

DP World Tour Championship

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Jumeirah Golf Estates

Matt Fitzpatrick

Press Conference



DP WORLD
TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP

Q. Must be a lovely feeling to come back here and rekindling some wonderful memories from last year.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, definitely. It's really nice to be back. Yeah, nice memories for myself, from 2016, and then obviously last year as well. Just nice to -- you know the course like the back of your hand. And played this morning in the Pro-Am, and I'm thinking I could probably play it blindfolded anyway. So it is very nice to come out.

Q. What is it about this place that suits you so well? And also just reflecting on the performance last year. Where does that sit for you?

MATT FITZPATRICK: The big thing for me is the greens are just so pure. They get really fast, they get firm. It's already -- I feel like it's quite firm.

And statistically speaking why it suits me is because there's a few more long irons, and apparently on paper I'm a bit better with my long irons than my mid irons and short irons. A few more of those, which helps. And like I said, the greens are so good.

And then in terms of last year's performance, I just remember I was struggling coming into it. I wasn't playing great. And me and Mike had a great, great session or two sort of the weekend before and then leading into it. And then Monday, Tuesday was really good. I felt like I was swinging it really well, all of a sudden, from not really anywhere.

And I had a great feeling, and I knew what the club was doing pretty much every time. And it just made it so much easier when you're out there when you feel so comfortable.

Q. A question that's somewhat left field from the tournament, what's going on in the world at the moment, we had the COP26 climate change conference that's gone on. So I'm just wondering, I'm asking all the players, really, what their feelings are about it. You've been to Spain, Bermuda, United States, now you're in the Middle East. It's a big global

footprint. Is that an issue you take into account when you're planning how you go about your business?

MATT FITZPATRICK: No. Not really. It's not something that I think about. It's my job. That's just all I'll put it down to. I've got to get on a flight and go from Miami to Bermuda or wherever it is, or Miami to Mexico, Miami to Dubai, wherever it is.

Just part of it, really. It's not something that I've ever really thought about purely just because I'm doing it for a living. If I couldn't get on planes, I probably only play about five tournaments a year.

Q. Winning here last year, winning in Spain, how different of a player do you feel this time around, not so much from a technical point of view, but inside your own head?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I feel like getting the win at the end of last year gave me some good confidence going into the start of the year, which probably showed in my performance as I played really well, got off to a great start. My game was as good as it's ever been, apart from some of my approach play.

And then winning Valderrama was kind of a -- for me it felt like a bit of a justification for how well I played the Ryder Cup, but obviously I had nothing to show for it. I felt like it was coming, and it did in the end, which was great, at Valderrama.

I feel like every year I'm growing as a player. Obviously the game always changes. Various aspects might get better, might get worse. So it's always like a balancing act with that. But in terms of mentally, trying to get better, have more confidence going into the weeks, and that's what I feel like has happened this year. I'm turning up to weeks feeling like I've got more of a chance of winning if I play well, or if I have a good week on the greens, whereas maybe 2016, for example, going to tournaments and don't really know what to expect and a bit unsure. So it's definitely changed for the better.

Q. How much golf coverage do you watch when you're not playing? When you're at these big events, do you notice the guys that are up high in those cranes and think, it's amazing what they're doing? Have you ever

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seen the highlights when you won from the air and thought that looks pretty good?

MATT FITZPATRICK: It's pretty brave. I wouldn't want to be up there when it's windy. I don't really watch much golf away from it. I only really watch football in terms of -- and other sports, really. Golf just bores me to death, to be honest, on TV. I might watch the final few holes if it's close coming down the stretch. Yeah, it doesn't really -- not for me.

Q. I can see the headlines now: Golf bores me to death and I hate the environment. We'll move swiftly on from that. I just wondered --

MATT FITZPATRICK: Talk about throwing me under the bus.

Q. Exactly. I won't be writing that. Don't worry. Just wondering how aware are you of the permutations for you to win the Race to Dubai this week? I think you've pretty much got to win and still need a bit of help? Is that about right?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I have no idea. I honestly have no idea. I'm higher up than I was last year, and I won and finished second. So I just presumed if I did the same again, I've got a good chance of winning.

So, yeah, I have no idea. Literally the only thing I thought is if I win, I'll have a good chance of winning. That's it really. That's all I thought about.

Q. And just a slightly more lighthearted question. Have you dried out from your social media thing? Can you talk us through that, where it was filmed, how much fun that was?

MATT FITZPATRICK: It was great fun. It was at Wentworth. The first challenge was great with the hickory clubs, I actually hit them really well. I was pleasantly surprised. Something Hogan would be delighted to see, I'm sure. But, yeah, I enjoyed that. And then the second one blindfolded was quite difficult. But then the last one was just miserable. I could barely swing, could barely hold onto the club, my hat was coming off. It was a nightmare. It was a nightmare.

Q. Have you forgiven Billy yet?

MATT FITZPATRICK: No, no. (Laughing.)

Q. Matt, 2021, I would say there's been more obsession over distance in golf this year than any other before. There's been talk about rules, obviously

what Bryson has been up to. Other players in the past have tried to seek more yards when perhaps they didn't need to. Have you ever been tempted yourself to get on the TrackMan and see how many miles per hour clubhead speed you could get to? Is that something you've explored? And if not, how have you managed to stay away from it?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I do speed training anyway to try and get faster, but it's not a case of changing my swing or technique, it's just a special club that's made with different weights, can change that. And so go through a routine with it really. It's like going to the gym. And the more I do it, the faster I've become.

So I picked up a fair few mile an hour since I started at the end of the last year. It's difficult to keep on top of it during the season when it's so busy, when your technique might be out and you spend more time doing that. It's a fine balance.

But I've done a fair bit, and I think, like you say, you've got to be careful. There's a few guys that have chased distance, and it's not quite worked out. So you've got to do it the right way.

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