

DP World Tour Championship

Tuesday, 16 November, 2021

Dubai, UAE

Jumeirah Golf Estates

Billy Horschel

Press Conference

Q. Just sum up for us what it feels like to be here, end of the European Tour season, and a chance to finish it as Europe's No. 1?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: It's first time to Dubai. It's a cool place. Obviously I've watched this event and Dubai Desert Classic and a few other events over here and seen on TV. But to be here and experience this amazing place is pretty cool.

And to be here at this event, the last one on the European Tour calendar, to have a chance to win the DP World Tour Championship is something as a kid I would have -- I didn't dream about or even imagine, but over the last -- earlier this year when it changed with playing well in the WGCs and everything, but it's great to be here. I've watched this event on TV. It's cool to see some of the holes and see some of the shots I've seen on TV some of the guys pull off, and to see it firsthand now is -- it's a great place.

Q. I was going to say, what do you make of this place?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: I think it's a big golf course. It's exactly what I've seen on TV, and the bunkers are deep. But I think if you're in control of your golf ball, this course lends itself to some low scores, the way the greens are shaped. I like to call them like sectional greens where you have little bowls and pockets on the greens that, if you have real good control of your golf ball, you can hit a lot of really close shots inside 10, 15 feet and even some tap-ins. And I understand now why the scores have been so low here in the past.

Q. Just away from the event, but the hot world topic at the moment is environmentalism after the conference that has just finished. I just wonder from your point of view, as someone who has obviously traveled probably the furthest you have ever traveled to go to a golf tournament, for this one, and the global footprint that golf has, how much of an issue is it for players such as yourself?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: It's a bigger issue than me. Obviously



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it's an issue for everyone in this world. Do I want to leave this place in a better place than I found it? Yeah. But I think we need to look at all scenarios and cases before we make a decision.

We're never going to always agree on the right direction. But at the end of the day, travel is what I do for my job, and I try and do it responsibly I try and do it smart. But end of the day, for me to do what I want to do, I have to travel. Simple as that.

Q. I would like to know if you are planning to play more tournaments in Europe.

BILLY HORSCHTEL: It's something that my manager and I have talked about and we tried to put into our schedule. But be honest with you, it's really all dependant on how well I play in FedExCup. If I can get off to a good start in the FedExCup, it opens up more opportunities to travel a little bit.

But right now I think the regular events on my schedule will be Scottish, Wentworth, Dunhill, this event. There's a couple of events that we're looking at possibly playing next year, possibly the Porsche European Open or the BMW International in Germany.

I would love to play more over here. I'm looking at my career as the next ten years of my career. And so we're going to try to get over here more. There's so many events that I watched on TV that I thoroughly enjoy. Crans-Montana is one of them. That Valderrama is a course I would love to get to. Over the next five, seven years, we're going to pick a few here and there to try and get over here more and play.

Q. Could I get your assessment of what's happening, the game of golf at the moment, with the PGA TOUR and European Tour making considerable announcements recently, do you think enough is being done now?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: You can't always please everyone on our tours. At least I know a lot about our players on our Tour, being on the pack and understanding different opinions and seeing different scenarios. But there's 200-something-plus guys on the PGA TOUR, and if you've got to try and please every one of them, you're never going



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to accomplish anything.

I think Jay Monahan and Andy and their entire staff has done unbelievable work with trying to take care of players. But, I mean, if I give you my opinion, what I think should be done, I think we need to look at the Tour as what's going to be sustainable in 25 years, and that's what the Tour needs to do, and not so much worry about the Saudis or the PGL. They need to do what's best for the PGA TOUR.

And I think in my mind I think we should make the Tour more competitive. And what I mean by that is maybe instead of giving out 125 cards every year, we cut it down to 100. And if we cut down the Korn Ferry cards from 50 to 30, you've got roughly 150 guys now, you make the field 120 maybe, now you're getting players, the better players week in and week out. Guys aren't sort of just happy finishing 90th on the PGA Tour every year and collecting a million plus dollars and that they're actually striving to be the best players on the PGA TOUR.

