

**East Lake Cup Men – Stroke Play Singles**  
**October 30, 2023**

**COACH BRUCE HEPPLER**  
**Georgia Tech**



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**Q. I want to start with Kale. What did you see from your freshman today?**

**COACH BRUCE HEPPLER:** He's come in and worked really hard. He's physically really, really gifted and it's just a function of starting to believe in yourself. Every time you move from one level to the next, most of them wonder. It's just kind of convince him to gain some confidence through the process. This is just kind of the icing on the cake. You've got to bake the cake through your daily work. Came in early, worked really hard, played some of the courses and qualified for the first event. He kind of showed up ready to go and really committed and really mature from that standpoint. That's special when you see that.

**Q. He told me a big part of his round today was you with him encouraging him. What were you telling him to keep him in such a loose mindset?**

**COACH BRUCE HEPPLER:** You just can't let one shot make you think there's a problem. And it was so good today. There's a lot of just good shots, there wasn't a lot of otherwise. Just to kind of have a conversation. Obviously it's a big deal and it's all new to him. It's more just to kind of make him realize that it's just not bigger than it is and Coach is just along for the ride and we're just going to have a nice day out there and see what we can do.

**Q. Overall impressions on how your squad fared in stroke play today?**

**COACH BRUCE HEPPLER:** Kind of made a mess of the 12th, the par 5. Made two triples there and that kind of took us out of the team thing.

We'll be ready to go tomorrow. Again, the reality is you've got to win two matches no matter what happened today to win the whole thing. That will be our perspective going into tomorrow.

**Q. What changes going into match play, if anything?**

**COACH BRUCE HEPPLER:** It's way different, man. The stroke play thing, sometimes you don't know whether you need to make a putt to win the tournament or whatever until the second-to-last hole or the last hole. This, the winning and losing starts on the first green, so it just amplifies everything. The winning and losing begins way earlier than in a stroke play event.

It's awesome. The intensity is off the charts. I love being part of it. And again, this is a great chance for them to feel like getting into match play at the ACC tournament or if you make a



match play at the NCAA tournament, you need to have these experiences. You know, you want to do well, but the opportunity's pretty special to do that, and again, at a great place like this is awesome.

**Q. Not a bad week for your squad, Atlanta Athletic Club and Cypress. What's it like having the team split up there? I saw Cristo's in here helping you with the pairings.**

**COACH BRUCE HEPPLER:** Yeah.

**Q. How much trust does that show you have in him and how much input did he have?**

**COACH BRUCE HEPPLER:** Well, we've kind of got a program philosophy that they need to stand on their own two feet. I don't ever want to get so involved that all of a sudden they're ready to make a decision on the golf course and they look to find you. That's not -- I'm not going to Q-School, I'm not going out there. So I really, the basis of the whole program is for them to leave thinking I had nothing to do with it and that even though you're grateful for people helping you, at the end of the day understand that you hit the shots, you put in the work. So try to create some independence. We're OK I guess with one coach at one place and one at the other, so yeah.

**Q. Is it nice having a semi-home game here in Atlanta?**

**COACH BRUCE HEPPLER:** It's a great place here and wonderful members. There's donors that are out here. It's one of the best clubs I've ever seen, so it's nice to be home.

And again, what a lot of these guys don't understand, we're members at East Lake, so we've seen what changed in the community. So for us, I think this may be a little more special. We've been trying to get in it for a while now, but I think what the foundation does and all of those kind of things, that's way more important than golf. To see kids going to college and those kids from Drew Charter School up here the other night in their school uniforms and they're going off, that's way more important than making a birdie. So to be part of that even as a member at East Lake is pretty special.

