

# WGC Dell Technologies Match Play

Sunday, March 26, 2023

Austin, Texas, USA

Austin Country Club

## Sam Burns

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome the winner of the 2023 Dell Technologies Match Play, Sam Burns.

Sam, congratulations on capturing this win in your debut appearance here at Austin Country Club. Just open up with some thoughts about the win.

SAM BURNS: Thank you. Yeah, crazy week. I didn't really know what to expect coming into this week. This is my first time playing this event. I feel like I gained a little bit more confidence as each match kind of played on. And then playing Scottie this morning, I knew it was going to be a tough match and got off to a great start and then kind of got lost a little bit halfway through the round. Really, things kind of changed. I've got a new driver in play, the Callaway Paradym, and when I hit the tee shot on 12, I hit a really good one there and I feel like it kind of gave me a little bit of confidence after that, and then I was able to make a few birdies coming down the stretch and ultimately going to extra holes. I feel like I kind of carried that on to this afternoon.

THE MODERATOR: Like you said, you've won your matches against some of the best, Rory McIlroy, Scottie Scheffler, defending champion. Just talk about mentally how much fortitude it took to get here today.

SAM BURNS: Yeah, this week is as mentally exhausting as it is physically. I think after 10 holes this morning, my caddie, Travis, kind of gave me a good kick in the butt and said, Come on man, let's go, you got this. And I really needed it at the time. Man, he was rock solid all week. I couldn't have done it without him. I'm just so thankful that he was out there with me battling every step of the way and thankful that we were the last one standing.

THE MODERATOR: We'll open it up to questions.

**Q. That was some decent golf played this afternoon, but as great as you played, it's hard not to think about the fact that you're standing on the 13th hole this**



**morning watching Scottie over a 4-foot putt. Is it weird at all, I know it's your first time here, to think about how quickly things can change in this thing?**

SAM BURNS: Yeah, I mean, that's the nature of this match play. It's one holed putt or missed putt away from winning or losing. He gave me a gift there on 13 on our second -- or second extra hole, I think, and then me having the chance there on the next hole. It's just -- it usually comes down to who can make a putt here or there. Yeah, it was a battle out there with him this morning.

**Q. (No Microphone.)**

SAM BURNS: No. But I was getting ready to take it off.

**Q. I've been reading the transcripts from the interviews before this. I don't think it's any secret that you're a little tired right now. This tournament is a grind. When we think of golf as an individual sport, and it is to some extent, but when you're looking at seven matches over five days, what role does your team play, does your family play, all that kind of stuff in getting you over the finish line?**

SAM BURNS: Yeah, it's such a different week. Usually you kind of have your normal routine and you play and you rest and recover. But starting on Saturday, it's you play, if you win, you have 45 minutes to get ready to play again. So I think it really just takes being flexible. It takes being flexible mentally knowing that this day isn't going to look like what it normally does. So I need to make sure that I'm trying to conserve a lot of energy and I tried to do that this morning playing against Scottie. Yeah, it's definitely a challenge.

**Q. I was curious what Scottie told you after you beat him this morning? Anything special you could share?**

SAM BURNS: No. Nothing really that I want to share, yeah.

**Q. Are you guys sharing a house in Augusta again?**

SAM BURNS: Yes, I think we are, right? Yeah.



**Q. Are there bragging rights? Does he have to cook you breakfast, make your bed, or anything now?**

SAM BURNS: Nah. He's done all right for himself.

**Q. Just how much momentum does this give you?**

SAM BURNS: Yeah, it's huge. I've been kind of fighting my golf swing a little bit at the start of this four-week stretch that I've been on. I put a lot of hard work in with my coach, Brad Pullin, and I'm just so thankful for him and the amount of work that he's put in with me and been there by my side for all of it. There's so many people that have helped me along the way.

**Q. Why have you not played this tournament before? And is the big shift -- was it mostly the new driver or was it -- because you came in here, I think, 52nd in the FedExCup. Was the big change the new driver or was the big change something that you found with Brad?**

SAM BURNS: I haven't played this event in the past because the last two years I had won Valspar the week before both times and the first year I had a back injury that I was kind of battling all week, and then after that, I was like, there's no way I can go play that many holes. I don't remember what it was last year.

And then to your next part, I would say I think it's a combination. I had a really good driver that I liked in Palm Springs and then the USGA tested it in California and it failed by one point. I don't really know what that means. They don't really give you a lot of information on those sort of things. And then put the new Callaway Paradym in a few weeks ago and just have built a lot of confidence with it. I think that was huge for me today.

**Q. So I'm sure you know, but David Toms was playing on PGA TOUR Champions today and he actually won.**

SAM BURNS: Oh, did he really?

