

PRE-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW
December 10, 2020



ABRAHAM ANCER
MATTHEW WOLFF

PRESTON SMITH: Welcome to the QBE. We'll start with you, Abraham. Do you want to talk about the first time being out here? You know, comments on just being out here for the first time?

ABRAHAM ANCER: Yeah, first time here, I'm pumped. I had no idea what the golf course would look like and it's a fun golf course, definitely perfect for this type of event. My partner here I think is going to be very exciting to team up with him. Very different golf than I play, so I'm going to be looking off the tee on lines that I would never really look at. That's going to be fun. We just want to enjoy it, but also came here to compete and take care of business, but it's going to be great. I think it's going to be a tournament that people will definitely enjoy watching.

PRESTON SMITH: Matthew, you're an Oklahoma State guy. How well do you guys know each other?

MATTHEW WOLFF: Yeah, I haven't known Abe too long, but I feel like the first time we met was probably about a year ago. When I got out on Tour he was out here for a couple years. Yeah, as soon as we met, he's a really laid-back guy. I feel like I am, too, but I feel like that's what's going to make, you know, like our team so nice. Just like not only our golf games are going to like work really well together, but also our personalities. Like we're going to go out there, we both love winning, we both want to win and compete and we've been doing it for our whole lives, but at the end of the day we're going out there having a good time, joking around.

Yeah, the OU-OSU rivalry always will kind of be there, but for this week I'm really glad that he's on my team.

Q. Have you guys ever played together?

ABRAHAM ANCER: No, not like this, no. But we played some practice rounds together. I don't even know we've ever been grouped together.

MATTHEW WOLFF: I don't think we have.

ABRAHAM ANCER: But we played some practice rounds. We played with Niemann in Korea.

MATTHEW WOLFF: Yeah, that was a lot of fun. Yeah, I don't think we ever played.

Q. How did you two hook up? How did this come together?

ABRAHAM ANCER: We have a mutual sponsor, Perficient, and so we thought it would be a really cool idea to team up, be Team Perficient for this event.

Q. What's going to work for the team as far as what Matthew can do and as far as what you can do, both of you guys?

MATTHEW WOLFF: Like I said, I think our games really like fit really well together. I'm obviously a little longer off the tee and so I'm going to try to go and mash it and have a lot shorter clubs in, and Abe's an unbelievable wedger, iron player and putter and stuff and every part of his game is a strength and every part of my game is a strength.

So there's no one person that's going to be carrying any side of the, like the golf course. Like he's not going to make every putt and I'm not going to hit every drive, but at the end of the day I think that we're kind of freed up because we know that our strengths are in kind of different areas. There's going to be times when I might not find the fairway, so we'll have to take his drive maybe, but then there's going to be times where I'm going to roll in some putts and he won't even have to pick up his putter. I think it will work really well together.

Like I said, we're both feeling really good and we're just going to go out there and have a good time.

ABRAHAM ANCER: Long story short, I'm going to hit the fairway and he's going to go for it every single time. I'm going to try to secure the fairway and have a look at the green and he's going to just rip it. I think it's going to be fun. I'm really pumped and looking forward to tomorrow. I think we're going to have a great time. Yeah, I think our games definitely match up good for this type of event.

Q. How is it different with him than playing with Viktor last year and did you learn anything playing last year that you can apply to this year?

MATTHEW WOLFF: Obviously I haven't played with him yet, so I wouldn't know if it was any different, but yeah, I think the biggest thing is just I don't know if there's so much -- I think we almost over strategized last year with Viktor. I think like we were so like okay, so Viktor's going to go first off the tee. I mean, that was fine with the strategy, but then we got too much like, oh, whoever hits the approach shot on the green is going to be the first one to putt. And then, you know, as soon as that didn't work, we like switched it up and we were trying to do a bunch of different things.

I think that, you know, what's going to be great is I think we have a pretty good plan put together. He's going to hit the drives first and, you know, put the ball out there and then I'm going to smash it, and I think on the greens I'm going to go first because even though I feel really confident with my putting right now, with how great of a putter he is, if he sees one putt

roll in front of him that's going to help him a lot. I feel like we have a pretty good plan and we're going to stick with it.

Yeah, I think the biggest thing is just to not overthink anything, just make sure we go out there, because if we both play well and if we both play our games and, you know, the scores are going to be low no matter what. I can't see a situation of us playing well and the scores being high.

