

# DP World Tour Championship

Friday, 11 December, 2020

Dubai, UAE

Jumeirah Golf Estates

## Matthew Fitzpatrick

Press Conference



**Q. A round of 4-under par 68. Let's talk about the first two thirds of it. You were playing beautifully; you seemed to be trading birdies with Patrick Reed, flying along. How good were things feeling at that stage?**

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Really good, yeah. The swing really felt consistent this morning in the warmup, and it showed when I got out on the golf course. Felt really comfortable, and just been playing really solid, and very happy to get two thirds of the round out of the way playing as well as I did.

**Q. A couple of issues there, bogeys at 14 and 16 and the tee shot at 17 looked like it might find the water. How pleased were you to turn that into a 2?**

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I mean, we would have been happy if someone said after that you'll get a par, then we'd be happy to -- to make a 2, we were laughing that it was a 5-net-2 really. I don't know, I felt like this year we've not had the best of luck, a bit dodgy lies around greens and missing fairways and stuff, so to have a bit on our side is very nice.

**Q. You've spoken about you've had six second places since the last win and you've said some of them were really strong finishes so you weren't necessarily in a position to win. You're looking to start tournaments better. This one you got off to a great start. How excited are you about that potential over the weekend?**

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Definitely, a hundred per cent. This is a golf course I love. It's a golf course I've played well around before, and I'm really, really looking forward to the weekend. It made me laugh, I was thinking me and Patrick were one of the earlier groups last year, bringing up the rear, so it's nice to have the opposite this year.

**Q. Was today one of those days where the score doesn't tell the full story?**

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I guess so, yeah. The first 13 holes I played really solid, felt really comfortable.

Swing felt in sync, and yeah, I was firing well. Then just poor course management on the par-5, tried to push, didn't really need to. That obviously led to a bogey, and then you sort of kind of lose a bit of momentum, a bit of rhythm, and then obviously 17 was a massive stroke of luck, and it's just nice to have that on your side for a change and to turn that into a 2 was fantastic, and finished 4-under for the day.

**Q. You're a previous winner of the DP World Tour Championship. What experience from that in 2016 can you take into this weekend?**

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: A lot. You know, a lot. I've been in the position before to win around here. Obviously I know what it takes. But at the same time it's four years ago now. It's just a long time ago, unfortunately. But things change, my game changes, different swing thoughts. Honestly after the first two days, I don't want to jinx myself, touch wood here, but I definitely feel like my swing was way better these first two days than it was the year I won. But that's the way golf is. It happens like that. I've won when I've played poorly and I've not won when I've played brilliant.

Yeah, hopefully just keep doing a lot of the same that I have done the first two days and keep playing well.

**Q. Talk us through 17 and how important that was to get away with a slightly dodgy tee shot and then to hole that putt.**

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Yeah, absolutely. I'm looking at that, I'm thinking I've hit it -- I'm just praying it comes down a little further left than it did, and it bounces right, and I'm like, well, it's firm, there's no chance. It's so nice to have that stroke of luck for a change. I really feel that this year it's been tough when we've had some momentum in tournaments or we've not had any and just needed something to kick-start the round, and before you know it you've missed the fairway by a yard and it's sat down deep down and you've got to hack it out, and that's what it feels like most of the year has been really. To have that was -- yeah, it was fantastic. I've just got to make sure to use it to my advantage and kick on over the weekend.

**Q. That birdie helped get you into the last group with Patrick tomorrow. Do you set much importance in that, being there to place a bit more pressure on him?**



MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Definitely. Yeah, definitely there's a bit of that, being one shot ahead of the guys obviously behind me, but just it's always more fun in the last group. That's where you want to be. That's what you play for. Yeah, just got to keep doing what I'm doing and hopefully sort of stay in there for tomorrow, hang in and push on on Sunday.

**Q. How tough a man is Patrick Reed when he's in this kind of form and he gets his nose in front?**

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Yeah, he is. He's obviously a fantastic player. Patrick has got a brilliant short game. Don't get me wrong, his whole-round game is brilliant, but I've always admired him for his chipping and pitching. Every time I watch him you always think it's going to be -- he's going to hole it or it's going to go close, and I think he's very underrated on that front. When he is going to be out of position tomorrow, which is inevitable, everyone is, that's just the way golf is, in my mind I back him to get up-and-down nine times out of ten. You wouldn't necessarily say that for some players, but he's one of those guys. So it's definitely going to be a grind. I'm really looking forward to obviously the challenge, and just like I say, to be in that last group is always exciting.

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