probably Olympia Fields got me prepared the best for this.

Q. After seeing Collin win a major, does that give you confidence you can get it done this week?

MATTHEW WOLFF: Yeah, I think a lot of people asked me about that and seeing all these young guys coming out here and having so much success. I answer it the same way every time is we feed off each other. Seeing Collin coming out here, winning a Major is unbelievable. But I came out here, won in my third start as a pro, and then Collin followed it up the week after. Viktor right after that.

Seeing all these young guys having success on the tour gives each and every one of us the most confidence in our games just because of we can see that -- I know we can compete with each other, and seeing people win Majors in tournaments, you kind of feel like you can do the same

thing as them.

It's still an unbelievable thing that Collin did win the PGA. I'm really happy for him, but it gives me the confidence to know I can come out here and do the same thing.

Q. How do the greens compare to the ones you played in your career?

MATTHEW WOLFF: I was telling my caddie, Nick. Karsten Creek at Oklahoma State, the home course there, is probably the slopiest greens I've ever played, just from a standpoint of all around the greens are just extremely slow. There's false fronts. There's kind of everything out there.

I think here it's a little different. At Karsten, it's more of a huge gradual slope throughout the whole green, and here there's more knobs and stuff that you could play it off of, but I would say these are probably the slopiest greens that I've ever played. I wouldn't be surprised if there were some putts that, not only people can't stop, but you're going to use backstops to bring the ball back to a hole even on a putt.

It's the U.S. Open. You expect a challenge, and you're excited for it.

Q. How did your grouping today help you?

MATTHEW WOLFF: Yeah, it just kept me calm. I think having Viktor and Rickie out there was super nice. Even my caddie Nick is -- we're really good friends. I've known him for a really long time. He keeps me really calm. I was joking around with Shay and Skov, who are both Viktor and Rickie's caddies. It was just a good time out there. We had a lot of fun and probably going to do the same thing tomorrow.

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