**Q. Can you kind of tell me what it's like for both you guys to win on the exact same day?**

SAM BURNS: That's awesome. Yeah, I was just texting with Carter, and he said that he's playing. Is he playing Palm Springs? Is that right? He said that he was about to win. Man, that's like a dream of mine as a kid. Growing up watching him play, I can remember sitting on the back of the range and just watching him hit golf balls. It's still one of the most amazing things I've ever seen, just the way he could hit it. So straight and just like his tempo is amazing. Still is. But, yeah, to be able to win on the same day is

really cool.

**Q. There's all this talk about the rollback and distance, and then we've got Rory's drive. It all came down to your putter just getting hot and hot and hot. When you get in a zone like that, does it make up for anything else? Do you feel kind of infallible? Because you were hitting everything you could make.**

SAM BURNS: Yeah, I mean, I think -- I've been putting it well all week and that was really -- a main strategy for Travis and I going into today was just trying to get the ball in position, inside 20 feet, as much as we possibly could, I felt like. I really like the greens. I really like the speed they were rolling at. So just trying to get as many opportunities as we could and I was able to make some today.

**Q. Growing up watching the World Golf Championships, what's your memories about them, especially about the match play and what does it mean to you to get one on your trophy case?**

SAM BURNS: I think the thing that stands out to me the most about watching, especially this event, was it Tiger won a match, like, 9 and 8 one time, I think? That was pretty fun to watch. So that's kind of what stands out from what I remember the most.

**Q. Obviously this will take you a long way to qualifying for the Ryder Cup. As a match play champion, how would you fancy being in Rome?**

SAM BURNS: Oh, it would be a dream come true. Being on the Presidents Cup team and having that experience was unbelievable. It's such a fun experience being on a team with those guys and world-class players and to be able to learn from them and have that experience with them. So, yeah, it would be a dream come true to be on the team.

**Q. Were you trying to break Tiger's record?**

SAM BURNS: I don't know if that will ever be broken. No.

**Q. As far as the majors, I think you missed the cut last year at the Masters. I was curious what you gained from that experience of playing in that. And you've been so successful, why haven't you scored better in the majors, do you think? Cameron hasn't won a tournament yet and he's had two top 3s. So curious what you make of it.**

SAM BURNS: Yeah, I'm really looking forward to Augusta this year. I think it's one of -- probably one of my favorite events I've ever played in. It's such an honor to be able to

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

play there, especially with all the history of that event. So, yeah, I'm really looking forward and excited to teeing it up there this year.

**Q. You've talked so much about how much you've worked coming into this and I think some of the phrasing I keep hearing is stacking one swing on top of the other or something like that. What exactly does that mean? What's your thought process on that?**

SAM BURNS: Yeah, I think really simple, just trying to make one good swing after the other. At times, I've been really hard on myself this year, and so I think one of the things that we kind of talked about amongst our team is you got to give yourself a little more grace. This game can beat you if you let it and I was definitely letting it do that.

So we just tried to kind of simplify things and say, hey, let's make one good swing after the other, throw the bad ones away, let 'em go, and keep going.

**Q. Jordan used that phrase a couple years ago, just having more grace in your game. How bad did it get? Was there ever a low point in terms of the self-berating for lack of a better word?**

SAM BURNS: No. It's just obviously frustrating. You come out here and you put a lot of hard work in and you want to come out here and compete and when you're not doing that, it's very frustrating. So that's really all it was.

**Q. Lastly, I know it seems kind of weird on a 6 & 5 win, but was there, do you think, a moment out there with Cam that really was pivotal?**

SAM BURNS: I think on 7, we both missed the green. His was obviously in a much tougher spot. But being able to go first and getting that ball to tap in and then him chipping up there and missing it, and then making a 20-footer on 8. That was huge to be able to go 3-up there. It felt like kind of a turning point for me.

**Q. Broad question here: Do you have an approach to match play that you could talk about being different from stroke play? Do you have a philosophy about it that you come in with?**

SAM BURNS: No, I mean, not really. I think the most obvious thing is you don't really want to give an opponent a hole. For me, what that kind of means is, like, you never want to be out of the hole in your pocket. I always want to try to have a chance, whether it's making a long putt or chipping in or something like that.

So I think really just fighting for every shot. You never

know when you're going to make a 40-footer and kind of flip it on someone. So that's kind of it, really.

**Q. Following up on something you said earlier, you said at some point earlier today Travis gave you a kick in the butt that you needed. When was that and can you talk about that a little bit?**

SAM BURNS: It was this morning after number 10. I just made the worst bogey I've ever seen, and he was like, Come on, man, let's go. Like, you're fine. Like, let's keep going. And I was like, All right, I'm with you.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Well, thank you. Congratulations.

SAM BURNS: Appreciate it.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports