

MEDIA CONFERENCE
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MATTHEW FITZPATRICK

CHRIS COX: We'll go ahead and get started. Good afternoon to our media calling in from the U.K. and good morning to Matt Fitzpatrick, our 2022 U.S. Open champion. Thank you all for joining us.

Matt, it's been almost 48 hours now since you broke through with your win at The Country Club. I imagine the last day or so has been a bit of a blur. If you can just take us through what the last couple of days has been like now that you are a U.S. Open champion.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, it's just been incredibly surreal. It's all been, all just happened incredibly fast. Didn't get finished with media and signing until late on Sunday night and then on Monday there was a bit more media and a few other things to do, and then came into the city last night as well. Yeah, it's been great just to sort of spend the time with my family and my friends as well here, it's been amazing.

CHRIS COX: That's excellent. Thank you. With that, we will open it up to questions.

Q. Just two quick questions. I suppose what are the next steps for you? Will you be heading back to Sheffield to play at Hallamshire? We were there yesterday and everyone was so excited for you and kind of can't wait for you to come back. And secondly, do you hope that with your win you'll be able to inspire younger golfers from across Sheffield and South Yorkshire to hopefully take up the sport?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I'm going to fly back on Sunday. That was my plan originally anyway, to go back to the U.K. on Sunday. I'll do that. Then in terms of getting up to Hallamshire, I'll see. Before this week, before last week should I say, I had a lot of busy stuff going on anyway, so I'll see what I can fit in really.

In terms of inspiring a younger generation, of course. That would be great for more kids and juniors, boys and girls to get into golf and if I can help push that along, then that's great.

Q. Matt, looking ahead to St. Andrews, no Englishman has won The Open Championship since Nick Faldo 30 years ago. Is that on your mind and do you think that being a major winner now gives you a better chance at being in contention there?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I've not even thought about The Open yet, to be honest. Obviously still fresh after last weekend. I definitely think that experience obviously of winning the U.S. Open holds me in good stead going into future majors, having been there and done it now and proven to myself and proven to other people around me that I've won majors -- major is a big deal, and to have that going into any event is a big positive. So I'll definitely take

confidence in that going into The Open.

Q. And you mentioned you're coming home to the U.K. on Sunday, but what do your golfing preparations look like between now and St. Andrews?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I'll play JP McManus Pro-Am in Ireland, which is the Monday, Tuesday before the Scottish Open and then I'll play the Scottish Open as well on top of that just before The Open.

Q. Can you tell us when your plans to go to Bramall Lane with your trophy, when are you going to get there?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I don't know. I'll have to figure that out. Not sure when it's going to work, but I think once the fixtures are out, we'll have a look at where they can cross over and I'll be sure to get down there.

Q. The other question I've got for you, Matt, is when you made that chip shot on the 18th, which is the most significant shot possibly of your career, how on earth did you stay cool before you took it?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Sorry? I didn't make a chip shot on 18.

Q. Sorry. Probably the most important shot of your career, how did you stay cool before you took it? What was going on in your mind?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I mean, it wasn't a shot I was looking forward to. It's not one that I've particularly performed well in this year out of the fairway bunkers, but I sort of said it already, I just think that natural ability I guess took over at the time and just hit the shot that was required. I just felt like got a little bit lucky with the lie and the line that I could go, but yeah, managed to pull it off.

Q. When we spoke last year, you talked about you felt as though you've still not realised that potential of a lot of people have talked to you about ever since the first Brookline. What do you feel is now having won the major, what do you feel your potential is?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I feel like I've just proven to myself that I can do more. I feel like I can go and win other majors now. I feel like this has just given me a massive confidence boost in knowing that I've achieved this. And people said it in the past about winning on DP World Tour, those wins give you confidence in regular events. And they do, there's no doubt about that, but winning a major's just a different level and that really does give me a hell of a confidence boost going into any event now. So yeah, I'm looking forward to teeing it up in Scotland in a couple weeks and playing in my first event as a major champion.

