

Alfred Dunhill Links Championship

Wednesday, October 4, 2023

St. Andrews, Fife, Scotland

Matt Fitzpatrick

Press Conference

CLARE BODEL: Matt, welcome back to the Alfred Dunhill Links Championship. It's a bit of a different week from last week in a lot of different ways. It must make a difference coming on to this week, the week after the Ryder Cup, that the family is here and it's a great experience?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Definitely, obviously playing in Rome was pretty special but looking forward to this week. Been looking forward to it for a while since we decided to play again. Yeah, if the weather stays all right it will be great.

THE MODERATOR: It's a family group for you, your brother in that group as well, looking forward to that.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I was very surprised that we got -- but yes, always nice and to play with my mum as well, pretty surreal.

Q. (Inaudible.)

MATT FITZPATRICK: We lost the Saturday session, didn't we. I think it was, you know, I would say it was probably a concerning spell from probably about 3 o'clock on Sunday. I think there was a moment in time there that it was a bit like, hang on a minute, what's going on here. But I think on the whole, it very much went to Luke's plan, and yeah, obviously it was a pretty special week.

Q. How late --

MATT FITZPATRICK: 1.30. Nothing crazy. Nothing crazy.

Q. On the bus --

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, it was an amazing week, it really was. You know, you go into the event beforehand, even with it at home, given a little more chance. But you look nine months out, three months out, it was USA have got so much depth, it's going to be really difficult for Europe to win.

ALFRED DUNHILL
LINKS CHAMPIONSHIP

I think that kind of shows how the result is given or what happened before, really, with everything, with the players that they have and the depth that they have for us to go out there and play as well as we did and to get the Ryder Cup back shows how well we played.

Q. As a home Ryder Cup, what was that experience like?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Just the support you get. The difference from being in the U.S., you're not feeling anything, there's no cheering for you really. The one I played -- I didn't feel like I had any sort of support I played, and '21 was obviously COVID, so we only had a few fans. It was very much U.S.-based.

You come to Europe, like you can't go any wrong from the moment you step on the first tee and walking every single hole, you've got people cheering left and right. I think that's what makes it so special being at home. That's why I think the European players tend to feel like we get a little bit better.

Q. Last week -- talking about how he helped his players deal with pressure, he basically said you have to find something that comes easy for you but that you can do really impressively. Do you connect with that, and if so what do you lean on when the pressure is up, that comes easy that you can be aggressive with?

MATT FITZPATRICK: That's a difficult question to answer. When you're under pressure, I wouldn't say there's anything that really comes easy. There might be a certain part of your game that's a strength that you try and lean into, but I wouldn't say I have anything in particular I think about being under pressure that I think about. Me personally, it's not really something that I've thought about before.

Q. Is this a special week for your family?

MATT FITZPATRICK: It is, definitely. It is definitely a special week. My dad would love to play -- start picking and choosing. It's just so nice to be here and the Old Course in general. The three courses we play are fantastic.

Q. Of the three, which suites your game?

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

MATT FITZPATRICK: To be honest, I don't think any of them suit my game. I've set that before when I'm playing St Andrews. Yeah, I don't think any of them suit my game in particular.

But I obviously enjoy playing this. They are all great golf courses, great layouts. I think for this format, that's what makes it enjoyable. It's not high rough. You hit fairways and it's pretty enjoyable -- and such a nice week.

Q. Did it exceed expectations --

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, it was weird, it was a mix of emotions for me. I think to get my first four-ball point -- to get my first point on Friday, after one of the greatest days I've had on the golf course and to be ahead by some distance was just amazing. Obviously after that, didn't really play as well as I would have liked. Played well in practise but couldn't take that to the golf course. To not sort of come in and support the team the last two days, that was disappointing to me.

But it's interesting, I spoke to Joe Root yesterday to ask him a question about, you know, being part of a team and not necessarily feeling like you contribute. It's new to me. It's an individual game, and you know, I don't have to worry about letting anyone else down. It's just myself week-in, week-out.

But when you're part of a team and you don't feel like you've contributed but the team has won, it's a weird feeling. I look back at my last two, and I contribute but we lost. I can accept that more, whereas unfortunately like you almost can't celebrate as much because you've not done as much.

But Joe gave me some great advice, and it's like, it's the way it is. You have to understand it's about the team -- I know it's definitely not about myself, it's about us as a team and that's why we do so well. But it was interesting kind of emotions for me because obviously disappointing to not do better for myself but obviously absolutely delighted to win.

Q. The progress made so far -- chance of brothers playing in a Ryder Cup?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Looking at the Molinaris, they have done it. The Højgaards, they have got a great chance of doing it as well. Me and Alex certainly have a great chance of doing it. To be able to do that again would be incredibly special. We obviously got some good practise in at Zurich this year. So hopefully a sign of things to come.

Q. Talking about captain for 2025, do you think there

should be a debrief amongst the players?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I think everyone should be asked. I think one thing that I was speaking to Edoardo about, he was kind of speaking to me about it, really, if you have Luke obviously doing this home one, see how that went. That obviously went really well, planning, all the meticulous details, very, very good. And you know, you go, okay, let's give him a chance to do two years in America. Doing an away one is completely different and it's much harder. You almost think, do you kind of do that cycle? Do you give a new captain a home one to start with, let him kind of find his feet a little bit, see how that goes, and then let him do an away one as well? And that way you've got some continuation of previous processes and rather than kind of just brand new every time.

Q. Colsaerts telling you -- last man standing at the celebration -- futile effort?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I do remember 2016, seem to remember coming down, and -- was like half-asleep, someone was. But I don't think there was any of that this time around.

Q. Circling back to family stuff, can you talk specifically about your mum?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I don't think she'd be the first to say I told him how to swing it or I told him to go take this lesson or anything like that. I think the thing about my mum is she was just always so supportive and she'd take me here, there, everywhere to go play a tournament or for a golf lesson. She sacrificed her own weekends and time to go and take me and my brother around when we needed to go for various things. I think that's such a -- goes without saying, such a huge thing for her to do to give us that opportunity. I wouldn't say this is like a repayment, playing at Dunhill, but this certainly is a nice thing to be able to play with her.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

