

U.S. Open Championship 2022

Thursday, June 16, 2022

Brookline, Massachusetts, USA

The Country Club

Matt Fitzpatrick

Flash Interview



THE MODERATOR: Matt Fitzpatrick, 2-under 68. What was working well out there today?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Just drove it really well early doors, and just a couple of loose ones coming in. On the whole, it just really pleased with the way I drove it. Holed some really good putts today as well.

THE MODERATOR: Can you remember a time when you came into a tournament with this many expectations? And evaluate how you played under those.

MATT FITZPATRICK: It's different. I think for me I've tried to have no expectations coming into this week. I just want to enjoy the week, having obviously played so well here nine years ago. I've got great memories of the place, and the whole time I've been out, I see shots that I hit and I see the places I was. I think because of that I'm a bit more at ease.

I'm just trying not to put any pressure on myself. It's a golf course I know I can do well around, and I'm just trying to enjoy it. I sort of enjoyed playing with DJ and Webb as well today, and that was nice.

Q. We've made a ton of the U.S. Amateur and all the parallels, and it seems like the crowd knows the story line too. Do you feel a little extra support here compared to other stops in the States?

MATT FITZPATRICK: 100%. 100%. Since I got here Monday, it's been the same deal. I love being in Boston, and everyone in the crowd has made me feel very welcome, as well, from when I was here nine years ago, so it definitely feels in a strange way a little bit more like a home game, which is obviously nice, but, yeah, definitely I notice that support.

Q. How would you compare the way the course is playing and the setup to U.S. Opens in recent years?

MATT FITZPATRICK: U.S. Opens? For me I feel like a few of them -- a few of them vary. As stupid as it sounds, the grass type makes a big difference. I feel like last year

you look at Torrey when you are on the kikuyu, to me it didn't really feel like a U.S. Open because it never got firm and fast. The greens got firm, but the fairways couldn't get firm. I feel like this place by Sunday could be really, really firm and fast, and that's what in my opinion U.S. Opens are all about.

There's a premium on driving, and I definitely feel like that's the deal with this golf course. You have to put yourself in position off the tee to give yourself a chance of going into the greens.

Q. Do you have any specific strategies for blocking out extra pressure or calming your mind before big tournaments?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Not really. I think if I'm honest, I think -- I've obviously played well at the PGA. It was obviously a new experience for me, so that was a learning experience.

I think this one is different, and it's kind of in a nice way in that I've played well around here before. There's absolutely no reason why I can't do it again, and on paper my game is way better than it was nine years ago.

I feel like I just have that confidence that I can turn it around. You go through a bad spell of holes, I feel like I can turn it around. I feel like when you've not played a golf course or not had necessarily good experiences at a golf course before or it's a new one, you don't have that, and it's kind of easy to get away from you and get down on yourself. Here, like I've said all week, I've got great memories of the place, and I feel like I know I can have success.

Q. You said you enjoyed playing with Webb and Dustin today. Does it get awkward at all, I guess?

MATT FITZPATRICK: No. No. DJ is still DJ. I really enjoy playing with DJ. He is a great guy, and he compliments you on good shots, which is more than some players do, and, yeah, in my opinion he is a down-to-earth guy.



Q. Is he the same guy inside the ropes as he is maybe in front of the mic?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I would say so, yeah. I would say so.

Q. We see it every week on the PGA TOUR, especially at the PGA Championship. It's a march to 72 holes. You've played one great round. You have three more to go. Do you think there's something magical or special about just 72 holes? It's been around for a long time.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Are you talking about the format?

Q. The format.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I think 72 holes, like you say, is more of a marathon. I do believe that it brings out the best golfers. I think when you play in a major championship that's what you want. When you play in the biggest events, THE PLAYERS, BMW Wentworth PGA, those big events, everyone wants to win. I feel like the 72 holes brings out the best players.

Regular Tour events, though, could they do with a shake-up? Sure. More match-play, maybe more team stuff. It would be more enjoyable. I think it would be more interesting for people to watch. But I think when it comes to big tournaments like this, I think 72-hole stroke play is where it's at.

Q. I've sometimes wondered how many majors Tiger might have won had it been four-day 90-hole events with 36-hole finals. It would only separate him more probably.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Exactly. I think for him he's just played the game with so much patience over the years, and that's probably why he has had so much success.

I think it's very easy to start chasing when you drop a few shots or you're not making any moves up the leaderboard. Rather, letting it come to you.

For me it's been a learning curve, and it's just about being more and more patient as weeks go on, and hopefully sort of let everyone come back and so you slowly pick up shots.

Q. Success, obviously, helps, but what is it about this place that suits you?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I think the tight fairways. The tight fairways is a big deal. There is just a premium on driving accuracy. I think from there -- I think you have to putt your

way around here. I do think you have to think about it.

If I look back at Winged Foot, obviously, I didn't play very well. I feel like I'm a different player than I am now. Winged Foot was -- you didn't really have to think much about it. It was driver. All holes kind of looked the same. It was driver everywhere as far as you can hit it, and then wedge it on or whatever.

Whereas here I feel like there is a lot of drivers, but you are then going into the greens. You can't miss on the left side because the slope is so severe, and you have no shot.

You might decide to play to a corner on 18 with a 3-wood or you just take it even further with driver. I just think it gives you plenty of options and things to think about around this place.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks for your time, Matt. Good luck tomorrow.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Thanks.

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