

THE PLAYERS Championship

Friday, March 12, 2021

Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, USA

TPC Sawgrass

Matthew Fitzpatrick

Quick Quotes

Q. You, Lee, Sergio on top of the leaderboard. Is there something about this course that is -- I don't know if it's different than the typical PGA TOUR test, but does it feel like anything back home?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: No, I don't know what it is. I think for me, it's just a demanding golf course. In particular visually off the tee. I think some of the fairways are actually wider than they look once you get -- yeah, wider than they look from off the tee, so I think it sort of plays a little bit like that, and I personally think the straighter hitters probably have a bit of advantage around here. Gives you more of a chance to hit more greens really.

Q. You and Carlos playing as a two-ball today was slow. You guys were waiting on basically every single shot. Is that difficult, do you try to slow down or do you kind of do your thing and accept you're going to wait?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: No, definitely try to slow down. It wasn't as bad as I imagined it would be, fortunately. It was more just taking my time and trying to just keep busy in between shots.

Q. How would you describe your round today? What was working so well for you out there?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Today was good, yeah, for me much better than yesterday. Just hit it bad tee-to-green really. First green I missed was 4 on the front nine and missed 5 and then missed 8.

On the whole, three greens -- missing three greens around here is a massive positive, in my opinion. If I can do that over the weekend, hopefully pour some putts in, I'll have a chance.

Q. This is your fourth week playing in a row and you've been basically in contention the entire time. Physically and mentally has it been draining and what's your energy level like going into the weekend?



MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I'm ready for a week off. I'm ready for a week off, definitely. When you keep putting yourself in position you kind of want to finish one of them off. Yeah, just got to keep grinding, and I think the biggest thing is I've got to play smart and not -- try not to play stressful golf where you're missing greens and easy shots and just keep hitting it to the fat side and make the misses a little bit easier.

Q. While you have been playing four weeks in a row, you might be a little tired, your game has obviously been in good form. Do you just kind of keep in that flow?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Yeah, a little bit. Statistically we've looked into it before, I normally play rubbish week four. I think, because I have been playing well, you do kind of take the momentum as you go. I think that's my opinion on that. I think obviously if it's the other way around, it is kind of difficult to find something when you're in a four-week stretch, three-week stretch and it's not quite going your way. For me to be playing well the first two, three weeks here and be able to push on here is a big help.

Q. Do you continue to feel more and more confident in these positions? Obviously all these events you've been playing well have been big, marquee events. Do you feel more comfortable worldwide in these positions, in these big events?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Yeah, definitely, definitely. It's one of my things this year that I've wanted to do is be in these positions more often. I've got to give myself chances and the experiences to hopefully knock one off. Statistically, all being well, I'll keep knocking at the door and one of them will open.

Q. Looks like you're going to be in the final group with Lee tomorrow, two Englishmen separated by 22 years. I would imagine you grew up watching him play. It'll be a comfortable one for you?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: Yeah, yeah, definitely. It's obviously much easier for me to play with someone like Lee who I've played with multiple times than someone who I've obviously not played with as much out here.



Particularly handy for Billy, obviously knowing Lee so well, as well. Yeah, hopefully we'll have a nice afternoon, a pair of 61s, and we'll see each other again Sunday.

Q. In the years that you were kind of coming up, Lee has been kind of known as a little bit of the Pied Piper of the European Tour, kind of shepherding some of the younger players along. Did he help you along the way with anything, any advice?

MATTHEW FITZPATRICK: I wouldn't say we spent too much time off the golf course. When I first turned pro, we were with the same management company. We had a couple dinners, played a couple practice rounds, but nothing out of the ordinary.

You know, you can always have a conversation with Lee. He's very, very down to earth, very approachable, and like I say, with Billy knowing him so well, yeah, it's pretty handy.

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