

The Walker Cup

Quick Quotes

Saturday, 2 September 2023

Alex Maguire

James Ashfield



THE WALKER CUP
ST ANDREWS 2023

Q. Alex, we've seen how much that meant. Can you tell us what it was like?

ALEX MAGUIRE: Yeah, delighted to -- we fought our heart out there. We fought too hard to let it go at the end, and obviously their putt sort of horseshoed and we got a look at the struggle up there, and I said to James, they're going to hole it, because I think me and him wanted to get a point on the board more than anyone else. Not at the team but more than -- it's just --

JAMES ASHFIELD: We wanted it bad.

ALEX MAGUIRE: We just wanted it so bad.

Q. What did it feel like when those putts dropped on 17 and 18?

ALEX MAGUIRE: Actually on 17, I tensed so much my abs that my stomach started to hurt going to 18 tee so I had to take a few seconds. Yeah, I just missed one on 10 there and that sort of annoyed me.

JAMES ASHFIELD: That was it really.

ALEX MAGUIRE: Then after that we played very good. I have a habit of holing putts under the gun. Luckily I came through in the last few holes.

Q. What lengths do you think those two putts were?

ALEX MAGUIRE: It was probably about 10 feet, maybe eight feet on 17, and that one was maybe 15 feet, 12 feet.

JAMES ASHFIELD: Yeah, left him a bit more work on that one.

ALEX MAGUIRE: The ball is in the hole now, so...

Q. James, what was it like for you standing over those putts?

JAMES ASHFIELD: Honestly, I'm just begging that they're

going to go in, but my partner can putt, to be fair, so he's ideal to have over them in that situation.

Q. How was that for first experience at the Walker Cup?

JAMES ASHFIELD: My body is still pumping, really. I want to get back out there, but luckily I've got a nice little rest this afternoon. Yeah, but wow.

Q. First lead since 2015 after the first session. How much stock do you put into that?

JAMES ASHFIELD: I think if we go out there and win each session, we're going to win, so we've done one out of the four. We'll go out in the afternoon, try and win that session and see where that leads us tomorrow. But yeah, good start.

Q. Alex, the Walker Cup experience for you, was it everything you imagined it would be?

ALEX MAGUIRE: Yeah. Being 3-up, you sort of think you're cruising, and all of a sudden you make one mistake and they make a birdie and you're 1-up. Then we made a sort of sloppy bogey on 15. I hit a bad second shot and a bad putt. James --

JAMES ASHFIELD: That's not to blame. There were so many --

ALEX MAGUIRE: To be fair, the last two putts were great, but the putt James hit on 16 was a big one because if he misses that, then all of a sudden we're 1-down, two to play. He had a 20-footer there to keep us in the match, and yeah, I'll take the glory, but it was all down to James.

Q. It was 20 feet on 16?

JAMES ASHFIELD: Yeah, yeah. Obviously I thought I had to hole it. I thought in my head that he's holing his. I thought if I hole mine, then maybe put him under a bit of pressure, and luckily he missed, so managed to go to --

Q. Can I ask you both about the crowd.

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JAMES ASHFIELD: Oh, how many people here, eh? I couldn't believe it.

ALEX MAGUIRE: This morning it was good but then the back nine was incredible.

JAMES ASHFIELD: That first tee shot I was trembling. I can't lie. Then got out there, felt comfortable, then near the end I got a little bit more nervous again. But yeah, it's great fun. Everyone is out here supporting.

Q. How much energy does that give you with this crowd behind you?

ALEX MAGUIRE: They're out here supporting us. They're not here judging us, which as, as a golfer it can feel quite intimidating. They're all people here, but they want the same result as we do. Obviously some of them are Americans and they don't want the same result as we do, but yeah, like it's a -- what an opportunity.

The roar is just so cool. You don't really hear that apart from major championships or big events. I know we're sort of in the arena, and getting those roars is mad. It's great.

Q. This golf course holds special memories for you, Alex, especially on this green, as well.

ALEX MAGUIRE: Yeah, especially the greens, yeah. For whatever reason, sometimes I lose focus and I just can't really get the read, but when -- it's annoying because I wish I could do it all the time, but it's usually when it's in crunch time I get the read very well and I commit to it a lot more. I'm so intense over it, and I commit to it.

Yeah, good memories. I think if we win this week or if we have a good week, it'll definitely trump what happened in June. But yeah, good start. Long way to go, but hopefully win the singles now.

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