

U.S. Open Championship 2024

Saturday, June 15, 2024

Village of Pinehurst, North Carolina, USA

Pinehurst Resort & C.C. (Course No. 2)

Matthieu Pavon

Flash Interview



THE MODERATOR: Matthieu Pavon, 1-under 69. Talk us through your round a little bit.

MATTHIEU PAVON: Yeah, that was a pretty nice round. We know on moving day, everything can happen. You can get a really good one and also a bad one.

The course is really showing its teeth so far. It's a tough one. You feel like sometimes you are flying a little bit, your game, everything is going on, and then at some point you just miss one green, can see a bogey, and then all of a sudden it starts to be harder in your mind and in your game, and you still have to finish the round.

That was an up-and-down day, but really happy with the score so far.

Q. Talk about the hot start, 3-under on the front.

MATTHIEU PAVON: Yeah, low expectation. That's I, think, for me quite key. The thing is the golf course is just so hard that I just try to put my ball in the right spots, not being too aggressive, trying to drop one or two putts, and then I made a great birdie on my par-5. That's the type of play that I'm trying to do all around.

Q. It's been a remarkable journey for you when you think back to Dubai last year, your finish there. You've overcome a lot in life, a lot of adversity. What's it going to take one more time? What are you going to tap into from previous experiences as you look ahead to this final round?

MATTHIEU PAVON: It's really, like, even more on a week like this, on a major, the word "discipline," I think this is really the key this week. As you guys probably saw, I hit a 6-iron off the tee on the 3rd. It was really tempting to hit 3-wood and get close to the green and everything, but that's not the way I see that hole to be played, the golf course to be played, being that aggressive.

So discipline and patience are really key for me this week, and this is what I've learned the most about the PGA TOUR journey so far.

Q. Have you ever had a worse lie than that punch-out shot from behind the native grass?

MATTHIEU PAVON: Yeah, that was a rough one. When you miss into the sides, you play you're going to escape from this type of line. That one was really bad. I was buried. I almost asked my caddie if I probably had to play like backwards because I wasn't sure if the ball would come out.

Then I just trusted, hit it hard, and I ended up making a super par. That's probably also on that hole the toughest pin location I have ever played. I think that pin location was completely sick.

Q. How hard was that approach shot after you punched out? You hit it pretty close after that. How challenging was that shot?

MATTHIEU PAVON: Yeah, I think I was lucky at some point to have done the best practice round ever and remembered how tight was that place because I couldn't remember it was that tight. There is literally like five yards to put the ball, and if you don't, it goes either in the trap or either back like 20 yards off the green. So I was just really happy that I had a nice number, 120 yards. It's kind of a shot that I really like.

I just tried to get the closest I could, and somehow it went pretty close.

Q. There's a good chance you end up in the final pairing tomorrow with Bryson. A lot of people that might not know who you are, know your name. What do you want people to know about you being on this bigger stage?

MATTHIEU PAVON: Nothing special. I just love golf. That's the thing. I'm just so happy to compete here in America. It has been a remarkable journey for me.

I just love so much competing here, and this is what I like people to know about me. I'm a pretty regular guy, and it's just awesome to be here and having a chance to share



maybe the last round in a major in the last group with a guy like probably Bryson tomorrow.

Q. What are some of the differences you've experienced playing over here versus in Europe?

MATTHIEU PAVON: Yeah, it's so much different. The golf course here feels like -- playing the Signatures so far, it feels like we play majors every week. Since we started let's say the Florida Swing, we had Bay Hill was one of the toughest golf courses I've ever played. Then you go to Sawgrass -- like not the toughest, but you have to be ready and your game in the right state to make sure you can compete at that level. Then you go Quail Hollow, you go to Memorial. This golf course, there is nothing even close on the European Tour. Nothing which comes even close.

This is really different. I'm not really used to like hit it in the rough and not being capable to go to the green, or hit it in the rough and sometimes can't really chip towards the pin, have to aim like 10 yards away and try to make 5. It is some of the stuff that I've had to heard, and I think I've learned quite a lot the last few weeks.

Q. This is going to be a new experience for you at a major championship tomorrow. In your mind are you expecting it to be golf like you've always played in your life, or do you have different expectations?

MATTHIEU PAVON: No, it's just golf. At the end of the day, it's me against the golf course. Even more in majors, my only goal every time I show up is trying to beat the golf course.

Here it's tough. The only thing I'm focused on is that goal, and this is what I'm going to do tomorrow.

Q. Michael Lorenzo-Vera told me in describing your game -- his quote, you "play with a big pair." Is that how you would describe your game?

MATTHIEU PAVON: No, the thing is I don't know if it's that I have a big pair. It's just that I have -- I'm not scared about taking the shots. I've never been scared about taking the shots. That's the thing; that's why I think we are a great team with my caddie because Woody is really holding me. I think if I was playing probably alone this week, I would have missed the cut by a lot of shots. But we have a game plan, some holes we just play short of the green and give it a chance with like an uphill-type of shot.

If I have to take one shot tomorrow to try to win the tournament, you can be sure that I'll try to take it.

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