

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
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ALEX FITZPATRICK



MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Alex Fitzpatrick to the interview room, making his Wyndham Championship debut.

Alex, you just got off the golf course. If we can get your comments on being here this week and also playing at Sedgefield.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Yeah, it's super nice to be here. It feels a lot like a home game this week, so I've already had a lot of support, which is pretty cool. I'm actually staying downtown in Winston-Salem, so I'm making the trip back and forth from there. Yeah, I went to campus the other day, saw it all again and brings back a lot of good memories.

MODERATOR: Before we go into questions, let's talk a little bit about your season, five top-10s in 10 starts. Obviously you and your brother won at Zurich. Just comment a little bit about the trajectory that your career has taken now on the PGA TOUR.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Yeah, it's a trajectory that five months ago I didn't see happening. I felt like my game was in a good spot, but obviously it's one of the craziest things that I could ever imagine happened. I'm very thankful that I have great people around me and a lot of good guidance and advice. Feel like I work really hard and yeah, happy. If you would have told me five months ago, I'd have told you you were the bigger liar I ever met but here we are.

MODERATOR: And now No. 19 in the FedExCup standings, four big weeks coming up. Just talk a little bit about your mindset.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Yeah, if you want me to be honest, I think this might be one of the most relaxed times I think I've been around on the golf course. I think this is all a bonus for me and this is, yeah, it's all been very surreal for me.

I feel like I'm playing good golf and I feel like if I play well, I can compete. But I think in terms of the stress factor, it's not as bad as it was last year when I was trying to keep my card. Yeah, every week is a bonus for me and just excited to go out there and hopefully show what I have.

Q. Since you came on Tour, only Scottie Scheffler, Cameron Young and your brother have actually played better than you from tee to green. How does it feel to kind of keep that caliber of company already and, like you said, is it kind of a surprise how fast things have gone?



ALEX FITZPATRICK: You said my brother was beating me tee to green?

Q. Yeah, since you came on Tour.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: It's amazing to have my name even in the same sentence as them. Yeah, I think again I've made a couple changes at the start of last year or the end of last year that were important. I think it goes to show that I feel like I picked the right people to surround myself with and I have a lot of trust in them people. Yeah, hopefully that can keep getting better and that's the goal. I think as long as I can keep improving little by little, then that's the most important thing for me. Hopefully the putting gets a little better and that means some better results.

Q. You're not staying with Jerry downtown, are you?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: No, I'm not.

Q. Does this course, playing Old Town all those years at Wake, does that help you a little bit on these Donald Ross courses or what's your take on playing another Ross course?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: I wouldn't honestly say it does. Old Town is obviously a very different style of golf course than this one. I think Old Town is much more of a second shot golf course. I think this one requires a lot of great tee shots to find the fairways and I think that's what separates the two.

I think just being around this area and being around this golf course beforehand has definitely helped. Yeah, I'm just excited to get out there. It's my first Wyndham and I've been looking forward to this one for a long time.

Q. When you say you didn't think this would happen the way it has, what do you think your game was lacking? Why do you say that?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: I think almost a bit of everything. I think tee to green, driver for a long time was always the one thing I struggled with most. Driver and putter were the two things that kept popping up as to why my game wasn't getting any better. I feel like my approach play's always been pretty good so that was always something that I could rely on. Since kind of making them changes -- sorry, before making the changes, that's where I always had what I felt was a lot of self belief but I just never really saw the results fall my way, whereas obviously these past four months, making these changes and seeing where my long game, I feel if I putt well, I can compete. I think that's the big thing for me was I didn't have that five months ago.

Q. Have you crossed paths with Jackson Koivun at all and what do you make of what he's been able to do so far?



ALEX FITZPATRICK: I have not. I saw him on the putting green on Monday. Obviously seems to be an incredible player. I don't think there wasn't anything in college he apparently didn't win.

It's weird, once you're out of the college game, I feel like I haven't paid as much attention but obviously you hear about kids like him where if there is anyone that does what he does, as much as he's a great golfer, I heard he's a nice kid, which I think is the more important thing. Yeah, good luck to him. He's obviously an amazing player and it'll be exciting to play against him.

Q. You sound like the least stressed person during what's supposed to be the most stressful time of year. Just wondering how you balance feeling calm and comfortable with the inherent hunger to try to win at this level?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I think the hunger never really goes away. You come here every week with the intention to win, that's ultimately the goal of every tournament you play.

But I'm comparing myself to last October where I was fighting for my card. I'm in a super privileged position now where I don't have to stress about keeping my card for a little bit. So I think I'm just trying to take it all in.

And also I think with a lot going on just outside of golf, you realize that the golf is great but it's also not you as a person. I think that's where you see videos like Scottie Scheffler talking about his life outside of golf and what's important. I think you've got to try to take that away and onto the golf course so you're not as stressed and annoyed out there.

Q. (No microphone.)

ALEX FITZPATRICK: When I'm the happiest, I play my best golf. Definitely noticed that out there on the golf course. As much as it makes you stressed out there, you're not always going to be happy and that's absolutely fine, but I think the happier I can be away from the golf course it seems to correlate.

