



BRANDON MATTHEWS

MARK WILLIAMS: We would like to welcome Brandon Matthews here to the 3M Open in 2022.

Brandon, thanks for joining us. You're a sponsor exemption this week, you're making your fourth start on the PGA Tour. I don't know if you've had a chance to look at the golf course yet, but coming in here, what's kind of your expectation at this point having just played three events on Tour?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: Yeah, well, obviously very appreciative of the opportunity from the 3M Open here and everyone that's given me a chance so far.

It's going to be great to get some reps under my belt before the start of the season. I have gotten a chance to see the golf course yesterday, it's absolutely fantastic. The condition of it is second to none and the team here has done a heck of a job with the preparation. So it's going to be very, very exciting to play out here this week and I look forward to the opportunity.

MARK WILLIAMS: You've had an interesting journey to get to the PGA Tour. You secured your card by the Korn Ferry Tour this season to be fully exempt next year, but you played in Latinoamerica Tour for a number of years and then progressed to the Korn Ferry Tour where you won earlier this year. What's that journey been like and how challenging has it been and now how satisfying is it to have secured your Tour card for next season?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: Yeah, incredibly satisfying. I've worked my way up through the ranks under the PGA Tour umbrella and it obviously goes to show how many great players there are coming up through the ranks. Harry Higgs is a perfect example of going the same route that I did, and certain examples like that across the board, you can find a lot of them. So golf is getting more and more talented every year and I'm excited to be able to finally make the dreams I've had as a kid kind of come to life here.

Q. Have you seen enough of the course to know whether there's a place in the bag for the driver and is that a week-to-week decision for you?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: Yeah, so driver's definitely going to be in the bag, be able to hit it a few times out here. A lot of these holes where I am going to hit driver, it sets up really nice for my eye. It's going to be nice to hit it a few times this week for sure.

Q. (No microphone.)

BRANDON MATTHEWS: Yeah, I mean, I haven't done that in a while. There's been a few where if I'm going to hit it once over the course of an entire round of golf, I rarely would put that in, I'd put a strong 3-wood in just to give up that very slight advantage on one hole maybe with driver where I can get a strong 3-wood up there almost just as close to it. Those are the kind of weeks where I would take driver out of the bag, but I haven't done that in a while.

Q. Kind of going off of that, what advantage does it give you when you can put it back in the bag? And obviously kind of goes without saying you're longer than a lot of guys, but how much are you looking forward to that this week?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: Yeah, it's going to be great, but also to that point, it's also an advantage when I can hit 3-iron, 2-iron, 3-wood, whatever it is up to the points where some guys are hitting a driver. Using my length to an advantage in the proper way is kind of how I look at it where I get my advantage.

Q. When did you realize that was a strength in your game? Like how early in your life did you realize like I can hit it a lot farther than other people?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: Pretty early. I mean, I played a lot of baseball. The fast hands kind of grew early and I was hitting it pretty far when I was 12, 13 years old, so it was pretty early where I realized that.

Q. Will your dad be here this week?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: Unfortunately, not this week. Maybe if we get into contention I'll get him a flight out here and we can have some fun on the weekend, but we'll see.

Q. When you get your chances out here, do you find you draw a crowd at all from people who want to stand behind you and see how far the trajectory of the ball is when you hit it?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: The support that I've gotten over the years playing golf from across the country, world, whatever it is, it's been tremendous. I'm incredibly thankful for the people that come out, support and watch me. It's been a lot of fun.

Q. The viral moment from three years ago in Argentina, have you kept in touch with the guy?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: Yeah, we speak once in a while. Not as often as we did obviously at the first point when it happened and quickly after that, but there's messages sent once in a great while just checking in kind of thing.

MARK WILLIAMS: When you come to a course like TPC Twin Cities where the scoring is traditionally pretty low, do you kind of salivate or do you have that the sort of feeling when

you come to the golf course just given your length and your chance at making birdies?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: Yeah, I look at every golf course as a different kind of opportunity. At the end of the day if I can go out there and do what I need to do and play golf the way I play golf no matter what golf course I kind of stand up on, I know that I'm going to be doing all right come Sunday as long as I stick to my game plan and execute.

