

The American Express

Thursday, January 19, 2023

La Quinta, California, USA

PGA WEST Pete Dye Stadium Course

Matti Schmid

Quick Quotes

Q. What a round. 64. Bogey-free. You bombed it off the tee. 17 of 18 greens. Third in strokes gained approach. When is the last time you've been that much on point with the irons?

MATTI SCHMID: I played really well last week, just didn't get the breaks. This week was just a continuation. I hit it very solid and, yeah, that showed up.

Q. So you felt it coming?

MATTI SCHMID: Kinda.

Q. Tee shot on 17, speaking of iron shots. As soon as it left your club it was on a really aggressive line. Did you think it had a chance?

MATTI SCHMID: It wasn't that great number. I thought my 8-iron would end up like five, six meters short. But I kind of hit it really good and I was a bit pumped. So it was getting there. Just over 20 feet. I thought up the hill I could take that. I thought I could make an aggressive swing at it and that's much easier to do on a hole like that.

Q. You come to us via the Korn Ferry. That's a tour where you need to be comfortable going low, making birdies. These three courses you got to keep making birdies going low. Comfortable environment for you?

MATTI SCHMID: A hundred percent. I think that really suits me. I like making a lot of birdies. I like being aggressive. And yeah, we keep going.

Q. You have experienced a lot of weather conditions playing in Europe as well as here. But when it's calm like this, do you savor that? Do you prefer that? Do you like that?

MATTI SCHMID: I don't know. I think I appreciate every kind of challenge. I want to be good in every kind of weather. But obviously this is a bit easier. But you still have to hit the shots right.

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Q. When you come here to a tournament that you haven't played before and there's three golf courses that you have to learn and experience, how much of a challenge is that for you?

MATTI SCHMID: Yeah, it's quite a challenge. I came here early. The 4th of January I came to the West Coast to play a few of these courses and get used to the time zone. So that helped definitely a little bit.

But I would still say the courses are quite similar. So this week I think it's not too much of a challenge, but going forward it obviously is.

Q. This is always, the Stadium Course is always the one that provides the biggest challenge for most players here. It must feel good to get off to a start like that on this golf course first. Knowing that the other two give up a lot of birdies. Is that how you feel after today?

MATTI SCHMID: A hundred percent. I think the way I played today definitely gives me confidence going forward. Especially the way I putted. I putted my shorties very good and hit it good off the tee and hit some good iron shots.

Q. You said you played nicely last week, but you did miss the cut. If I look back through your season so far there's a few missed cuts and couple of finishes which aren't very high. What has changed in you to produce this round today?

MATTI SCHMID: I have a new coach since, yeah, kind of December. We did a lot of work over the break. Worked hard on my swing, my short game, my putting. I think everything starts to feel pretty good now and, yeah, just want to -- I have fun doing it and I have fun getting better.

Q. When you say a new coach who is it and what prompted the change?

MATTI SCHMID: His name is Marijan Mustac. He's from Germany. He worked with my buddy Max Kieffer this year and I spent a lot of time with him in Europe and I got to know how he coaches and I kind of liked it a lot. So, yeah, I want to try it out and it's been pretty good so far.

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Q. I know your caddie Mike Waite. He's caddied for a lot of players and had a lot of success. You had your first event as an amateur at the Open Championship. But you stayed together since then. What do you like about Mike and what does he bring to your game?

MATTI SCHMID: Mike or Sponge, how everyone calls him, he's -- first of all, he's just a great guy. He's super calm, even in nervous situations. For me that helped me a lot starting out. When you're young, when you're new to everything that's great to have someone like that. I mean, if I don't hit it as good like he would never ever get nervous about anything. He just takes things the way they are and tries to make the best out of it. So his character is a really good, a really, really good attribute to everything. He's obviously super knowledgeable and knows what to do.

Q. One more thing. This is only your 13th event on TOUR. You're a rookie. But take me back to the Barbasol tournament in Kentucky. You had a top 10 there. I know you went to school nearby. How much confidence did that give you at that event to continue to come over here and play.

MATTI SCHMID: I mean, super much confidence. Every time you show up and do something good you know you can do it, right? Barbasol, I mean it's a grass I'm very familiar with. So is this week actually the greens are. I like putting on these a bit more so far than on Bermuda. Which is just normal for a German guy I would say. But, yeah, that's how it is.

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