

Waste Management Phoenix Open

Thursday, February 4, 2021
Scottsdale, Arizona, USA
TPC Scottsdale



Matthew NeSmith

Quick Quotes

Q. Talk about today, what a spectacular day for you, bogey-free, six birdies and an eagle. Doesn't get much better on this golf course, does it?

MATTHEW NeSMITH: No, it was really good. Drove it really good, hit the irons good, putted really well, hit some great short game shots, kind of everything kind of lined up really nicely. Just made it pretty easy on myself. Didn't really get in trouble very much. Hit a lot of fairways, did everything you're kind of supposed to do.

Q. The shot behind the 6th green, you made that look awful easy. You threw that in there for birdie. That was tough. Tell us about that.

MATTHEW NeSMITH: Actually I've been struggling with my short game a little bit for a while now, and I got a chipping lesson, short game lesson from a guy named James Oh on Monday, so I've really been trying to work on that the last few days, and that shot would have been extremely tough for me the last few weeks and months with kind of where my head was at and kind of the skill level that I was at. And with the lie I had and everything, I just kind of trusted what we were trying to work on. That was a really big confidence booster, just proved that what we worked on on Monday was working out.

Q. You made it look easy. You hit 16 of 18 greens and of course the one you missed you chipped in for birdie. Talk about your iron play. It was really on target today.

MATTHEW NeSMITH: Yeah, I lean on my iron play a lot. It's what I do best. If I drive it good, I'm usually going to hit my irons pretty well. That's just kind of how I've always been. I'm just trying to keep it in play, keep it in the short grass, give my irons a chance to speak for themselves, and that's usually how I play my best golf.

Q. The fans were out today; did that make a difference?

MATTHEW NeSMITH: Yeah, it was fun. I probably made the quietest almost hole-in-one ever on 16. I got about six claps there and hit it to six inches. But yeah, it was really nice. It was really nice to have fans again. It's really nice to feel a little nerves. It's been kind of quiet and it's just been like we're all kind of playing together at home or something like that. So it's really nice to feel a little bit of the nerves and get some claps. I'm sure they're having a really good time out here. It's beautiful.

Q. 63 ties your lowest round. What were the biggest keys for you out here today?

MATTHEW NeSMITH: I drove it good, I hit my irons well, I putted good. I just kind of did everything that you're supposed to. Everything kind of was pretty simple. Drive it in the fairway, hit the greens, try and make as many putts as possible and got lucky making a few short game shots in there, as well, so just did everything you were supposed to.

Q. How comfortable would you say you are now, out here as a PGA TOUR member?

MATTHEW NeSMITH: Oh, I'm getting more comfortable by the day. It helps to play with Scott Brown. We play almost every day together at home, so any time I get to play with him or guys from back home, it really makes it seem a little bit easier.

It's just nice to be out here -- I think I've played more golf, more rounds in kind of COVID without fans than I have with fans, so it feels a little bit different to play with at least a little bit of people out here, so it's been nice.

Q. Are you also friendly with Kevin?

MATTHEW NeSMITH: Mm-hmm.

Q. How have those guys helped you develop here on TOUR?

MATTHEW NeSMITH: They've been amazing. Both Scott and Kevin have been extremely knowledgeable, and they've been helping me kind of navigate golf courses, where to stay, where to eat, kind of places to stay. Even at home, working on shots, trying to pick their brains on what



they do great, and they've been out here a long time. They're amazing veterans out here.

They've taken me under their wing a little bit and really showed me the ropes. I've been grateful. I'm very grateful for it.

Q. Not trying to put any cart before the horse, but your history in attending the Masters, did you go there as a kid, as a spectator?

MATTHEW NeSMITH: Yeah, my dad caddied there when I was a kid. He was a part-time caddie, just doing something on the weekends when I was little, so I went every year probably from the time I was six to probably 19 or so. I've been -- I mean, it's my favorite event of all time.

I'm obviously very biased. I grew up 15, 20 minutes away from the golf course. But yeah, I'd try to get my dad to let me skip school on Thursday and Friday to watch it when we were going, so it's been really, really nice. It's been great.

Q. How much of a focus is it for you to have the goal of being there as an invitee?

MATTHEW NeSMITH: Yeah, it's a goal. But you've got to let things take care of themselves. You've got to play tomorrow's round, play Saturday and Sunday and you've got to keep doing the things that I've been doing that I did well today, and you've just got to stay in the moment and things happen the way they do. I'm just going to stay in the moment and keep trying to play well.

Q. Do you play and practice out of Palmetto?

MATTHEW NeSMITH: Yeah, me, Kis and Brownny every day. I've been there -- Tom Moore was really nice to let me start coming out there when I was in high school, right at the end of when I was in high school and a little bit in college, and then Brooks Blackburn, who's probably Brownny's best friend, let me start coming out there right when I turned pro. The membership has been great. And if it's good enough for Scott and Kevin, it's plenty good enough for me. That's where they spend most of their time. I'm just trying to be around them and be a sponge and soak it all in.

I live about half a mile from the golf course, Kis lives right there, Brownny lives right there. It's been cool.

Q. Have you ever had played Augusta National?

MATTHEW NeSMITH: I have once. One time. I played it one time. It was in the middle of kind of when I was hurt a

little bit, so I hadn't played in like a month or six weeks or something like that. I played not very good. I didn't play very good. And I was almost -- I was so nervous just standing on the first tee there with nothing going on. I had watched that place for so long when I was a kid, and I know every hole and all the shots and I just watched all the time. It was really cool. It's kind of one of those places where you have to go over there a bunch of times and lose the allure of it a little bit to start to get ready for a tournament there. But it was awesome. It was amazing.

Q. What club at 16?

MATTHEW NeSMITH: Today, 8-iron. I chipped a little 8-iron in there. Caddie gave me a great number. Hit a really, really good golf shot and worked out great.

Q. You also hole one for eagle at 13; can you take me through that?

MATTHEW NeSMITH: Yeah, I holed a bunker shot last week. I holed one today. I chipped in today. I mean, I don't know what's going on the last couple days, but I'm very grateful for it.

Q. When did you play Augusta National?

MATTHEW NeSMITH: I played 2017 probably, 2018 with a member named Fleming Norville, a really good friend of mine. I was just at the right place at the right time.

Q. You don't remember exact I what year?

MATTHEW NeSMITH: It was either 2017 or 2018. I've got a picture of it on my Instagram. I would assume it's 2018. There's a picture of me hitting a shot on 12.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports