

WGC Dell Technologies Match Play

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Austin, Texas, USA

Austin Country Club

Ben Griffin

Quick Quotes

Q. How much fun was that?

BEN GRIFFIN: Yeah, it was a lot of fun. Playing match play, it's something I haven't played in a long time, and so -- yeah, match play is something I haven't played in a long time. I just tried to focus on my game and just tried to do the right things and give myself a lot of looks. I played a relatively clean round. I only had one hiccup hole. I didn't let that get to me and stayed strong and was able to pull it off.

Q. Has this been the reflection of how you've been playing the last few weeks?

BEN GRIFFIN: Yeah. I've definitely been trending in the direction. I feel like -- even you go back the last year, probably full year, I feel like consistently I've gotten better and better, more comfortable at the big stages, and the last two weeks playing in big-time events, maybe not necessarily the Valspar as strong of a field as THE PLAYERS and Bay Hill, but playing some of those big field events, some of the highest-ranked players, and seeing myself stack up against them is pretty rewarding.

I know if I just continue to do what I've been doing, it's going to pay off. I know I can compete with these guys.

Q. When was your last match play?

BEN GRIFFIN: Probably like the U.S. Amateur in 2017.

Q. You went to Carolina, right? Did you guys ever get to the NCAAs?

BEN GRIFFIN: We didn't. In our conference tournament, we never had a match play portion, so I really only played the U.S. Amateur and U.S. Junior Amateurs and maybe like Wyndham Cup AJGA events, stuff like that, maybe the North & South Amateur.

But not a ton of match play and, honestly, I feel like I've



never played incredibly well in match play portions, partially, I feel like I've gotten tough draws and played solid, and I just got beat.

But, no, it's just a game of patience and you just got to keep doing your thing and try not to let the opponent bother your game plan.

Q. What do you think -- and you've been around long enough, even if you go back to Bermuda, to realize, A, how good everybody is, and secondly, how fine the line is. When the draw comes out, golf fans look at this and start doing matchups. What do you guys do? Do you care who you play, if you're being honest?

BEN GRIFFIN: Not really. I mean, yeah, I just kind of -- whoever I get is just the way it works out. Some guys might have a better draw than others. There's different ways you can look at it. I had Tyrrell today, who finished second at THE PLAYERS not that long ago, so probably one of the hottest players recently. You just got to focus on yourself and your game, and that's kind of what I did and just tried to give myself a lot of birdie looks. Didn't necessarily make as many as I wanted to, but I just played a really solid clean round to where I didn't get myself in really much trouble at all.

Q. Didn't give 'em anything?

BEN GRIFFIN: No, I gave him some three 2- or 3-footers.

Q. No, no, in terms of giving a hole away.

BEN GRIFFIN: Yeah, exactly. The only hole was 13, the drivable par-4, I actually smoked a driver and hit it right on my line, and I thought it was going to be good and it probably missed the line by feet, not even a yard. So I hit a good drive and that was kind of the one match play moment where I do that, he hits iron out to the right, wedges it close, and I had to get up-and-down from close to 200 yards after dropping with the way the wind was. So he won that hole, but I didn't let it get to me.

Q. What was the status of the match going to 13?



BEN GRIFFIN: I was 2-up.

Q. Why did you hit driver?

BEN GRIFFIN: It was a perfect wind and I figured if I missed it right, I still had enough green to work with to where I could get it close. You know, he's one of the best players in the world and I figured my game plan when I was on that hole is I've got hit driver because if I don't hit driver and lay up, he's going to hit driver and potentially put it close, which I wasn't necessarily thinking so much about his game plan, but I just knew that with that wind, I thought it was a perfect driver for me and I hit it flush and somehow it just didn't cover and sometimes that happens in golf.

Q. Were you aiming at that welcome sign or going more at the pin?

BEN GRIFFIN: There's a little gap in the grandstand, a little walkway. I was aiming at that and one of the Dell Match Play logos, and I hit it right on the walkway, which was basically the target, and it just didn't cover.

