

DP World Tour Championship

Sunday, 13 December, 2020

Dubai, UAE

Jumeirah Golf Estates

Matthew Fitzpatrick

Press Conference

CLARE BODEL: What a week for you, your second win, the DP World Tour Championship, Dubai and your second in the Rolex Series Event, can you sum up how the day went for and you how you're feeling right now.

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Yeah, amazing. The start I got off to, four birdies in the first 4-, 5-under through seven, it's a dream start. Fortunately I managed to pull away from that and really sort of create some distance.

Yeah, it was just obviously a bit of a grind on the back nine. For me it was just about finishing one hole at a time and just getting through it. So managed to do that and yeah, finished well.

Q You said last night that you would put some money on yourself but only a couple of pounds. Explain that?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: What were the odds?

Q Oh, I don't know?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: (Laughing) yeah, listen, just the way I've been brought up, I'm not going to stand here and say, look at me, I'm the next best thing since sliced bread. That's just me. It's the way my parents have brought me up. It's the way my team is around me.

When the highs are high, we don't too go too high and when the lows are low, we try not to go too low. I'm going to stand here and be honest; the Masters, I felt my game was nowhere to be seen. I was struggling. Didn't want to play RSM the following week. Billy and Mike convinced me to. Sort of treat it as a nice week; Denise was with me, my girlfriend, and Billy and Mike, we were all in a house together, tried to make it more relaxed.

We spent some good time on the range and we sort of put the off-season on plan into place on things that Mike saw in my swing that I needed to work on and we took it from there.

I definitely put it down to the work we've done in these



three, four weeks since RSM, three including RSM, I've had some of the best warm-ups in all honesty in my career this week in my opinion. I really was hitting it very, very well and felt very comfortable on the range, and going and taking it to the golf course.

Q I had forgotten Lee could still win The Race to Dubai at the end. How aware were you of what was going on?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: I had no idea about the Race to Dubai because I knew where I started the week at 16, a lot needed to go my way. When I saw Lee at second, it did enter my head briefly going to 18, even if I win, probably not going to be -- it's probably not going to be enough, anyway.

But all I was bothered about this week was winning. I turned up obviously 16th, so first, Race to Dubai didn't really enter my head if I'm honest. I just wanted to win a lot this week. Just the work that I've put in the last couple of weeks on my game and just stuff that we talked about, me and Mike, yeah, it just felt like it kind of clicked.

It's one of those few weeks in your probably career, where you're like, it feels really good and I'm playing really well, and you go and win. You can play poorly and win and sometimes you can play amazing and lose. To me this is a week in all honesty I felt I'm playing really well and I managed to convert it.

Q When you won the British Masters, we kept asking you about trading in your Mondeo, I think it was. What do you do with \$3 million? Do you buy a striker for Sheffield United?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: I don't know. I'll have to speak to Chris.

No, I don't know. It's obviously a very nice bonus of the job. I'm more bothered about these (raising trophy). I'll just let it sink in the next few days, and I'll have a think. Maybe I'll buy myself something nice, who knows.

Q You started the season, or you started the year ranked 26 in the world and had a very consistent kind of year, but if suppose you did not have this Sunday, how disappointed would you have been with the year?



MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I think I would have been disappointed. There isn't -- no doubt about that. I've already talked about that with my team that I would be disappointed because I've not felt like I've contended enough this year, and I've not felt the good results coming through the back door, which is always nice, but you like to be competing.

But the big positive for me that I was going to take away from this regardless of what happened today is for the first three days, I really, really felt like I played really well. The only holes that I felt in my game were my short game the first three days. And I think it quite tough to chip around here anyways, it's very grainy and stuff.

But that was going to be the positive coming away that I felt my game was in good shape and knew what I needed to work on and we were doing well with what it was.

So to obviously pick up the win, as well, is a little extra special.

Q I also wanted to ask you, one of your first starts as a professional was actually in the UAE when you played a MENA Tour event. When you came over here as one of your first professional events of your career, what kind of career did you envisage in the next five, six years, and did it include winning the DP World twice?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Listen, it's not -- I've not sort of stood here and thought I'm going to blow everyone away; I'm just this amateur young kid coming out. I had done well as an amateur, obviously I had to prove myself as a pro. For me it was a case trying to take each tournament by tournament.

2015 was good and 2016 was better. Just trying to improve every year. I really set high standards of myself, and I am honestly very hard on myself, and my team will all tell you the same thing.

But in all seriousness to be here at 26, and I don't know what this win has taken me to in the world, potentially my highest career end, year-end ranking, yeah, I'm very, very happy.

Q Your putting today was phenomenal and it has been all week and has been all season. Is that something that's improved and are you conscious that was something that had to keep getting better?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Not particularly to be honest. I don't want to jinx it, touch wood, but I've been working with Phil Kenyon for a long time now, and I've used the same style of putter for a long time, since I was 14. I've always

been a good putter statistically.

I putted poorly my last month or so in America, and I had not seen Phil for a while. Now, I spent a good bit of time with Phil last week. I'm not saying the stuff we worked on was anything I took into the tournament, but stuff to keep chipping away at.

I don't know, maybe just having him around and going and talking to him about things just gave me a bit more confidence this week. I love these greens. I love bermudagreens and these are like glass this week. I felt very comfortable and I really pat myself.

Q Ryder Cup on the horizon, but are you hoping this will be a springboard, and would Europe be well served having Lee Westwood back on the team again?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: For myself, I really hope it is. I thought that would be the case in 2016, but I had not a poor 2017, but not as good a 2017 as I'd like.

But for me, it's a new year and I've got a big off-season planned. I don't know when I'm going to start my year next. But I've got a lot of work to do and I want to come out obviously playing better and playing more like this.

As for Lee, having Lee on the team, it's a no-brainer right now, isn't it. He's playing some brilliant golf as you've seen again this week and he's competed plenty this year. So yeah, there's no reason why we can't see Lee in.

Q You've probably spoken about your caddie before, Billy. How important was he today, and particularly coming down those last few holes? Can you translate that into an extra club in your bag, someone of his experience on the bag?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Definitely. I think he was very helpful. He's been doing it for a long, long time so he knows what to say at the right times.

But I think to be honest, we were both so much sure in the moment that we didn't really talk much to be honest. I could feel that. I could feel the tension. We were both nervous and we were both obviously trying to get it over the line. It's the first one we've won together, so it's obviously a big deal.

But I think for me, he's obviously been great to have on the bag and it's quite funny, normally he's just very straightforward, straight to the point; "it's 115, sand wedge."

On that last hole, we were laughing, not sure about this -- he was overthinking it. I was like, "Billy, give me the sand

wedge and I'm just going to hit it." It was all right.

CLARE BODEL: Congratulations again.

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