

DP World Tour Championship

Sunday, 13 December, 2020

Dubai, UAE

Jumeirah Golf Estates

Lee Westwood

Press Conference



CLARE BODEL: When you stood here at the start of the week, you told us you were struggling with a back injury, you weren't sure how the week was going to go, and here you are European No. 1 for a third time. Can you even begin to sum up the emotions?

LEE WESTWOOD: Well, I got my back back to pretty decent; now I've had to lift that massive trophy and strained it again -- no, start of the week, I had no expectations. I had hit balls for about 45 minutes, maximum, at any one period of time for the previous sort of 2 1/2 weeks.

Like I told you, I was only going to play nine holes practise on Wednesday, just to see if it was all right.

The two lads in the physio unit, Nigel and Rob, have done an incredible job on me. They have stretched me in places I didn't think I had, and they have given me a massage twice a day. They are really the two ones that kind of kept me going this week. First thing in the morning and after I had played, and I'm very appreciative to the job they have done on my back this week.

Q The question I asked you last night about in your first tournament of the year and now second and your last, I got the marriage bit wrong but I got most other things right. You must be delighted.

LEE WESTWOOD: Yeah, ecstatic. I knew I needed to go out there and shoot a good round today, and you know, I played great, as I have done all week. I missed a load of chances today, but you know, hit a wedge to two feet on 16 and made a great par on 17, and then made a great 4 at the last when I needed to.

Just little things like that just keep proving that I can do it when it matters, and you know, still got it.

Q Just a word about Matt, if you don't mind. What is it about his game that strikes you?

LEE WESTWOOD: Doesn't really have any weaknesses. He's not really what you call a bomber. He's very strategic

in the way he plays. He's obviously got a very good caddie on his bag; he's a good thinker around the golf course, as well, so they make a great team. And he controls his emotions well, which you need to, need to do.

Q Just wondering how aware were you of the mathematical circumstances? Was it only when you sort of signed your card that you became aware of what was going on?

LEE WESTWOOD: I went out trying to win the tournament. That was the best and the simplest thing to try and do.

When I bogeyed 14, the par 5, I hit in the water there, I had a look at the leaderboard on the next just to see where I was, and saw Matt was 16-under. Then I missed from about three feet on 15 for birdie and I knew I needed a really big finish then. Saw Patrick wasn't kind of running away.

There's so many sort of permutations that can go on on a day like today. It can all get too confusing if you let it. You might as well just go out there and shoot as low a score as you can on each individual hole and I just tell myself that going down 16, look, bang 1-down as far as you can. I knew it was a tough flag, and you know, if you hit a good one, I'll be going in with wedge. I hit wedge to two feet there, not too much stress.

Found myself in a tricky spot on 17 but played what I thought was a good chip over the corner and then rolled in a nice 15-footer down the hill and then hit a lovely drive off the last, and a pretty nice hybrid, as well. I was trying to turn it in. It didn't quite turn in far enough, but that trap is never a bad place to try to get up-and-down from. I played a great bunker shot. When the bunker shot came out, it was tracking. I thought this has got a chance of going in.

I figured I needed to finish 15-under to win the tournament. Not really any thoughts of The Race to Dubai until I got into the scoring tent afterwards and looked at it all and realised I've still got a chance.

Q Ryder Cup-wise, sadly the points this week don't count, but in terms of your form, are you now thinking, one more playing appearance next year?

LEE WESTWOOD: I'd love to play again obviously. It



beats watching. There's obviously a lot less pressure watching the lads being vice captain.

Yeah, if I qualify for the team then I'm clearly good enough, and you know, that's the way I'm going to play it. I can still turn up to the biggest tournaments and compete as I proved at the start of the year in Abu Dhabi; the U.S. Open where I bogeyed the last two holes, and if I hadn't, I'd have finished fifth, and here.

So it's definitely -- I'm not going to say it's one of my goals for next year because you should never make Ryder Cup one of your goals. You should break it down to try and play well each tournament. But I could see it happening.

Q Just wanted to ask you a couple of questions. One was how does the motivation change now that you've won in the last century, in the last decade, and now this year? How has the motivation changed for someone like you?