Q. Alex, do you maybe appreciate this more that you didn't hit it right out of college, that you had a few years of toiling? Do you appreciate this more where you've come from?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Definitely, yeah. Yeah, my route was a funky one. I think I did a little bit of time on PGA TOUR Canada and I did Korn Ferry Final Stage and then I did Challenge Tour. I felt like I traveled a lot all over the world to get where I am today and definitely I think you appreciate the grind of it more. That's what you love to do, but it's also the hard part. You have to work incredibly hard to be here. I'm glad that a lot of my sacrifices and where I played my golf has allowed me to be where I am today.

Q. (No microphone.)



ALEX FITZPATRICK: That's a great question. I just dreamed about being on this tour since I was a kid. I used to play the video game back in the day as much as I possibly can. Seeing all the courses and then playing them has been the most amazing thing. This is exactly where I wanted to be when I grew up. Yeah, the little Alex now would be kicking himself for that.

Q. Alex, could you talk a little bit more about the difference in your life since Zurich and just mentally and feeling good and everything? And do you think are you happy -- obviously you're happy, but could you talk about how you've kind of -- if anybody was critical that you got your card because your brother and you won a tournament, that you kind of followed up and showed that you belong?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Yeah, after Zurich I guess my life really did change. Like I went from not having anywhere to live at home above my parents' place because it was expensive and I'm trying to save money to suddenly moving to America and finding a house over here and having my own space, I think that was the biggest thing for me.

But again, the stress of trying to keep your card and trying to play good golf and expectations I put on myself, I managed to tick all my boxes of goals that I wanted to do this year and more.

I think that was the most amazing thing for me was I had all these goals of getting a PGA TOUR card via the top-10 of the DP World Tour and getting to Race to Dubai. They were all goals that I wanted to achieve and then that kind of was blown out of the water. I think other things going on outside of golf in my life that have just made me really happy, yeah, I think that's why I'm thankful to be here. And then I'll be brutally honest, I forgot your second question.

Q. About proving yourself once you weren't playing in a team event.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Yeah, no, after Zurich I think that was always going to be the case of is he good enough to be out here, does he deserve it, did your brother carry you.

And the answer is yes, he did carry me for a little bit. I felt like I moved my fair share of weight in that tournament.

Yeah, I think I was hungry and eager to show that I belong here and I felt like I played well enough to show that. I feel like the guys out here were so nice to me and I would hope that they also believe that I belong out here now, so that was the main thing.

Q. You and Alistair were roommates, right, at Wake? Alistair Johnston?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: No, no. He dated one of the girls I lived with in my junior and senior year.



Q. You guys are still friends though?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Still close, yeah.

Q. Talk about that experience playing for the World Cup for Canada and all that.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Yeah, it's amazing. It's funny, soccer, football is still my favorite sport in the world. It's way better than golf.

Yeah, like it's so nice to kind of speak to someone from a different sport and hear kind of their experiences, their side of things. For him to be at Wake with me and then move up his ranks from Montreal to obviously Celtic now is an amazing achievement for him. I'm hoping that he'll get to move to the Premier League if any of the Premier clubs out there want to sign him.

Yeah, he's an amazing person, I've got so much respect for him. Yeah, it's just really cool seeing two Wake alumni do what they wanted to do growing up.

Q. I know Matt was quite hesitant to sing after you guys won at Zurich in New Orleans this year. If things do go your way, are you willing to lead the crowd in the chorus of Wonderwall for (indiscernible) English national team?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: I have the worst voice you could imagine, so I will not be doing any singing. I can hype up the crowd, but I won't be singing that's for sure.

Q. You're in great shape for the Playoffs, but do you sense tension rising this week?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: No, to be honest. No, I don't. Yeah, I don't know how to explain it. Again, I'm really lucky to be here. This is a tournament that I wanted to play for a long, long time. I know that this is one of the stressful weeks for the players out here. You know, I'm very fortunate that luckily for me that's not me this week.

Q. But the other guys that are maybe outside the bubble of making the Playoffs --

ALEX FITZPATRICK: I don't think you really see it from an outsider's perspective. I'm sure, well, pretty much all the golfers, it will be more of an internal stress. I don't think that they will try and show that they're stressed, but that's just part of it. I think once Thursday comes around they'll feel a lot of tension on the golf course and that's just all part of it. That's part of the game. Yeah, I haven't -- I haven't noticed anyone being too crazy yet.

Q. What's something off the course that has helped contribute to your happiness?

ALEX FITZPATRICK: It's a great question.



I think just the feeling of freedom to do what I want, to be where I want to be. I've been spending some time in New York with my girlfriend and that's been super nice to kind of have a rest and completely reset. I think as much as it's been such a great year, I think I needed some time to kind of like recover and take it all in. I think that was really nice for me to kind of put it all to one side and enjoy life outside of golf for a little bit.

MODERATOR: All right. Alex, we appreciate your time, best of luck this week.

ALEX FITZPATRICK: Thank you, guys.

