

# The Ryder Cup

Wednesday, 27 September, 2023

Rome, Italy

Marco Simone

## Team Europe

# Matt Fitzpatrick

## Press Conference

**Q. Matt, just wonder how your mood is coming over, given --**

MATT FITZPATRICK: I'm done (laughter).

**Q. How are you coping?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I had the pleasure of being there on Sunday. Yeah, just wasn't good. But no, I was just really excited to be here this week, really. So yeah, just looking forward to getting to Rome, getting this week underway, and you know, from getting here late Sunday night, it's been great so far.

**Q. Has it helped with the mood? All seriousness, if you're a big football fan, seeing your team get thumped like that, most of us have been there.**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Can't get any worse, can it. I am a massive football fan, so it was a pretty sore one to take, that's for sure.

**Q. Obviously it's been a while since your debut in 2016 and then playing again in 2021. Can you talk about how much more of a better player you think you are since those two experiences?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I think looking back, you could argue that I probably wasn't necessarily ready for 2016. Probably would have been ready for 2018. 2021, obviously very different from 2016, as well. Better player. Quite a bit older. And then obviously now, also different player to then as well.

So obviously a lot's changed in those two years for me. Definitely feel just much more experienced, particularly sort of looking around the team room this time, one of the more experienced players just in general rather than -- you know, certainly my third Ryder Cup.

But just having more experience in general I think holds me



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in good stead for this kind of event.

**Q. What does it do for your confidence coming in here as a Major Champion?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, does a world of good. You definitely feel much more like you belong. You know, you feel like you've had that success at the highest level before, and you feel that you always have that feeling that you can repeat that.

I think just having that confidence is a big help.

**Q. Will you finally get to play a four-ball match this week?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: I don't know, you'll have to ask Luke (chuckles).

**Q. You mentioned 2016. What do you think was so hard about that match? When you talk about the experience, you were too young for it, what did you find particularly challenging? Obviously, the result didn't go the way you wanted. But can you talk more about that one?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I think 2016, I was still 19 or 20. Maybe 21 or whatever. I was still really young. I wasn't obviously the longest back then. I was pretty short. There's quite a lot of technical difference in my swing between now and then as well.

I think as an experience, I only played one foursomes and obviously the singles, so that was kind of disappointing. You build it up to be this amazing thing that you wanted to be part of thinking that you'll get a real good go at it, and obviously I never did, really. So that's obviously always something that's sort of disappointing.

But at the same time, like I say, I look back at that experience, and I was very young, and my game wasn't necessarily ready for that almost, I think. I think the golf course setup that week was just not in my favour at all, as well.



So yeah, that was obviously an experience that wasn't necessarily as good as you would have dreamt it to be, but it's what you learn from. And I feel like I know much more how to get ready for an event like this now than I did, you know, learning from that.

**Q. Now searching for any happy memories you might have from the Ryder Cup, from 2016 and 2021, can you speak to the value of what you learned from the Monday through Thursday part of the week, what similarities, what different touches have you seen, depending on the captain?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, for me, I think the big things that stand out for me is communication is really, really important. I think the captain has to be really clear with, you know -- or through the vice captains, I think you've got to have really good communication knowing when you might play or who you think you're being paired with. I think communication is a really big thing.

I think sleep is a real big thing. The days are really long -- your early starts, long days.

I remember looking back at 2021, and it's like you're going to bed at 10.30, which doesn't seem too bad, but then you are up at 5.00, 5.30 to get ready for the match. And so that's a big thing that I'm aware of this week.

The other thing, I haven't done it yet, but I'm convinced you need to play a four-ball match to be able to play your own ball to experience the pressure of playing the full round and not just hitting half the shots. I think that's really important.

**Q. Curious what it was like when you have a one-sided match last time around to being in the last singles going off, long decided by the time you finish. What's it like playing that way?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, obviously it was bizarre. Like you say, it was one-sided. It was great, though, because Billy and Daniel Berger's caddie at the time just took every flag, so I'm sure they have got the most mementos because nobody really cared.