But I would have hit the same shot 20 more times in a row and wouldn't have regretted it. So I didn't pull it off, but if that carries one more yard, I -- actually when I hit it, I thought it might have been over the green. There's a sneaky wind up there and I guess the grandstands make it feel like there's not as much and there is. I thought it was long. It came up short. It is what it is. Moved on and was able to get one back two holes later with a birdie. So it all paid off.

Q. Your story is getting a lot of traction on social media because of how unique it is. Do you get time to enjoy that or is it like we're on a mission and if we start thinking of the bigger picture --

BEN GRIFFIN: Yeah, there's moments where I definitely do some reflection and it's pretty awesome to think about my story. But when I'm out on the golf course, I'm on the same mission every single day, and that's to beat the best players in the world and play my best, and so I'm just kind of keeping the pedal down. I've got nothing to lose. I'm having a blast, having a great rookie campaign. I wouldn't trade it for anything, again, and so I'm just blessed to be out here.

Q. Are you a resilient person? I would think so based on the things you've gone through and being out here now. Is that fair?

BEN GRIFFIN: Yeah, I would say, like, my college golf coach, Andrew DiBitetto at UNC, he used that word a lot, resilient, because he wanted all of his players to have that

like mental attitude of being resilient and being fearless a little bit.

That's something I even go back to college golf and when I first turned professional, I probably maybe wasn't as resilient as I needed to be, wasn't as fearless. I thought about it too much and now it's just let's try to make birdies and have fun with it. The more fun you have, generally speaking, the more kind of mentally stronger you get, in my opinion, because you're a little more aggressive sometimes, and I feel like you start pulling off shots and can gain confidence really fast. I've pulled off some good shots recently and I've just been gaining more and more confidence as it's gone on.

Q. Has anybody ever told you you kind of got a Kuchar vibe like the way you smile?

BEN GRIFFIN: No. A lot of people think I'm Justin Thomas, though. It's weird. Yeah, I'm a little too tall to be Justin Thomas.

Q. You have the long arms.

BEN GRIFFIN: But even hitting bunker shots yesterday, I heard some kids behind me, they're like, That's Justin Thomas, that's Justin Thomas. And the other kid is like, No, it's just not, I promise.

So I probably get a "Justin Thomas" once every couple weeks, especially if he's not in the field, because people think that he probably is, and I would be -- I think that's solely based off looks or something. But, no, I mean, it's hard not to smile playing on the PGA TOUR, and Kuchar does a lot, I do it a lot. I hope more guys do it because it's a pretty sweet place to play.

Q. Going back to the confusion with Doug's question, having not played in a lot of match play, what was your mindset going in as far as giving putts?

BEN GRIFFIN: Yeah, I mean, Tyrell's -- I actually was curious before the round. I had my caddie look up his stats because I was curious how good of a putter he is, and Alex is like, he's really good, and he made like 3-, 4-, 5-footers on the first six holes, and the rest of the way I was like, if it's inside putter length, he can just pick it up, because he made 'em right in the back. And I think he kind of realized I was a pretty good putter too. So I didn't have that much like 3-footers that were kind of questionable. We both kind of had more either 5-, 6-footers or like 1-, 2-footers. There was maybe one 3-footer that I gave him. But, no, it's funny. I mean, the one thing that I kind of forgot about in match play was on the 9th hole I missed my putt and I was like, oh, I can re-hit this putt because it's match play and I

could get a practice putt. So I forgot I could practice a putt after I finished a hole so that was nice.

Q. Would this have been an event that you would watch, if you took time to watch golf at all, did you like this event?

BEN GRIFFIN: Absolutely. And a lot of my friends love it too because you got the best players in the world and you got head-to-head matches, it's kind of a fun format, you see guys get aggressive sometimes. I remember watching the 13th hole a ton the last five, six years just because it's such a fun hole to watch in match play. And even the 12th, the par-5. It's just, it's pretty cool to be able to be in the field and playing in it, but I would 100 percent be watching it if I wasn't playing.

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