

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW
November 19, 2020



MATT WALLACE (-6)

Q. Well, Matt, the last hole you get a little excited there for good reason, that was a great par save. In fact, that was maybe as good as some of your birdies you made today.

MATT WALLACE: Oh, definitely. Yeah, as I said over there, two misstruck shots the whole day, and you don't want to neck one on the last with the wind hard off the left and that's why we finished in the water. Made a good decision to drop, just try and get out of there with a 5 and gave myself a chance and rolled it in.

Q. The putter was exceptional today, you hit like 140 feet of putts, No. 2 in strokes gained, picked up four and a half shots on the field.

MATT WALLACE: Nice.

Q. The putter was exceptional. Was this something coming in you knew the putter was going to be good?

MATT WALLACE: My putting hasn't been where it should be and it was the area I needed to work on the most. Just talking to my team about routine, little bits of understanding why I like to pick a spot in front of my ball and the line wasn't looking over that spot, so visuals were going all over the place and that's why I didn't feel comfortable.

Went to a no-sightline putter this week. Joe Toulon at Callaway's been brilliant this week. He came up with three putters and I chose the no-sightline one and able to roll the ball end over end, which is part of my game that I do really well. I haven't been doing that, so getting back to that this week has been really nice.

Q. Now the transition to Plantation, a par 72. What do you think about going over tomorrow, because today was a great start on Seaside?

MATT WALLACE: Yeah, we've got so far to go. I've started to understand the importance of the first round; it's not to win it, it's to put yourself in position. So all I was trying to do there at the end there was try and limit the damage and I managed to roll one in, so that was really nice. But we'll go out there tomorrow and just try to play the same, put it in the right spots, give my putter as many chances as possible and hopefully talk to you about it tomorrow.

Q. I know you don't have your caddie here this week, you took a local caddie. Did that help you have?

MATT WALLACE: Yes. As I said to a couple questions before, he was on the fourth hole, fifth hole, he was one-for-one in green reading, so I said, "Don't read anymore putts because you're 100 percent."

But no, he's been great. He's really chill. Justin Parsons put me in contact with him, which is great, and very fortunate for Jeffrey to jump on the bag in the absence of Dave.

Q. What was your preparation, because you're headed over to Plantation. Did you get practice rounds in at Plantation?

MATT WALLACE: Yeah, I walked nine in the morning yesterday and then played nine on the back nine yesterday in that wind. So similar wind, similar direction. And the nice thing is that I played that side that I'm going to start on tomorrow, so I'll get a feel for how the course is playing and then I'll jump on the side that I didn't play.

Having Jeffrey there, that's another buffer that I feel I've got where he's been around there plenty and knows the misses. We spoke about that and we'll have a good game plan tomorrow.

Q. Matt, excellent start to the tournament. If we can get some comments on your day, please.

MATT WALLACE: Yeah, windy day. The wind picked up as the day went on. It was really blustery and gusting up a good amount around the 13, 14 where we go out to sea a little bit. Yeah, hitting a 5-iron from 150 yards is not normal, but I'm kind of used to that from being back home, just normally playing on links courses rather than these types of courses here.

Putted great. Got off to a nice start and holed a good putt on the third hole for bogey. I hit a decent shot to the right-hand side and I practiced putts up this to the back left flag and I put in my book it's slower and stuff like that and I still managed to putt it through the back and off the back edge and left myself a wedge, which wasn't nice, but holed a good one. Good momentum there, that was a good putt. Carried it on till the end there.

Q. I think Adam and I are both probably interested in the story of Jeffrey. I think you were asking what does he do for work other than caddie. Do you know his last name by any chance?

MATT WALLACE: Jeffrey Cammon, so like Gammon but with a C. That's his room in there where he works, so he's a club-fitter, does a lot of stuff up here. As soon as I found out that Dave tested positive, and luckily he was okay and everything, no symptoms, I messaged JP, Justin Parsons, up here, who I know. I said I'll take a local this week because of the two courses, I thought that was a good idea. I didn't want to step on Dave's toes as well with another pro caddie.

Yeah, he's really chill. He said, "What do you want me to say?" That was the first question

he said at the start of the week, "What do you want me to do or say?"

I was like, "Listen, mate, I don't need anything. I'll ask you a question and you answer it just with pure facts of what you think." It worked well today. I said to him, "Is the wind more out of the left than it is like helping," and he's like, "Yep," and that was it. It was really simple. Struck the ball really nicely today and rolled the ball well.

Q. When did you find out that your caddie had COVID?

MATT WALLACE: On Monday. So he got tested Monday after traveling on Sunday down here. And yeah, I was driving and I got the phone call and Dave said he tested positive. I was like, oh, no, I'm going to be positive as well because I've been hanging around with him on Sunday at the golf course at the Masters. I don't know when he would have got it.

But the strange thing was the guy that he traveled down with, Colin Byrne, didn't test positive. So there was hope there for me and yeah, I was negative and I have been negative since.

Q. And then what model putter did you put in the bag?

MATT WALLACE: I've got the Atlanta now, but with no sightline on the back.

Q. Who is Justin Parsons? What is his position?

MATT WALLACE: He's the head coach up here at Sea Island. He coaches a lot of the Tour players over here and he's from Northern Ireland and Dave knows him well and I know him well from being up in Dubai. He used to be in Dubai, at the Emirates course and The Els Club where he coached out of. I got to know him on the European Tour and then he moved over here. I just know him and gave him a text and he was very kind to sort me out.

Q. A lot was made of the controversy with Tommy Fleetwood and Paul Azinger about, you know, winning on the PGA TOUR from the U.K. or Europe or whatever.

MATT WALLACE: Yeah.

Q. Not to get your feelings on that, but is there, despite all of that, a kind of badge of honor, is it something you look at as this would be a significant accomplishment to do it here?

MATT WALLACE: 100 percent every week. Not just this week, every week that we want to do that. What I would say is I feel the depth over here, like scoring, I did that long stretch after COVID when we started at Colonial, was it? So I did six weeks and I just thought the cuts were just unbelievable, they were so low. I thought European Tour may be one less or one more, whichever way. It's just the strength and depth over here is the tough one.

Tommy's going to win, everyone knows that, everyone knows that. Paul saying you can do whatever you want on the European Tour, it matters over here is nonsense. Tommy's going to win, he's going to win big, he's going to win a lot and hopefully I can follow him.

Q. (No microphone.)

MATT WALLACE: Playing-wise, yeah. Like I said, the strength and depth is so deep. The players are amazing. The only difference I feel on the European Tour is that we have to travel on Sundays, traveling for eight, nine hours to another country to play the next week, whereas I found it very easy over here, jumping on a plane or even driving. You might finish at 3:00 on Sunday and you'll be at the next tournament come 6:00 at night. That just doesn't happen on the European Tour. So you've got to be a different kind of person mentally on the European Tour I feel like to deal with the pressures of the travel and the stress of the time zones.

Q. What was the best putt you made today?

MATT WALLACE: The one on 1 was nice, started the day off with a birdie. What was it, 18 feet? You always remember the last one, don't you, especially when it's for par.

Q. Looking way, way, way down the road, is your mind at all on the Ryder Cup? Would that be a dream of yours to participate in a team like that?

MATT WALLACE: 100 percent, it's definitely there for me. That's what I want to achieve, but I've got to play golf like I've done today, I've got to carry that on until next year. Luckily, I think it's been a bonus for me that it's been postponed because I wouldn't have been anywhere near it last time with the form that I was playing.