

ROUND 3 INTERVIEW
November 10, 2018



MATT KUCHAR (-20)

DOUG MILNE: Matt, thanks for joining us. First round 64, second round 64, and then the wheels just came off today, you couldn't do better than a 65. 20 under, if we did our research right, I think is your best in relation to par, 54-hole score. So obviously things going well for you this week.

MATT KUCHAR: Yeah, Doug. I can't imagine having done better through 54 holes, 20 under's awesome. I actually did think about it today. It would be nice to get to 7 under to match my first two rounds. 16, 17, 18 aren't the easiest holes. Typically 17 might be a birdie hole, but where that pin was was not much of a birdie pin location.

However, I felt really, really good for three days. I mean, 20 under's my best 54-hole total. I felt in control of my ball-striking, I felt in control of driving, the iron play, the putting. It's been a great three days.

DOUG MILNE: One of the words you used with some of the media outside in media interviews was "frustrating." I know you haven't been fully satisfied with your 2018 season. How good does this feel on the heels of that?

MATT KUCHAR: Golf's a crazy game and I think that's what's kept me a bit sane. Even though we play a crazy, insane game is that knowing how difficult golf is and how close you really are to bouncing back and playing some good golf when it can feel pretty far off.

So 2018 has not been my best year, has not been a highlight for me, been a disappointing year, but it's got signs now of righting the ship and turning into a great start to -- maybe it's a great finish to '18, great start to '18-'19, however you want to classify the calendar.

But it's nice to come this far. I knew last week in Vegas I was hitting it really well and not quite scoring as good as I would have liked, and this week it's come together through three rounds. It's been very satisfying.

Q. Matt, we only see you when you're out playing in a tournament. When you're at home, are you grinding for hours on end on the driving range, or what is your day like to sort of keep your game in shape or get it back in gear?

MATT KUCHAR: Cam, I love playing golf. I find myself on the golf course a lot. I love playing, I love practicing. Golf's an addictive game and I kind of got the bug and still have it. The beauty about the qualities of the game are when you're playing good, it's so much fun, you want to keep playing. When you're playing bad, you get so frustrated you want to figure out how to get better. It kind of keeps you on both sides. When you're playing great, you

never want it to end, and then when it's not going well, you want to figure it out and you want to go grind away and get better.

So I find myself at the golf course a decent bit. My kids have now gotten into it, and so we do a lot of kind of family afternoon time on the golf course. It's really been kind of one of those great, you know, father-son and even the whole family, even Sybi will come along and we'll cram four people in a cart and just go out and play nine holes or six holes or four holes, whatever we have time for. I've really enjoyed those sessions.

My life has evolved. I used to only go out and be by myself or with a competitive match, and now having some kids to bring along, it's really been rewarding, fun times for me on the golf course.

Q. And then just quickly as a follow-up, you turned 40 this year. Assessing your career, I think you have -- you've obviously won THE PLAYERS Championship, which is a biggie. You have, I think, seven wins; is that right?

MATT KUCHAR: Correct.

Q. Do you think about the big picture stuff and think, I've got seven. Now I'm in my 40s, if I have a decade like Vijay or Kenny Perry or, you know, Phil, could you get to 10, could you get to 15? Do you think big picture thoughts like that?

MATT KUCHAR: I have on both sides. I have on the side where I would love to -- I mean, anybody in my state would love to have 40s like a Vijay Singh. I hope that's in the cards for me.

And I've thought the other side. I've thought, man, kids are getting younger and stronger and it's more and more challenging for a guy that plays my style of golf to win and win multiple times.

So it's definitely crossed my mind on both sides. Like I said, I still love playing, I still love being out here, I love the challenge of it. I don't see a point in time of me ever putting the sticks away. I love the game of golf, and it's cool that my family's into it so I can continue going for the long haul, I'm sure, and sure hope I have 40s like Vijay had.

Q. Do you remember last time you had this big of a lead going into a final round, and what is that kind of mindset, because I know you can't play conservative, but you do have a four-shot lead.

MATT KUCHAR: I'm not so sure I remember. I think Harris English and I might have had a decent lead in the Shark Shootout. I'm not sure I've ever had a lead like this in a PGA TOUR event. You know the deal, though; you have to go play good golf. I can't go out there and think a whole bunch of pars are going to get me in the winner's circle. I've still got to go play good golf, I've still got to make a good number of birdies, and with that, somewhat have

the pedal down.

First three rounds it felt great. Going back to last week felt great. I had a nice session before that with my instructor, Chris O'Connell. I feel like I'm in really good control of the golf ball at the moment. I'm certainly going to need to be tomorrow to find myself in the winner's circle.

Q. Are there some like fun kind of nervous jitters? I mean, when you teed off this morning having the lead, is that something you've missed the last year especially?

MATT KUCHAR: Golf provides all sorts of nervous jitters. I found myself on the cut line a lot last year and those are nervous jitters. It's no fun missing a cut. All sorts of different nervous jitters.

It helps to feel confident about what you're doing with your golf swing, and I feel confident with what I'm doing with my golf swing. I feel confident how I'm hitting it, how I'm putting it. That helps with those jitters.

It's kind of like going into a test and either you're prepared or you're not. When you go into a test and you're not prepared, you're pretty nervous to see that next question. When you're prepared for it, not as nervous.

Q. Matt, your caddie, Tucan, he helped you now with some secrets. How many has he told you about the course?

MATT KUCHAR: We've had a great time together. This is my caddie this week. My regular caddie, John Wood, had an engagement this week and wasn't able to be here. So I have a local guy, David, El Tucan, and he's certainly bringing me some good luck.

I had Diego, who was my caddie for America's Cup, so a local there who was helpful, and I think there's maybe some good luck that has been brought from El Tucan.

Q. How do you get to know Tucan and how did he end up being your caddie, and did you know he was a caddie of the guy that won the Mexican qualifier here, so he's a lucky guy.

MATT KUCHAR: Arranged through the tournament. So Joe, the tournament director, has been a good friend of mine, and actually tried -- when my regular caddie wasn't able to make it, I tried to ask a few of my other caddie friends if they could caddie and they were all working this week. So I asked Joe to help me with a local is the connection, so he's the one who put us together.

Q. There have been lots of discussion about long driving. Is it really that important as everybody's talking about, or is it not that important?

MATT KUCHAR: The beauty about the game is you still have to get the ball in the hole. We don't have any guys on the long drive circuit that are playing the PGA TOUR. There's a difference between the two.

Listen, driving the ball long is an advantage, always has been, always will be. But being accurate, being consistent, being able to chip and putt and do all those other things are important in the game of golf.

So it's a balancing act of trying to figure out how to hit it really far and be really consistent, and some guys are better than others, but there's always been a Jack Nicklaus of the PGA TOUR and there's always been a Tom Kite of the PGA TOUR. There's kind of a fine balance between the two.

Q. Along the lines of guys who hit it far but also do all the other things well, Cameron Champ was one of the guys in your group. I just was wondering your thoughts on his game, and I'm not sure if you had played with him before?

MATT KUCHAR: This is my first time. He's hugely impressive. It looks like effortless power. He looks like a really consistent, good swinger of the golf club. He's going to do damage out here. I think he's going to be kind of the future of the game of golf. I think that's a bit of the direction we're heading and I think he's -- I think he's got it. I think he's got speed and consistency and I think he's going to be really good.

DOUG MILNE: Everybody good? All right. Matt, thanks for your time and best of luck tomorrow.

MATT KUCHAR: Thank you.