

The 150th Open

Mixed Zone

Friday, 15 July 2022

Matt Fitzpatrick



MATT FITZPATRICK: I managed to take them.

Q. You said yesterday you were pretty pleased. Today did you execute it as you would want to?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, definitely. I just felt, obviously with a little rain this morning, it allowed you to get a little closer to some of the pins, allowed you to stop your ball. Because of that, more chances of making birdie and managed to putt well as well.

Q. Knowing you grew up watching Tiger, playing with him these two days, seeing him in the current state he's in, what were your emotions as he was making that walk up 18?

MATT FITZPATRICK: It was amazing. It gave me goosebumps. Just looking around, seeing everyone stood up, and giving him a standing ovation coming down 18. Yeah, it was incredible. It's something that will live with me forever, for sure.

It's thoroughly deserved, and I think towards the end of it, you could see he was a little bit emotional as well. Yeah, it was a big deal.

Q. Was it just a function of him being not sharp competitively? What do you see?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I guess so. He knows the answer to that better than pretty much anyone. But I think this place as well, I thought it was difficult yesterday, and I think probably maybe that lack of sharpness maybe put him out of favour. Today just, I guess, got going after the first couple, and then, yeah, just struggled a little bit.

Q. Did you and Max talk about hanging back on 18 to let him have the stage to himself?

MATT FITZPATRICK: We didn't, but I'm pretty sure -- you know, I've seen it with other players that have done it up here before. Max gave me a little bit of shit. He was like, you were a little bit close. I'm, like, was I? I was panicking. No, we're all good. We knew what we were doing.

Q. What emotion did you detect from Tiger when it was all

done?

MATT FITZPATRICK: He was pleased with me. I played well. He said well played and keep it up. He seemed like he was the whole day, the whole two days. I think obviously he seemed emotional just as he was about to arrive to his ball. Yeah, on the hole after we finished there, he was pretty normal as he has been the last two.

Q. The atmosphere there, did you block it out. Or was it quite inspiring?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yesterday probably the first couple, just you've got to get your head around where everyone is and who's marshaling what because he's got his own marshals. I had a go at one guy, and he gave me some chat back saying he works with Tiger, to which I was, like, I didn't know what to say.

That was -- getting my head around that first was a bit strange. After that, certainly today just becomes playing like any other round really.

Q. What was the difference, did you feel, in your game today versus yesterday, if there was any difference?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I just made putts today. Yeah, I gave myself more chances as well to make birdie. Yeah, I just made the putts today. That was the only difference really.

Q. What will the mindset be going into tomorrow?

MATT FITZPATRICK: You know, just do the same as what I've been doing for the last two days. I feel like I'm playing well, hitting plenty of greens, which is important, even though the greens are massive. So it's kind of hard to miss some of them. Just keep doing what I've been doing.

Q. Do you feel different out there as a major champion? Has it affected you? It's (indiscernible) in the round?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I feel different. I can compete, and I can win. It's definitely been a positive. It doesn't hold me back. It's not something I'm nervous about. I've got to show myself a bit more. Yeah, it's just given me that extra confidence, I guess.



Q. Matt, your transformation has been so significant over the last couple of years. Tiger probably hasn't seen you. Did he have anything to say about the new-look Fitz?

MATT FITZPATRICK: He asked me about the speed stuff, and I just explained what it was, the stack and all that. But, yeah, that was it. It was a brief conversation.

Q. How much did yesterday, the length of the round, test your patience?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Not at all, to be honest. It was one of those, I knew it was going to be long. Billy had warned me. I played the Dunhill here, which I know is super long as well.

So I knew -- I didn't really mind waiting. It wasn't that that was the issue. It's the issue that it is taking like six hours and nothing's done about it. I know there isn't anything to do about it, but I don't know, I guess it's just about the golf course. I don't know, maybe it needs tweaks. I don't know what the answer is.

But it just shouldn't take six hours and nine minutes to get round. Like I don't care where you play. I just think that's stupid.

Q. Would you say the lack of wind or the dampness was the bigger difference today?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Dampness, I would say. Just because balls are spinning. I mean, I've not seen any spin-back in the four days I've been here, and I spun one back off the green where I made my only bogey. I was just like how is that possible?

Q. Where was that at?

MATT FITZPATRICK: 6 maybe.

Q. The only bogey, you said, right?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yes.

Q. About an hour shorter today. Does it feel now to you like it was shorter?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Not really, to be honest. It's still, what, quarter to 4:00. I teed off at 10:00. It still feels like it's a long day.

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