

**PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW**  
**11 October 2022**

**HIDEKI MATSUYAMA**



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**CHUAH CHOO CHIANG:** We would like to welcome defending champion Hideki Matsuyama back to the ZOZO Championship media center. We've got Bob Turner, who will be assisting us with the translation. We will conduct the English portion of the interview first where Bob will translate before turning it over to the Japanese-speaking media.

Hideki, welcome back to Narashino Golf Course. You won by five strokes last year. Just share with us some thoughts about being back in Japan to defend your title here at the ZOZO Championship.

**HIDEKI MATSUYAMA:** It's great to be back as the defending champion. I've really been impressed the last couple of days. Practice days, but still lots of members of the gallery have come out and cheered us on. I know there's going to be even more come Thursday and through the weekend. Hopefully, I can play my best and give everyone something to root for.

**CHUAH CHOO CHIANG:** Speaking about memories, Hideki, what stands out for you from last year's win?

**HIDEKI MATSUYAMA:** When I think about last year, again, the number of gallery cheering us on and, but the shot at 18 on Sunday is one that I'll never forget.

**CHUAH CHOO CHIANG:** Cool. And this year we'll have the fans in full attendance again. How excited is he to see the local fans coming out in numbers to support not only him but the 15 other Japanese players in the field this week?

**HIDEKI MATSUYAMA:** Yeah, there's a lot of great young players now coming up through the ranks on the JGTO. I'm going to have to play my best to beat them.

**CHUAH CHOO CHIANG:** Before I open it up to questions, one last one from me. Hideki, how much of a help is it to be playing at home, or if there's any hindrance of playing at home where you have a lot of fans, a lot of home comfort, and what do you find the main challenge of playing at home in Japan?

**HIDEKI MATSUYAMA:** That's a good question. The energy that the fans provide really helps out, it helps my game, but on the other hand, there's pressure that goes along with it.

**Q. Pardon me for asking again, but in regard to LIV Golf, are you committed to the PGA Tour and can you state your position vis-a-vis LIV? Are you with the PGA solidly?**



**HIDEKI MATSUYAMA:** Yeah, I'm a member of the PGA Tour. Never been prouder, especially last week at the Presidents Cup. Yeah, I'm fully committed to the PGA Tour, I'm a member.

**Q. Also for Hideki, in 2024 you move to a January-to-August schedule. What happens to these fall events like this one? What's going to happen in 2024 when the PGA Tour schedule changes from January to August?**

**HIDEKI MATSUYAMA:** Yeah, I'm looking forward to it in 2024. The schedule has changed. I've been on the Tour 10 years now and I'm looking forward to it.

**Q. The question was, what happens to this event, which is a fall event, so it's after August? What's going to happen to an event like ZOZO?**

**HIDEKI MATSUYAMA:** I'm hoping that it will be part of the fall schedule.

**Q. Hideki, you mentioned that there are several up-and-coming players on the JGTO. Is there any particular player that he would like to mention? That's the first question. The second question is, he's obviously an inspiration to many of his countrymen. What does it mean for a local Japanese player to excel on the global stage like him?**

**HIDEKI MATSUYAMA:** A lot of the players I haven't been able to play with that are up and coming. Keita's one.

**INTERPRETER:** Did you understand the other ones that he mentioned.

**Q. LIV Golf is currently trying to get World Ranking points for the players. At the moment they're unsuccessful. Do you think they should be allowed ranking points?**

**HIDEKI MATSUYAMA:** Personally, I think they should be able to; however, there's a procedure that they have to follow, too, with the ranking points.

**CHUAH CHOO CHIANG:** Before we turn it over to the Japanese side of the questions, just one final question from me, Hideki. We're into the start of the new 2022-23 season. You played in the Fortinet Championship. Are you the sort of person who sets goals for yourself going into a new season on the PGA Tour?

**HIDEKI MATSUYAMA:** Obviously, winning is always the No. 1 goal and hopefully I can do it here this week.

**CHUAH CHOO CHIANG:** All right. With no more questions in English, we'll turn it over to the Japanese media for questions.