I think if we would change the way the money pays out where the top 30, 40 guys get paid a lot of money and then you don't get paid as much down below, so it really pushes guys to really do everything they can to be the best player that they can be. And by doing that I think that takes care of any other Tour that comes competing against the PGA TOUR or the European Tour.

Like I said, I think we're doing great stuff, but I think we need that make sure that we're looking at all scenarios before we make an ultimate decision of the path forward.

Q. The reception you got at Wentworth, after that experience, how excited do you now get to come and play on this Tour, how a part of this Tour do you feel, and what's the vibe like when you turn up?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: It's pretty nice. In 2019 I got a great reception, a lot of support. 2021 was even more so. People have asked me something about the cool moments and that wedge shot and stuff I remember, as I've said, the coolest moment for me that entire week was walking from 17 green to 18 tee and that little 120-yard walk and the support and people saying, Go Billy, come on, Billy, you got this, or Go irons, come on you irons, for West Ham, it was absolutely amazing. I'm an American playing overseas on English soil, when you have Laurie Canter behind me, had a chance to win, and they're giving me the energy to try to go on and win this event, it was amazing. I could never imagine that kind of reception when I first came in 2019.

So it really does make this enjoyable every time I do come over here and play. And I look forward to being back at

Wentworth again and having that reception hopefully on a regular basis, and hopefully I don't do anything to negate that reception in the future.

Q. Just curious, you're a FedExCup champion back in 2014. When you look at the roll call of champions Race to Dubai and the European Tour Order of Merit, and I know you've spoken so glowingly about Wentworth and some of the courses out here, that they demand more of players, more thought, more strategy perhaps in your game. Where would this rank if you were to end up this week as Race to Dubai champion in terms of your overall big picture of how you assess your career?

BILLY HORSCHTEL: I was telling Tim earlier, growing up in the States, all I thought about was winning on the PGA TOUR, winning majors, being the Player of the Year on the PGA TOUR. I did grow up watching a lot of European Tour coverage, but I never envisioned myself playing over here or being -- having the success I've had.

So to be in the spot I am now, I tried the last couple months to sit back and picture the whole thing, try and decompress and understand everything that is in front of me.

And I think this point in my career, this is probably the best year I've had of my career. I know I won the FedExCup, but that year I didn't play great until the very end, and this year I've been pretty consistent.

But to win two big tournaments in WGC Match Play, BMW PGA Championship, those are two massive events to win, especially when you sit back on your career résumé and you say these are the events I won. And then to add possibly the Race to Dubai, be the first American to win the Order of Merit, obviously by far would be the best of my career.

And I think that it's just another step closer to -- ultimately my goal is to be a Hall of Famer, to have a heck of a career that I can be inducted into the Hall of Fame at one point in my career.

There's a lot on the line this week, and we'll see how it all plays out when it comes Sunday.

Q. I thought it was interesting what you said there about cutting card sizes and field sizes on the PGA TOUR and making players truly earn the big money. As far as you're aware, are you the only player who really thinks that? Because guaranteed money seems to be one of the attractions that these rivals leagues are trying to throw at you.



BILLY HORSCHER: I'm not the only one that thinks this way. I may be the only one or the few that really isn't afraid to state maybe a little bit of the obvious or maybe my opinion a little bit more strongly.

I think what makes our sport so great is that we earn what we make. And we play bad, we don't make any money. If we play bad for an extended amount of time, we're not going to make a lot of money with our sponsors off the golf course.

So I think we're -- and this goes -- I mean, I could sit up on my soapbox all day and talk about this, but I feel like society in a whole, everyone is work looking for handouts, instead of go work for it, go really bust your butt and do something. Yes, do people always get the fair shake of it? No. But I grew up blue collar. My parents -- there's times only one of my parents had a job for extended months at a time. Neither of my parents have college degrees. One thing they instilled in us is treat people equally. Doesn't matter who you are, what background, what race you are, what ethnicity you are, you treat people equally and you work hard. You do the right things. You work hard, and hopefully that all pays off in the end. And I've been fortunate I've had the right shake come my way here and there.