MARK WILLIAMS: You made the cut at the U.S. Open earlier this year. What was that experience like for you playing in a major championship?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: It was really cool. You know, teeing off afternoon on a Saturday in my first major was pretty great. Birdied the first hole, so I was in contention on an afternoon on a Saturday of my first major, so gave me a lot of confidence.

Unfortunately, you know, things kind of didn't go my way from there. The mental side kind of left a little bit and doing that in a U.S. Open doesn't really help a lot coming down the stretch. But it was a great experience, definitely learned a lot from it and looking forward to playing in many more majors coming up here.

Q. Looking at the winners here, Cam Champ, Matthew Wolff, does that give you kind of an inkling, a hint of what it's built for and whose game with the long hitters?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: Yeah, it definitely gives me confidence to see past champions here and who's played well. Again, excited for the opportunity, looking forward to competing on this golf course, on a golf course where longer hitters are at a slight advantage.

MARK WILLIAMS: Tough question sometimes, but what sort of expectations do you have this week and particularly going forward into next season?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: Yeah, I mean, I constantly say that if I -- if I'm at a golf tournament, I'm not here to make a cut, I'm not here to, you know, slightly contend or finish high. If I wasn't here to win a golf tournament, I need to figure out a different profession.

I feel like my game is at a point where I can win any given week if a couple things go my way and getting to that point where I can contend every week is my goal. If I play well this week, I like my chances contending and finishing towards the top there.

Q. You mentioned Harry Higgs earlier. Is there any player you would like to model your game after, any player that you kind of sought advice going into this week?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: Yeah, I mean, I'm kind of in that generation where, you know, everyone idolized Tiger, so I grew up kind of looking at things he did obviously. He's an inspiration to I think everyone, especially my generation. I've always tried to look at his game and tried to pick little things from his game out, the way he carries himself, and mentally kind of you can just see the look in his eyes when he gets into contention, it's just different.

So looking at that, drawing off of that, trying to find out what he's thinking, the way he kind of goes about his ways is very interesting to me and obviously inspirational. But beyond that, I think I have a very unique set of skills that's a little bit different. I've grinded really hard on my short game with my short game coach, Brian Simmons, and my swing coach, Dale Gray, putting with Todd Sones now, he's been a tremendous help and all that has improved tremendously to the point where we're getting really close to getting exactly where we need to be and that was my goal, to be ready to have a game that can be in contention week in week on the PGA Tour come this fall.

MARK WILLIAMS: Just a couple more. Last week I noticed you were 10 under through three rounds in Springfield, Illinois, and withdrew. What was the reason for that? Is there anything that needs any concern?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: No, no concern. I was in the gym in the morning and was looking at the weather and it was kind of one of those 50/50 things where we really didn't know if we were going to play that day. The storm system was kind of hovering, didn't look like it was going to exit until mid afternoon really. So I kind of made the decision early to come up here and make sure I was rested because I might not have gotten in until 4:00 a.m. Monday, early Monday morning. To play the pro-am on Monday up here and the position I was in, obviously if I was in contention I would have stayed, but it was just a position with how low the scores were that week, it was not feasible for me to win that golf tournament.

MARK WILLIAMS: And was that decision made specifically as a sponsor exemption and some of the commitments that sponsor exemptions have in a tournament? Like I believe you maybe did something this morning, is that something to do with it as well?

BRANDON MATTHEWS: Yeah, but at the end of the day, like I said, if I was in contention, obviously they're going to be very understanding with me staying. I'm very fortunate to be here this week and I understand that. The commitments that I have are very easy compared to the opportunity that I have this week. So to come up here and do these little small things, I'm just very fortunate to be here and I'm more than happy to do everything. Like I said, the position that I was in, I really didn't have a chance to win the golf tournament. If I had a chance to win the golf tournament, I would have stayed and obviously they would have understood that.