I ended up -- I was talking to Daniel Berger as we were going around, and we were kind of saying, it's pretty dead. This match didn't really have any significance, really, by the time we got to maybe the 10th or 12th hole, really. Yeah, it was a little bit odd.

**Q. There have been statisticians many times in the past, experience flashes. Would you tell us what the significance and what it is that Edoardo brings to the team this year and to you, for that matter?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, obviously we've had stats in the last two that I've played. I just don't think that they have been as in depth or as specific or had the knowledge like Edoardo has.

You know, Ed's played one of these. He's now a vice captain in one of these and he's played on tour for so many years. I think he's just had that success and experience as a player. I think what he brings to the team as a vice captain is absolutely fantastic.

I think through -- I touched on communication being a big thing, and I think through his work with the other players already that he works with on tour, I think his communication has been very, very good.

Yeah, I definitely think he brings a different dynamic than previous stats experience, and I think it's better personally.

**Q. He's helped you a lot, and you've talked about that, but would you be here now not for him?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Would I be what? Sorry.

**Q. Would you be here if not for him?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: I would like to think I would be, yeah.

**Q. You would?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I would like to think so. But yeah, he's definitely helped me a lot.

**Q. In terms of Billy, what does he offer this week?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: The word is used all the time, and probably overused, but the experience. There's probably not a scenario that he hasn't seen in these. I think he probably knows how most players tick of having seen what's happened in previous, and I think, you know, having him on the bag for myself is invaluable, just because of that.

I remember a couple years ago it was the same thing. He was just super positive and just really helpful and guiding me through the week on that one. I feel like, you know, I've learned for myself what I need to do this week to hopefully play my best. And having him, as well, he knows the same thing.

**Q. Has he been regaling you in the team room with stories of years gone by?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I think in the caddies', he has been, yeah. He's not told any in the players' team room yet, but yeah, he's got plenty to share.

**Q. Wonder if you can give us a bit of detail on what it is specifically that you get out of those stats.**

MATT FITZPATRICK: I think the biggest thing this week for me is how you play the course, where you're hitting it, where you're missing it to certain pins, where the best areas are, and just knowing your own game better. You know, knowing the percentages on what clubs to hit, how to hit them. I mean, the depth that me and my team go into personally is pretty deep.

So I feel like we know my game very well and how we can use that to our strength around here.

**Q. Players usually say something along the lines of, I don't care if I win a single point as long as the team wins. If you said that, would that be actually true?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I mean, I want to win a point, of course. But you know, I really would rather be on a winning team. There's no doubt about that. I think that is what's been so great about the last couple of experiences, anyway, is obviously we've not been on the right end of the result, but just being part of The European Team and being amongst the guys that you play with week in, week out. That's what makes the Ryder Cup so special for me.

**Q. Just a word on the course. Obviously you've played here before in an Italian Open and a good performance. How different is it in the setup?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, it's a little bit different. Rough is a little bit higher. But green speeds are the same and pretty similar overall. I think it's in fantastic condition, it really is, and I'd argue better than The Italian Open, so I think that's exciting.

But yeah, it's a good golf course. People say, oh, it's a good match-play course. Normally when people say that, it doesn't do it justice, but I actually think it's a good golf course, too.

**Q. You told us before that in 2016 you were 21 years old. I think this is the same age Højgaard has right now. Which kind of advices are you going to give him for playing his best golf? Because you have this experience, so you can give some help, which kind of advices?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I think the big thing is to not try too hard. I think you can be on the range trying to

perfect your swing and trying to make sure you're hitting all the shots that you want to hit. I think, you know, sometimes it's hard -- it's easy to say, don't try too hard, but doing it is another thing.

I think the important thing is if he can just play his own game and try -- easy as it sounds, just one shot at a time, just not try too hard to find the perfect swing.

**Q. In the past, we have Molinari brothers on the team, Edoardo and Francesco. So I'm wondering if you and your brother, Alex, have the target of the Ryder Cup, playing together in the future?**

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, hopefully. Hopefully. You know, if we both keep playing well and Alex can sort of keep going, then you never know what can happen. But that would be an amazing experience, and there's nothing I would love more than to play with my brother in a Ryder Cup.

STEVE TODD: Thanks for joining us. We wish you well this week.

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