

ROUND 4 QUOTES
January 27, 2024



MATTHIEU PAVON (-13)

MARK WILLIAMS: It's a pleasure to welcome Matthieu Pavon into the interview room here at the 2024 Farmers Insurance Open. Champion, PGA TOUR rookie in your 11th start, you win down the stretch. Just what are you feeling right now, Matthieu?

MATTHIEU PAVON: Yeah, I still can't believe it. As I said, it feels like there is another round to play tomorrow because we're only Saturday.

That is special. I can't thank the PGA TOUR enough to give us the opportunity to come from Europe and compete here in America against the best players in the world. That's always been the dream for me. I got finally a shot and I took it. I mean, it's a dream come true and it's a little bit hard to believe.

MARK WILLIAMS: Before we take some questions, can we just get a feeling of your sense coming down the stretch, maybe particularly the last tee, having a one-stroke lead standing on that tee, it's a pretty daunting tee shot. Talk us through that last hole.

MATTHIEU PAVON: Yeah, that was tough for me to give a point on 17. It is how it is. Sometimes you make some, sometimes you miss some.

And then I just saw Nicolai striping down the drive 300-plus yards in the middle and I was like OK, it's going to be spicy now, I might have to do a birdie or something special.

I just -- my ball didn't fade from the tee and then I end up a little bit against that lip. All I can do is play a 52 degrees so I kind of try to get back to the fairway, put my ball back in play and I missed that. I don't know actually if my ball just hit the lip and came left or it was just a bad shot. Anyway, it's done.

Then we see Nicolai hitting the green and my caddie was like, OK, we should probably lay up and get ourselves a wedge and kind of try to make par and get a playoff or something.

I was like, listen, Woody, like the lie doesn't look too bad, I feel like I can do it. He said OK, but it's your call (Laughs.)

It's my call. And I was so pumped at that time, I know I had the energy to lift that ball up on the green. I kind of aimed to the middle of the green knowing the face would close a little bit because it's quite deep and thick. That ball came out like a butterfly and it really feed the slope on the green and left myself a nine-footer or something. That was the right time to prove I have the guts to finish that tournament and I did it so I'm so happy about that last hole.



Q. You talked outside about looking at written things that you have. You have the tattoo, but you also have other things that you were using to kind of calm yourself on the back?

MATTHIEU PAVON: No. It's all about motivations. For me, it's really important to have everything clear in my mind. I always wrote down -- to be fair, since I won in Spain last year, I write down some notes in my book which bring me back to the present moment.

You know how it is on the golf course, sometimes your head flies away a little bit and you have to get back to the present moment to refocus yourself. Sentences like they are telling me why I play golf, why I'm here. They show me -- they give me a little extra confidence.

I think it's really keen in sports, the more confidence you get, the easiest it could be and those sentences are there for.

Q. How important were they today in the mix of what you were trying to do?

MATTHIEU PAVON: Yeah, big. Like people will realize but the sentences, I read them like 100 times in only six holes. Just focus on this. I raise my head and it's me to play, OK it's just showtime. You try to commit to the shot, very focused and just try to do your best, that's all you can do really.

Q. You mentioned it was a dream to come to America. How motivated over the last six, 12 months when this pathway from the DP World Tour here were you to get to the PGA TOUR?

MATTHIEU PAVON: The thing is, to be fair, there wasn't -- that wasn't my goal in 2023. I had no wins there. I spent seven years battling on the DP World Tour trying to get my first win. I achieved that so far, and then all of a sudden on the perfect timing I have to say it comes in Spain, wire to wire. It proved to me that I'm capable to do great things. My confidence level went up. Also, with my staff we're doing the right things to be competitive at a high level of sport.

Then birdied the last four in Dubai to get myself into the PGA TOUR and since then I'm like on a cloud, I'm flying. It's incredible.

After I just came here in America, just trying to enjoy every moment. It's a dream since I am 16, since I came to America for the first time to practice in West Palm. I loved everything about America, the mentality, the sport, everything you guys do. It feels like I'm an American somehow.

