

WGC Dell Technologies Match Play

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

Austin, Texas, USA

Austin Country Club

Rickie Fowler

Quick Quotes

Q. If golf is a game of confidence, how much is gained from a win like that against an opponent like Jon Rahm?

RICKIE FOWLER: I knew it was going to be tough, but Jon obviously didn't play very well today. Not his normal on the greens. Ball striking was a bit off.

It's match play. You never know what you're going to get. You just got to go beat the guy you're against. Fortunate to come out on top.

I know he's going to be tough the next couple matches for some guys. I got to go take care of business because there is a chance I still might face him.

Q. Another excitable character tomorrow in Billy Horschel. What's top of mind as you look ahead to Thursday?

RICKIE FOWLER: Clean up a few things. I think I did a good job after the first hole keeping it fairly stress-free. Throwing in a few birdies.

Going to have to play well. Billy is a great ball-striker. He was my Walker Cup teammate and partner. I know his game well. It's going to be a tough match between him and then Keith on Friday as well.

Q. Defeating Jon Rahm today, you both didn't putt very good, but seemed to me like you really wore him out with your iron play. Really just stepped up and said, listen, you have to beat me by hitting it closer than I am right now, and you didn't seem to do that.

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, Jon struggled a little today. I know him quite well and we always have fun playing together. That wasn't the normal Jon Rahm and what I was exactly expecting to face.

Like I said, we both struggled a little bit on the greens. Just



happened to hit it a little bit better than him today. That's match play. Never know what you're going to get.

In golf, just about anyone can beat anyone, especially this week with the guys that are out here. Yeah, fortunate to come out on top. I know Jon will be tough for the boys next couple matches. I've got to take care of business on my end.

Q. What does it mean to struggle the last couple seasons and come out here and take down the world No. 2 as well as you have? What does it say about where you are mentally and physically with your game?

RICKIE FOWLER: A lot more than where I have been in the last few years. Still gaining, working on a lot of things. I wouldn't say I feel -- I feel comfortable, but not -- definitely nowhere near 100% where I think I can be.

But managing well. Like you said, iron play has been something I'll lean on. Been putting a lot better than I did today, but these greens are tricky and the wind and tough locations where it was tough to get it right.

We'll try and clean things up tomorrow and go have some fun.

Q. Seemed like you were just hanging around, and on the backside you took advantage of some of his mistakes. How do you feel it went today?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, other than the first hole, felt like I did a good job keeping it fairly stress-free. Had a few putts, both of us. Didn't exactly have the best day today, but kind of relied on the iron play and was able to put myself in position to where was able to get back in the match and put myself in control kind of in the driver's seat for the final -- coming in.

Obviously played a lot with Jon. That's not what I was expecting. He's typically very strong, great ball striker, makes a lot of putts. That's what happens in match play. Anything can happen.



Very fortunate to come out on top. It was enjoyable and we're going to have plenty more matches.

Q. A lot of tough pins. You mentioned being on the proper levels, and Jon was below the levels a lot, which made it hard for him to get his speeds dialed in. You seemed to be leaving easy putts. Though you weren't making them all, you were able to come down the stretch and get yourself in position to go. What are you trying to fix or get ready for tomorrow and the next couple days? You have Keith Mitchell and Billy Horschel tomorrow?

RICKIE FOWLER: Both will be tough matches. I didn't obviously get to see what they were doing behind us, but both great ball strikers, which is key around this place.

I need to drive it a little bit better than I did today. Hopefully I hit a lot of good putts like you said, kind of tough pin placements and with the wind we had today, a little gusty here and there. Makes it tough to dial in reads as you know.

So keep hitting good putts. Hopefully start to get more to go in tomorrow and, yeah, go have some fun.

Q. You close out Jon Rahm here to the 17th, the par-3. Interesting match. 2-down but ended up winning here at 17. I guess you don't expect -- I think some holes he made bogey to give you a hole. I guess you don't expect that in match play, but, again, anything can happen?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, no, I remember where we were. I was on 8 and that was kind of like a little bit of a turning point. He makes bogey there and I won the hole with par.

Yeah, I think that's kind of where things kind of went my way. I kept it fairly stress-free and didn't make any bogeys after the first.

Yeah, very uncharacteristic of Jon and not what I expected to see today. I know he's going to go get some things cleaned up and be tough for the boys next couple days.

Yeah, no, I felt nice with irons. Hit a lot of good shots. It was tough to putt out there today with the gusty conditions. Yeah, hopefully get some more to go in the next few days.

Q. Billy Horschel tomorrow. Is this another confirmation of all the work you have done to get a back where you want to be on the tour as far as FedExCup points?

RICKIE FOWLER: Yeah, definitely. I mean, obviously we

all go through work and changes to ultimately get better. We're not trying to get worse or stay in the same spot.

Maybe if you're Tiger in the early 2000s, that was pretty good. But, no, we're all working to get better. There is always going to be setbacks. Can't be on top forever. Yeah, nice to be back in a good spot moving forward and building momentum and confidence.

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