Q. I had the pleasure to speak to Billy Foster earlier and he said some nice stuff

about you as you would imagine. What was it that you saw in him three or four years ago that you thought "I want this guy as my caddie" and how has he helped your game?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I think it was a mutual thing. I think we both -- I was looking for a caddie and he had just split with Lee. I think both being from Yorkshire is a good thing, where we get on so well, both our love for football. And it's been incredibly helpful to have him on the bag with all his years of experience. It just makes a big difference when you're out on the golf course having someone alongside you that's been there and done it all.

Q. A couple of biggish names have pledged to the Greg Norman operation to date. I know you've made your position clear, but do you worry that trickle might become a flood and it might diminish the conventional tours in the weeks ahead?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Not really, no. I think whenever you've got Justin Thomas, Rory McIlroy, I saw Collin Morikawa's come out and made a statement today, Scottie Scheffler, I feel like you've got some great players there. For me, they're more than good enough to compete with any rival tour that might want to try and take hold of golf.

I'm not really concerned about it. I think it's -- I guess it is now part of the game, this whole story's happening, but I think the guys that we've got that are committed to the European Tour and the PGA Tour is just as impressive, if not more.

Q. Also, in the wake of a big win, some crazy things can happen. Have you had recognition or crazy messages or what's the daftest thing that's happened in the last couple of days?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I've had some pretty cool messages, but yeah, just probably recognise that dinner just down the street in New York last night was kind of a little bit weird, and the guy actually did a triple take. I watched him walk past and then he walked back and then he walked past again just to say "well done," so I appreciated that. Yeah, that was probably the funniest thing.

Q. I seem to recall Sheffield's last major winner told us he was out jogging at a ridiculous hour of the morning after his Augusta victory. What were you doing in the immediate aftermath?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I wasn't doing that. I don't remember Dan telling me that either. I think jogging must have been a code name for something else.

I didn't go to sleep until probably 3:00, replying to some of the messages that I'd been sent and kind of just taking it all in. And I didn't really sleep, to be fair. It was kind of just too much going on, all obviously pretty exciting. Yeah, it's just been a whirlwind, it's just been so busy and just a lot going on and exciting.

Q. And looking at the future majors, you seem to be pretty precise about six was the number that you had set previously and you're going forward. Why six? Is there a bit of Faldo in there?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Everyone's now kind of taken it that I said I want to win six majors. Yeah, of course I want to win six majors, but it was kind of a bit of a joke between me and my pals that anyone who has six majors is like part of this mythical legends group that we created. So we look at the names on who's won what and that's kind of what we created amongst ourselves, just me and my pals. Now it's out there, everyone thinks that six is what I'm going to win. I'm just trying to win one at a time and keep doing what I'm doing.

Q. Just quickly before I go, this won't take a second, Fitz or Fitzzy?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Either, either.

Q. You're supposed to have a preference. Thanks, Matt?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Thanks.

Q. I'm sure you've managed to pick up now on how captivated people were, particularly by the dynamics of you going down the stretch with Zalatoris, and that's something that the LIV can't offer with their shotgun start. I wonder if that was a nice by-product for you that you've underlined what the PGA Tour can offer really on the final day when it comes down to the final pairings?

MATT FITZPATRICK: I think for me, traditional 72-hole stroke play is in my opinion, it brings out the best player of each week. Particularly, that's what you want to have particular to the majors. I think having 72 holes over four days, it always creates that extra tension. There's extra pressure and stress and I think it just shows who can sort of come out on top and I think that's why in my opinion it's the best format to decide the best players.

I understand why they've gone down that route with the format they have. Yeah, it's different and it's probably enjoyable and decent to watch maybe, but I think it's hard when you've got a guy finishing up on No. 2 and a guy finishing on 17 that are going to win. It definitely makes it difficult. Yeah, I think 72 regular stroke play is the way to go.