Q. You were both on the leaderboard in majors in the final round. What did you take away from that that you can use?

ABRAHAM ANCER: Quite a bit. Maybe not so much in an event like a team like this, but yeah, I learned a lot my last round of the Masters. It was really cool to be in the last group for my first time playing there. It was a big-time group, too. Didn't play my best. I definitely let one putt kind of get in my head and just didn't feel really good after hole 2, but I mean I took a lot of notes. I was in spots on greens that I guess I didn't do my homework well enough in my practice rounds, a couple of breaks that kind of threw me off. Other than that, I mean, the more I put myself in those situations, the better I'll come out in other events.

MATTHEW WOLFF: Yeah, absolutely. I think it's the same with him, I didn't get it done at the Open, but I felt like it was a really good -- you know, really good place to put myself and I've learned a lot from it. I think I've grown as not only a player physically, but just mentally.

I think the biggest thing I took away from being in that final group is just the comfort level of being out here because no matter who you are, no matter what tournament it is, we love competing and we always want to win. I think that sometimes, you know, in those stages, the U.S. Open and the Masters and the biggest stages in golf, you kind of get ahead of yourself and you kind of make the stage bigger than what it is. Even though it is a big stage, you know, the U.S. Open is, you know, a win is a win.

So I think that the biggest thing that I took away from it is just being comfortable out there and making sure to be focused and determined but not overthink anything and not, you know, wear yourself out or think it's more important than it is.

Q. A lot of eyes were on Viktor last week. Can you talk a little bit about Austin Eckroat's performance?

MATTHEW WOLFF: Yeah, he played really well. I was super impressed with him. Obviously I didn't, you know, watch much of it, but to put four rounds together as an amateur, that's really impressive because most amateur events are only three rounds. All college events are only three rounds other than like a few, like national championship and maybe the conference championship that we play in.

Yeah, it was really impressive. He made the cut pretty easily so that was really nice. From there he kind of just kept the pedal down. Just proves that when he's playing well, he can

play with anyone. I guess maybe everything hasn't fallen in place for him in college and I'm sure he wanted to leave a little bit ago, but he's going to get his chance and I like his chances.

Q. For both of you, what have you learned the last six months post-COVID break that will help you going into next year, whether it's how to deal with no fans, whether it's how to get your own energy going because there's no buzz or anything like that? The last six months, how is it going to -- will it prepare you differently going forward the next six to 12 months?

ABRAHAM ANCER: Yeah, it's definitely been different. My experiences in majors, this was my first Masters that I played, but I played U.S. Opens and PGAs where there's full crowds. It was a little weird playing the PGA and not having anybody there. It was definitely strange. Also, the U.S. Open. I played the PGA at Bethpage and the fans there are ruthless in New York and not having anybody there at Winged Food, it was weird. But you've got to pump yourself up, you've got to stay in it. Some people might like it, some people might not. I don't think for me it matters that much. I definitely miss the fans, definitely wish they were there and obviously miss them and we need them to keep these tournaments alive obviously.

In my own personal experience, I mean, you're still playing golf, you're still playing the same golf courses against the same guys and you've got to do your own work. I'm happy that at least we're playing. I think the Tour has done a great job that we're still out there. We haven't had any really bad cases that we had to cancel or anything, so I think we're very lucky compared to other sports, for sure.

MATTHEW WOLFF: Yeah, I think Abe pretty much covered it. It obviously is very different. I have yet to play a major with fans, but the 3M was loaded with fans.

And for anyone who says that they have to like get themselves pumped up because there's no fans, I think that's kind of a joke just because, like I said, we're out here competing, we're trying to win and the fact that you're playing on the highest stage of golf and if you're saying that you can't wake up for a tournament because there's no fans, I just think it's not right to say.

But yeah, what Abe said is spot on with the PGA TOUR. They've done an unbelievable job with the players and allowing enough people out here to still have the same coverage and feel like it is a PGA TOUR event, but not -- but keeping everyone safe at the same time.

With the testing, I don't think anyone likes the testing, but it is what it is and we're blessed to be out here and play the game we love at the highest stage. There's plenty of people right now who can't do what they love and we're lucky enough to do that and still make a really good living. Yeah, PGA TOUR's done an unbelievable job and I think we're just pretty thankful to be out here.