

MEXICO OPEN AT VIDANTA

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW

April 26, 2023



MATEO FERNANDEZ DE OLIVEIRA

THE MODERATOR: We'll go ahead and get started here with Mateo Fernandez de Oliveira here at the Mexico Open at Vidanta. Mateo, this is your second PGA TOUR start, playing on a sponsor exemption this week. Talk a little bit about just the surroundings here at Vidanta and getting to tee it up on the PGA TOUR.

MATEO FERNANDEZ DE OLIVEIRA: Well, of course it's going to be an honor for me to make my actual PGA TOUR debut this week at Vidanta. It's my first time here, also. The course is unbelievable. It's in unbelievable shape. The whole resort, the whole people, all the stuff, they are just amazing. They've been treating us really good and making us feel at home.

Q. Obviously making your first start since the Masters. Just talk a little bit about that experience. What was that like? What do you take from that experience coming into this week?

MATEO FERNANDEZ DE OLIVEIRA: Yeah, I mean, the Masters was a great experience just to have a first look at how the pros play, how they prepare, how they compete. It was very, very helpful for me to come here, and moving on in my career, just I'm looking forward to this week, trying to -- every week that I get to play with them, I just try to learn from them and get better. It's a long process, and the more weeks that you get to play against them, you always learn more and just get better.

Q. On your experience at Augusta, were there any specific moments that stand out, any fun interactions? You played some cool practice rounds there, as well. What stands out as you reflect on that week?

MATEO FERNANDEZ DE OLIVEIRA: Yeah, I mean, all the practice days there were just fun. I got to play with Taylor Moore, Joaquin Niemann, Abraham Ancer, Mito Pereira, then the last day was Collin Morikawa, Kurt Kitayama and Min Woo Lee. They are all great guys. I got to hang out with them and just ask them for advice, and they were all really good guys. From the competition itself, the first tee was -- I was feeling very nervous. I was shaking walking to it, and it was a hard time just to hit that ball. But I got to do it well. Just to compete out there was something special for me.

Q. Correct me if I'm wrong, but your next start after that was playing in the SEC Championship or one of the next starts. What's it like playing in an event like that, going back to college and playing with your team at Arkansas and now back here on the PGA TOUR, having to shift that focus around? What's that like?



MATEO FERNANDEZ DE OLIVEIRA: Actually it was a little tougher because on Monday after the Masters, I had to leave during Sunday. I drove from Augusta to Virginia to play a 36-18 hole event so I played 54 holes in two days, walking, carrying my bag, just thinking about what I experienced in the last three days. I played two tournaments after that. SECs was good. I just didn't play quite the way I was expecting to, but we made it to regionals with the team right on the number. It's been a long season, and now we're looking forward for the postseason. I think we have a lot to do in the next couple weeks, and hopefully -- anything can happen in postseason, so hopefully we can make a deep run in the National Championship at the end of May.

Q. Looking ahead to the future, you've got a lot going on with that and obviously graduating and then you get to play in the U.S. Open and the Open Championship this summer. Take us through what your future looks like after you get to play in those major championships. What's next?

MATEO FERNANDEZ DE OLIVEIRA: Yeah, so as you said, postseason is coming up, then Palmer Cup, then also the U.S. Open and the Open. I get to play in them as an amateur, so I will stay as an amateur until the end of the summer. Well, right after that I'm turning pro and starting my professional career, so I'm very excited for that. I still don't know what exactly the plans are going to look like, but hopefully -- you never know what can happen in the next couple weeks. Hope to start on the right path.

Q. To shift focus back towards this week because you are here ready to compete against the best players in the world, this golf course in particular you mentioned at the start, but how do you think this golf course suits your game after really seeing it here this week?

MATEO FERNANDEZ DE OLIVEIRA: Yeah, I mean, it's a course that you've got to -- there's some holes that are hard out there, that you have to hit really good tee shots, and then just put the ball in play, and from there move on. Probably there are not going to be a lot of birdies on those holes. Once you get over those holes, then you can be aggressive. It's a course that it's very long, but it's also kind of wide from the tee, so you get to be aggressive from the tee and get as much distance as you can, so then the second shots you don't have a 7-wood or a 4-iron.

Q. Obviously a lot going on right now and a lot of distractions and things happening. Who have been some people that you've looked up to during this process throughout your career who you've been able to really rely on for advice?

MATEO FERNANDEZ DE OLIVEIRA: Yeah, now I'm getting to know a little more the players. It's always nice to hear from them, their experiences, and just how they made the transition, some of them, from college to their professional career.



Then also talking a lot to the Argentinians and Latin American players this week that I speak the same language, so there are a lot of familiar faces that I've seen them on TV a lot, and now I get to play with them and play against them, too. I mean, just asking questions and learning. That's all what I've been trying to do.