LEE WESTWOOD: The motivation's never changed, really. I get to get up each day and do the job I love. I've always wanted to be a golfer, and I don't want it to end.

So I'm prepared to keep working hard and put myself in the line of fire and try and get into contention in tournaments. It's where I'm most comfortable and what I love doing. I love the work away from the course and the gym and on the range, the hard work that people don't see, I love that.

I don't need to motivate myself very often.

Q Can you sum up the year, being one of the senior-most players on The European Tour, can you just tell us something about how proud the players are of what the Tour has managed to put together, despite all the circumstances?

LEE WESTWOOD: Well, I sit on the Players' Committee, as well, the Players' Committee and all the players are immensely proud of the job that Keith and his team does done with the tour. It didn't look good for a period of time there, and we played every week pretty much, I think Keith said 27 tournaments since the restart. That's a phenomenal achievement with what's going on to get those tournaments on.

We still have to come to tournaments and go through all the protocols and wear masks in certain places, and we're not allowed to be with people who we want to be with; we're all in these bubbles.

So to take all those different kind of things into consideration, to actually play tournaments and play a full tour this year has been an incredible job by everybody at

the Tour, and Keith deserves a pat on the back.

Q Can you talk about what it means having Helen on the bag, and what she's brought, obviously not a professional caddie but seems to be a calming influence?

LEE WESTWOOD: Yeah, that's exactly it. She's a calming influence on me. You know, we talk about things away from golf. That's kind of our thing. We keep me focusing on golf as little as possible, really, especially when I'm out on the golf course.

You know, she gives me a reality slap every now and again, and that's the kind of thing I need, and not to get carried away and blow it out of proportion. We obviously get along very well, and it's a nice environment to play golf in.

Q Has the wedding been rescheduled?

LEE WESTWOOD: I don't know, has the wedding been rescheduled yet? Four times, we've done it. Keep getting away with it (laughter).

Q Three Race to Dubai titles in ten years. Is it fair that each one, one is better than the other or are they all very different in terms of when you won the titles?

LEE WESTWOOD: They have all been very different. I guess 2000, sort of I was winning a lot, but I was still like up-and-coming. It was only my seventh year on Tour.

2009, I was honing in on the best player in the world spot, and I needed to win here to win The Race to Dubai, and I managed to do that.

And then this one, I'm kind of the more mature player on The European Tour now. It wasn't something I set out to do at the start of the year, but it shows the consistency I've shown.

The most satisfying thing is doing it under pressure when it matters. You know, coming out this week knowing nothing but a win or second will do, and pulling it off, really. You know, those last three holes, I'm really proud of -- well, the last four holes, and I missed from three feet on 15. But my proximity to the hole today, my iron play was stunning. I missed from ten feet on the first, eight feet on the third, eight feet on the -- sorry, eight feet on the fourth, eight feet on the fifth. It just kept -- wouldn't go in the hole.

But I kept grinding it out and made two birdies in the last three holes, and a nice 15-footer on 17 when I needed to, so it's very satisfying.

Q What do you think you could buy yourself with 16 quid, which is about the difference in points? There's only about 18 points.

LEE WESTWOOD: It's a beer here, isn't it. It's 16 quid a beer, for a pint of Peroni here, somebody was explaining about the other day. And a Scotch egg. You've got a substantial meal there.

Q A serious question, you're back --

LEE WESTWOOD: That is serious. 16 quid for a beer, you don't think that's serious.

Q Well, I can tell you how much money I've lost but I won't bring that up. Were you on painkillers today, and will your back require any surgery or can you get away with medication?

LEE WESTWOOD: The lads have done a brilliant job this week and I've been taking painkillers and they have got it to a stage where I'm not thinking about it when I'm not playing.

What I need to do is go away and not hit balls and do the same thing on it so it improves. I don't want to come out next year and have physio twice a day and take painkillers. I need to give it rest and do the correct stretches and soft tissue work and get going again beginning of next year and get ready for Abu Dhabi, Dubai.

CLARE BODEL: Many congratulations and we will see you next season.

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