Q. Just my last question. I read a quote that said you felt you turned to Billy on maybe the 14th when you were in the thick of it and saying that you maybe hated the tension of it all, but presumably as you plan a long-term career at the top and hopefully more majors, you're going to have to learn to love those moments, aren't you, or will you continue to hate them indefinite?

MATT FITZPATRICK: No, it's a love-hate. I love hitting the shots and I love being out there. It's kind of just everything else that's around it, sleeping on the lead and trying to stay busy before your tee time, warming up knowing that what you're about to go and do, but once

you're out there, it's really you're in the thick of it. And after a couple holes you just start thinking about how to win and where to hit the ball, you're planning your way around the course and that's been the big difference is once you're part of it, it's fine.

Q. You touched on it a couple of minutes ago, I'm sorry to bang on about this LIV series, you said the rival tour might try and take hold of golf. You've clearly positioned yourself on one side, but what's it like being in the middle of all this uncertainty of you going about your business? Has the atmosphere changed considerably? It's clearly not an unpleasant place to be in Boston for the last few days, but what has it been like for the last few weeks? Does it feel like a sport under attack?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Not for me personally, it's not something really I've thought about. I know that the PGA Tour is not going anywhere, the DP World Tour is not going anywhere and I feel like that's the important thing for me is that I've got a place to play and that's where I want to play. I think, as I said, it's the tour's not going anywhere, so they'll continue and as long as they've got Tiger Woods' support and Rory's support, Justin Thomas, there'll be no issues in my opinion.

Q. It's strong enough to stand up to this not exodus yet, but certainly some very good players seem to be leaving the tour, and the DP World Tour have got a big decision to make probably later this week ahead of the Scottish Open that you're going to be playing at.

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I guess so. That's obviously in Keith's hands and the board's hands. But for me, I know where I want to play, I want to play over here in the States on the PGA Tour and I want to play in Europe on DP World Tour. That's where my focus is going to be and just want to continue doing what I'm doing.

Q. This is Julia with the USGA. Matt was happy to take a few questions on that subject, but we're going to focus the remainder on the U.S. Open.

Q. Greetings from beautiful West Yorkshire. It's beautiful here I'm sure you're pleased to know. I just wanted to, when he mentioned Danny Willett winning the Masters and we all saw Rory waiting for you on the 18th green on Sunday, just wondering if you're planning to seek any advice from those kind of guys on how to cope with life as a major champion and put up with more stupid questions from the likes of us?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I am, to be honest. I messaged Rory just saying thank you for sticking around after the round on Sunday. I mentioned that I might want to have a chat about one or two things. I'll be speaking to another couple of players that also have been in the same position as me just on what to do, maybe what not to do, what worked well for them and try and get some advice.

Q. And a quick final one, has Alex asked you to pay the \$150 for the extra flight he

had to take to get back to Brookline yesterday?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Not yet, no. My parents said they'll cover that so I'm not worried.

Q. I think you can probably spare him the cash though, surely.

MATT FITZPATRICK: No, no, no. He's still living with my parents, so they can cover that.

Q. I just wondered, obviously you've put so much effort in pursuit of titles like this, I wonder when you finally get home to Yorkshire, what is maybe the one place you want to go and eat or maybe the one thing you want to do, the normal things that maybe you've given up in pursuit of titles like this?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Nothing. No, nothing out of the ordinary. Just want to see my family and see my pals from home, that's literally all I'll be doing when I'm at home, and playing golf and practicing. Nothing will change when I go back to Sheffield, that's for sure.

Q. And I read that you stayed with the same family that you stayed with in 2013 in Boston. I just wondered, will you return the favour, will you invite them over or will you buy your own place over there as it seems to be a bit of a second home for you?

MATT FITZPATRICK: Sheffield's not quite Boston, so I'm not really sure they might want to visit there. If they ever do, they are more than welcome and they know that. Yeah, I think it would be more chance of me moving to Boston than them moving to Sheffield.

CHRIS COX: All right, Matt, thank you so much for the time and again congrats on your U.S. Open victory. Best of luck moving ahead. Thank you. Thanks everyone.