I think if we look at it on a professional level of golf, I think -- and I'm not trying to harp on or knock any other players that are struggling making money or maybe not feeling like they're getting enough of the fair shake. But I know how hard I work. I know how many hours I put in on a daily basis. I know all the sacrifices I'm making to be a great player, to try to be the best player I can be in my lifetime or my career.

And when I hear other players say, well, we should get more of the money or you guys need to look at taking care of the lower guys, are those guys doing the same thing I'm doing to be the best player they are? If they're not, why should they get a handout just because they're not playing as top golf as some other players?

So it does sound harsh. It sounds like I'm trying to maybe attack the lower guys or the guys that are lower on either Tour, but I'm not. All I'm saying is that are you doing everything you can to be the best player you can? And if you are, then maybe we need to look at something. If you aren't, we shouldn't just be giving you handouts because you got your PGA TOUR card and you're not making as much as some other guys.

We're fortunate that the top guys over the generations have brought all this money into the PGA TOUR, and

they've been rewarded because of the top play. We reward for top play, for playing great golf, not for mediocrity.

Q. Do you think that's something that the fans appreciate? Because the tournaments that we care the most about, the majors, nobody really cares what the first prize is, it's about your green jacket, your Claret Jug, Wanamaker Trophy, et cetera. Do you think the fans are not bothered about minimum guaranteed money?

BILLY HORSCHER: I don't think fans care about the money. I know I haven't looked at a person, how many years, I don't know what I make on a weekly basis. I haven't -- that's not something that motivates me.

What motivates me is winning a trophy, having a chance to do something no one else has done before. Yes, they may look at the person, it's a big deal, but at the end of the day, it's winning a green jacket, it's winning the Claret Jug, it's winning THE PLAYERS Championship, it's winning the Order of Merit, the Race to Dubai.

That's what the fans care about. They want to see the energy, how much passion the players have to winning the event itself. I don't think any player is out there thinking if I win this, I win \$3 million. No, hey, I can call myself the Race to Dubai champion, the Order of Merit winner. That's what guys are competing for, and that's why they bring so much heart and energy and passion when they're trying to win an event.

Q. Just picking up what you said earlier, you're going to play in the Scottish Open next year. You played this year when it was as big an event as it was at the time. Next year it's co-sanctioned with the PGA TOUR. Can you talk from an American perspective just how big a step that is for the event?

BILLY HORSCHER: I think it's a great step for the European Tour, for the PGA TOUR. From me experiencing for the first time, I think it's an awesome event leading up to Open Championship. It lends itself getting acclimated to that style of golf course, which I think makes it easier to prep for the Open Championship. You don't have to grind so hard earlier in the week as much, and you can more or less try to learn the golf course, try and get comfortable with the golf shots that you have to hit in links style golf courses.

So I think with the new partnership with the European Tour, the PGA TOUR, I think it's tremendous that there's a co-sanctioned event like the Scottish Open.

If I'm looking at the writing on the wall, I would see there's possibly more of that coming down in the future. But for the Scottish Open for the first one to be a co-sanctioned event is a big bonus for them and everyone involved with the Scottish Open.

Q. The Renaissance Club, going back there, the course is always improving, but there's more, the off-course stuff, the accommodations, was that something that impressed you about the Renaissance Club?

BILLY HORSCHER: Yeah, I thought the course was awesome. It's a great course to warm up for an Open. It's a course that's not going to beat you up too bad. The weather does get nasty, yes, the weather can beat you up. But I don't think you're going to come off that course and be exhausted, just grinding away at trying to play a great round of golf.

I do think there's a few improvements to the course that could be made, make the driving just a little bit tougher off the tee. But other than that, I think it's a great golf course.

When you think about the area around that, North Berwick, Edinburgh being 45 minutes away, there's just some great little old towns and great restaurants. And the place I stayed at last year was exceptional. And I'm looking forward to going back and experiencing again. I may even go back a few days early. I've talked about going a few days earlier next year and playing a few other courses around there. There's so many great links courses around that area, that is also another way you can prep for Open Championship.

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