Yeah, I mean, to be fair, I had almost no pressure coming, playing in America. It's like it's just an opportunity. If I fail, I could just go back in Europe and I start again. So it was just like trying to do your best every day, enjoy every moment because they are special ones, I can



tell you there are very special ones and it looked like it worked.

Q. And you said when you were 16, was that the first time you came to America? Why specifically --

MATTHIEU PAVON: Not 16, I was 17, 17, yeah. So I finished high school and I was between like should I go to college in America or should I just practice and turn pro as soon as I can. My best world ranking as an amateur was probably 800 in the world at that time. I've never been a very good player before I turned pro, to be fair.

Yeah, I came here to practice in West Palm. I found some great people over there. My coach at that time was Ken Martin. Ken Martin, he caddied for Sandy Lyle. I had some lovely people in Royal Palm, as I said, and when I came here and started to play the minor league tour as an amateur, I was like wow, that's the dream. The golf course, the way the people are, everybody was just cheering for me and I loved it. Since that moment I was just -- I felt like I had to come back.

Q. And then last one, you now with this win, world ranking-wise, you're projected for the Olympics for France. What would it mean to be able to play in an Olympics back home and all that that would involve?

MATTHIEU PAVON: Yeah, that's big. Olympics is huge. Since I'm kid I'm watching it. We got lucky that when it came back to -- golf came back into Olympics in, what was that, '16 in Rio, something like this? I have a good friend of mine, Julien Quesne, was my mentor and is still my mentor to be fair, he did that Olympics in Rio and told me how cool was it.

Yeah, it's definitely one of my goals this year to qualify and represent my country in Paris. Looks like I'm on a pretty good shot right now.

Q. Success in professional sports is nothing new for your family. I'm curious, did you ever learn anything from your grandfather, your father, about what it takes to succeed at the highest level and were you able to pull out any of that today? Were you able to think about any lessons you learned from them on what it takes to be a successful professional athlete?

MATTHIEU PAVON: Yeah, I come from a very sports family background. My mom is a golf teacher, my dad, football professional. Should I say probably soccer in America, but it's football.

Yeah, it's big. He won the French Championship when I was young. I think we had a VHS tape with all the highlights of his seasons. We probably watched that 100 times with my brothers. This is how inspiring is my family.

Yeah, I mean, all they could really do with me is like teach great values, the taste of the effort and the grind and just trying to be as humble as you can and do your best every time



you show up.

Q. You've got some pretty big events you're going to be playing in now the rest of this year. Looking ahead to those, is there anything you learned about yourself today that you think you're going to be able to carry on into those next events and what does the future look like for Matthieu Pavon now?

MATTHIEU PAVON: Matthieu Pavon knows he's going to go eat at Nobu tonight, that's all I know, and playing in Pebble next week.

There's so many fantastic tournaments that are on the PGA TOUR. Bay Hill, PLAYERS, I dream about Masters. There's so many great ones, like too much that I can't mention them all.

I don't know. We're going to have like a nice meeting, enjoyable meeting with my team next week and we'll see what we can do about that schedule, which is going to change pretty much dramatically now.

Q. You mentioned your father. Did you play soccer, football growing up, and why golf?

MATTHIEU PAVON: Yeah, I did. I played for 13 years. I wasn't too bad, to be fair. That was a tough time for me because you're always like the son of Michel, my dad. So that was an awkward feeling going on the pitch and hearing some of the (indiscernible) as a family and stuff like talking to you trashily and stuff. That was some tough time, but it makes you stronger, I guess.

And then I felt like at that time team sport wasn't for me. I've always been very professional on everything I do and I mean, we were 11 players and when you're 15, 16, they start to go out, they start maybe to drink alcohol and I wasn't. So I was a bit mad -- I mean, losing games when you've done your best and you know you're in shape and stuff kind of made me angry. It feels like individual sport was the best option. But to be fair, from my young age to my 16, I was only practicing golf like once or twice a week.

