

U.S. Open Championship 2022

Saturday, June 18, 2022

Brookline, Massachusetts, USA

The Country Club

Matt Fitzpatrick

Flash Interview



THE MODERATOR: Matt Fitzpatrick, 2-under 68. Great round out there, Matt. Can you talk us through it?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, just everything was solid today. I played really well. Holed putts at the right time, and, yeah, it was a great day.

THE MODERATOR: Can you talk a little bit about the conditions? Obviously, they were tough all day.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah I put my sun cream on before the round, and I was thinking, oh, it's going to get nice and warm, but quite the opposite by the end of the day. It's pretty dark now.

You know, the wind was strong. Wind was really strong. It made it tough. You had to be switched on with the way you were hitting it, where you were missing it, and I think that was why it was a great challenge, and really happy with my score.

Q. Matt, what is it about this course that just gets you going that you like about it so much?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I think visually for me it's a test off the tee. Not only that, you've got to be good around the greens here. Can't miss it in the wrong spots.

I said it yesterday, I think you've got to plot your way around. You really have to think about where you want to hit it, where you don't want to hit it. Compared to other golf courses we play on Tour, it certainly gives that to me, and that's why I like it.

Q. Matt, you obviously have been building up to this moment for some time. You've had a win here. You were in contention in Tulsa last month. What did you learn on that final day that perhaps you can put into action and go over the top tomorrow?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I think I didn't have my A-game that day, and still just missed the playoff by one or two shots. I can't even remember now.

I think that was the thing is that I felt like if I played anything like my A-game, B-game, whatever, I would have been in even better contention. For me I think taking that away from it, knowing that I can play better than I did and where I finished definitely brought into this week as well as, obviously, having great experiences here before.

Q. Do you think your win in 2013 might give you the edge tomorrow?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I certainly think it gives me an edge over the others, yeah. I genuinely do believe that. It's a real, obviously, positive moment in my career. It kind of kickstarted me.

To come back here and play so well again, it kind of just gives me growing confidence round by round.

Q. Have you ever heard the word "Fitzzy" yelled more on American soil?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Probably not, to be honest. I was walking down 18 and said the same thing to Billy. I said, obviously, winning the U.S. Am here helps, but it just feels a bit more like a home game this week, and that's why it feels different and for the better.

It's been great to have the support this week. Any moments I've had of success around here during this week, it's been celebrated pretty loud.

Q. You, obviously, have won a bunch in Europe, but what did Southern Hills do for your comfort level knowing you can put yourself in that position on such a big stage?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Obviously, Southern Hills, with it being a major, it's quite different than a regular PGA TOUR event. At the end of the day, they're just really hard to win.

I think up until Southern Hills really, I didn't really appreciate how hard it is actually to win a major. Yeah, I've not challenged really up until then. I think, myself included, and people on the outside maybe think it's easier than it is.



You just have to look at Tiger. He knocked off so many in such a quick span. That's why I think people think, oh, it's a piece of cake; it's like a regular Tour event. But it's not.

It brings a lot more to the mental aspect of the game than other regular events, and for me I think it's been a big change from U.S. PGA to come here to a golf course I know so well, and it's given me extra confidence.

Q. What's different?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Different about this week?

Q. No, what's different majors, how you feel, entire atmosphere versus regular?

MATT FITZPATRICK: They mean more. They mean more. Unfortunately, I love playing the events, but nobody really remembers 2013, obviously, Heritage or 2015 Canadian Open. It's like everyone remembers the majors and who wins them and when they're won. Those are the ones that mean something. That's what everyone strives to achieve.

Q. When you say they mean more, does that mean that your career would be incomplete without one?

MATT FITZPATRICK: You always ask good questions. I remember you caught me out here in 2013.

Would my career be incomplete if I didn't have one? Sure, yeah, I would be disappointed if I didn't, yeah. I genuinely would be disappointed if I didn't.

I feel like certainly now these last two majors that I feel like so much more comfortable out here. My game has changed for the better. I've given myself more chances. I definitely feel like I have much more of a chance now to win a major than I ever have done in my career, obviously.

Yeah, I would probably say it does if I retire at 48, whatever, not playing Seniors Tour.

Q. I assume you're talking about because of the length.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah. I think that's been a big, big thing this week, and certainly the last few weeks really, just noticing me playing with other guys and being level to pass them consistently. As I said the other day, I drove it really well with DJ the last few days, and you look at the success he has had in his career driving it that distance. You know, he has taken advantage of that. Now for me I feel like I've got to take advantage of that myself.

Q. One other thing. Billy on the bag, obviously, it's not Alex.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Can't have everything, can you. Billy on the bag. He's great. He's so experienced. He's been there and done it before multiple times.

Yeah, the experience is invaluable. He is still learning. He's learning about me, and I'm still learning about my game and the game in general. I think sort of since we started working together, my career has got considerably better, so I think that just shows how good he is.

Q. Another one on distance. Just size-wise, I think you give motivation to normal-sized people. Were there times where in recent years where you're kind of looking around and thinking, like, man, there's a gap and how do I close it? Can I close it? How limiting is this going to be in terms of what I'm able to do?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah. Now I look back from where I am now to years ago and where my game was. It's actually crazy how different my game is. It really is. I think one thing that was kind of -- well, it was the big thing really that was holding me back. Putting was good. Short game was good. Approach play was fine, but my driving, I was straight but just didn't have that distance to take advantage of everything else.

Now I feel like I've gone one more than that. Rather than just keeping up, I'm past guys. My ball speed is up considerably over the last years or so, and I think all of a sudden doing that, it just gives me a much bigger chance in competing week in, week out.

I feel like that's what it has done this year.

Q. It increases your self-belief?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, no doubt. I'm sure it's the same with Rory. He is arguably the best driver on the planet, as well as DJ, Rahm, all those boys. They step on the tee against someone, and they know they've got 20 on them instantly, and that's a big difference. It could be two clubs. It could be three clubs. That's huge when it comes to 72 holes.

For me I definitely feel similar to that now.

Q. Obviously, distance is what the media is sort of focusing on with you. Do you get the sense that your fellow players are noticing? Has anyone said, like, oh, didn't expect to be behind Fitzy?

MATT FITZPATRICK: No one has said anything to me. I

would like to think they notice it because I'm in front of them most of the time. But, yeah, no one has said anything.

The media, that's what everyone has been talking about. It's obviously a big deal. I'm only 5'9", so people probably aren't expecting me to get it out there, but yeah, I definitely -- it's just been a real big positive. It's taken a lot of work, but it's paid off.

Q. One last one real quick. Are the distance gains, have they gone down the bag too, or is it just driver?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Not really. I picked about three or four yards up with irons, which we found strange really because I can kind of hit my irons longer anyway because I can kind of trap them and get them going further, but yeah, we did find it strange that it wasn't really that big a difference in the irons really.

Q. Do you have numbers for your club head speed and ball speed?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Club head speed, I'm guessing about 117, 118 on the golf course and ball speed I think last week at Canadian Open I was, like, 179.

Q. What's your weight?

MATT FITZPATRICK: 74 kilograms.

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