

U.S. Olympic Team Trials - Swimming

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Lucas Oil Stadium

Matt Fallon

Media Conference



U.S. OLYMPIC TEAM TRIALS



Q. I was wondering if you could kind of walk us through -- we saw some of it in the mix zone, but your reunion with the Penn teammates that are here and with Mike once you saw him on the pool deck. Have you seen him yet, and what's that been like?

MATT FALLON: I've seen Mike. I've never seen him cry before, so that's a first. Yeah, it's just been great seeing the reactions of my teammates and coaches. I'm just happy to have them here along for the ride.

Q. Matt, you qualified for Paris, and then the race afterward, your old club teammate from GSCY, Jack Alexy, also qualified for Paris. Can you talk about what that means to go to Paris alongside him?

MATT FALLON: It means the world. I've been training with him ever since I was really young. He's been right alongside me for a lot of this.

It's just really cool seeing the people I grew up with qualify to make the team, and I'll be swimming alongside them at the highest level. So it's kind of unreal.

Q. With your 200, you obviously have a different strategy than pretty much everyone in the pool. Going, based on your reaction from semifinals, it seemed like you were sort of surprised by your time. How did that maybe inform how you approached the race tonight in terms of strategy and what you're capable of?

MATT FALLON: I felt really good about that race, so I just wanted to do mainly the same thing that I did. I was strong but still kind of keeping it a little gentle on the first 100, don't want to go out too fast. Then on the back half, just really doing more of the same stuff, but really still trying to keep it together even though I've gone out pretty fast.

I've done a lot of work this year on kind of developing my strength while still being able to keep the back half along with it. So my race strategy just didn't really change. I just

really tried to hammer it home that last 50, and I feel like I really succeeded there. I didn't spin out or do anything like that. I was able to maintain that speed as my stroke rate increased.

Q. 2:06, American record, that's obviously been there for eight years. You've been kind of looking at it as you've made your way up. Did you think you were capable of that? Was part of the thought process behind not pushing the third 50 as much to make sure you had that last 50 so you could get that record?

MATT FALLON: Honestly, if I'm being completely honest, not pushing the third 50 was kind of a race time decision based on how I felt the first 100, and it obviously paid off.

Definitely I've been eyeing that record for a while. I knew that I definitely had the capability to do it. It's just this year I took a ton of time out doing a lot of long course, really making sure I can kind of put my best foot forward, doing a lot of race prep.

I know -- I've had it in me this entire time. I just wanted to get out and do it on the biggest stage.

Q. Congrats on the No. 1 time in the world this year. Wonderful performance. The U.S. hasn't won this event since 1992. Is that something that is now in your sights?

MATT FALLON: I don't really know what other swimmers in the world have in the tank going into the Olympics, but definitely going to put my best foot forward, and I'm definitely going to put in a lot more work on this level, and I'll see what I can do in Paris.

Q. Kind of going with that question, you told us that 2:06 wasn't even going to medal at Paris when we spoke a while ago. Do you still hold true to that, and if so, what gets you a little bit faster?

MATT FALLON: That's definitely possible, but the main thing is how does everyone -- how do the top eight people feel on race day? I think that's definitely the main component.

I don't really -- because I don't know what some of the

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fastest swimmers in the world in this, some of the other fastest swimmers in the world really kind of have in the tank for the Olympics. I kind of said that earlier. But I have a feeling some of them haven't really put their cards out yet, but we'll see what happens.

Q. Josh talked a little bit about how long you guys have been competing against each other. I wonder if you could speak to that relationship between you two. Does it feel like a younger generation coming up and now it's you guys' turn a little bit?

MATT FALLON: Him and I have been competing against each other before I could even remember. It's been a lot of back and forth. He's definitely been kind of right alongside me on the rankings. He's kind of pushed me further to greater heights than I could have ever thought, especially when we were younger.

Definitely it is our turn now. Having two young guys qualify in an event that's typically considered an old guys event, we're really seeing a changing of the guard here. Happy to have him alongside me at the Olympics.

Q. Do you think you learned a lot from your experience in 2021, three years ago, and did you apply any of that today?

MATT FALLON: Definitely, but I've definitely learned a lot more as well in the time since then. I'm learning something new every day about swimming and how to compose yourself, how not to get too nervous behind the blocks.

Really it's just a game of experience. The more you've done, the more you're able to control yourself because, if you really see yourself, I've been here before. I know how to have fun in this position, then if you just reapply that, you're going to have fun every time you swim.

In 2021 I was definitely really tight on that final day. I had given it everything I had in the semis. Today I was much more loose. It's definitely just a testament to all the work I've done the past three years.

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