Q. What was your impression of Torrey Pines when you first got here? Did you look at this and go wow, this is a golf course that fits my eye? I mean, the conditions were so difficult. And then just kind of recount the second round on the South because really that's a huge part of why you're sitting here is because of the second round.

MATTHIEU PAVON: So that's a great question you're asking because my practice round on -- that's a joke. My practice round was Monday on that South Course, which is the foggy and rainy day.

I waited until 2:00 until we were allowed to go and see the golf course. When I showed up, it was foggy. I mean, I couldn't see 100 yards away from me, so I was like, OK, nice, welcome



to California. I just walked 18 holes with my caddie, three balls, a putter and I was like OK, just seeing the greens, trying to a little bit think about where could be the pins. Everything was so wet, so even the putts I practiced were like totally wrong compared to the speed of the green we had this week.

Yeah, that was a fun practice round. I never, never walk 18. I hate that. So that was the first time ever I walked 18 holes for practice round because I had to. I mean, I'm new, I don't know them.

And yeah, when we get to Friday it as like, oh, there is a fairway, there is the rough, there is a cliff. So everything was kind of brand new for me. But I was disciplined on my foggy practice round on where could be the pins and I had a good look at it. I just discovered the golf course totally on Friday. You know, it feels like when you don't really know what you're going to be faced and you don't have any expectation, this is sometime when you show the best and this is clearly what happened on Friday.

Q. Did you have any knowledge of Torrey? Obviously two U.S. Opens, all that, but how aware were you of Torrey Pines as a facility, as a PGA TOUR golf course?

MATTHIEU PAVON: So first when I came here I was like, I've watched that tournament on TV so many times, there are no trees, it's open visually, it's only rough and fairway. It's hard for us to focus on -- I like to focus on a point like a tree or something that I can aim for and cut the ball. Here it's so wide open. I was like, oh, I don't know if I'm going to like that place, to be fair.

But it felt like with some sun, some sun back on Tuesday, I really appreciated it more and more. It looks like it would quite suit my game.

Didn't miss many fairways this week, that was key. A bit of a struggle yesterday, but I walked my way around and yeah, that was just -- that was just one of the great weeks.

Q. You're not the only Frenchman on Tour, but now you're kind of the only one in a very, very long time that's won. Does that hold any special meaning for you to be a winner from France on the PGA TOUR?

MATTHIEU PAVON: It is big because, as I said, I come from a special background. (Indiscernible) left and below. I was about to quit golf, to be fair, just before turning pro because I had yips. It was 10 years ago, 11 years ago and I discovered a technique and I just worked on it so hard and become very familiar and something which is a weapon for me.

Again, amateur 800 in the world, nobody was really caring of me, never played for the French team, never -- they were not really looking at me, which I can understand.

But, you know, I've learned a lot. I always worked hard. So being successful first in Europe last year was big, and now on the PGA TOUR for me is just amazing.



I think it is historic for the French golf. We have Celine Boutier, the French LPGA player who won Evian last year, which is an even bigger performance.

It is big for us as a country. I hope it will inspire a lot of people because coming from an amateur player which is 800 in the world to a PGA TOUR winner, it's pretty big.

Q. Is that like, is that something you've carried with you as motivation? You talk about almost quitting the game. Was there a point that you said, OK, no, I can do this? It took a long time to get that first DP World Tour win. So was there a moment on the Alps Tour or somewhere where you said no, I'm going to keep going?

MATTHIEU PAVON: The thing is, not being great when you're young, you don't have much expectations. They are not really high, to be fair. So every day I had a bad day on a golf course was kind of normal and every day I had a good one was amazing. So I always had positivity coming to me.

I think it's just hard work and belief; if you believe that you're capable to do it, you can do it. I found in my life so many great people around me, invested a lot in my staff. My physical trainer, Ben, he's American. I got my physio with me this week. So it's all about investment and it shows to everybody that if you invest in yourself and you have belief, you can achieve pretty much everything.

MARK WILLIAMS: Matthieu, we appreciate it. Thank you so much for your time and congratulations and good luck for the rest of the season.

MATTHIEU PAVON: Thank you very much.

