

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT: FRED COUPLES
Thursday, October 31, 2013



FRED COUPLES: I hit a lot of really good irons and I putted well. You know, I had a couple -- I had different streaks, I birdied four holes in a row, or four out of five holes a couple different times. I hit the ball really well. Played with Mike, who is an extremely solid ball striker, so you're always going to see shots, and we followed each other and played pretty well, I just made more putts than he did.

Q. And a good way to finish.

FRED COUPLES: Yeah, I don't know what my drive did over there, I don't know if it hit on the ground and then bounced in the tree, but I got really lucky. I smoked it but I pulled it. I don't really know where you're supposed to go. I know further right than I hit that one. I got lucky and I played a safe shot to about 45 yards and I hit a great pitch to make par. I made a nice little four foot curler on 17 to save par. I thought the course was pretty good. Obviously I made a double on the 8th hole and that was a blunder, but I don't think I could have shot much better.

Q. What happened on 8, Fred?

FRED COUPLES: 8, I know I didn't have enough club but I hit the same club yesterday and the same yardage. On this one I pulled it and it was on the downslope of some grass bunker and I hit what I thought was as good a shot as I could and no way it could stay on the green. I kind of fluffed a pretty difficult chip to about five feet and missed it, so that was that.

Q. Some of the guys said the greens were softer today, they watered?

FRED COUPLES: Yeah, I think they did, then they'll gradually get firmer. I don't think we need rock hard greens the first day, and I honestly didn't think there would be anyone at 8-under also, but that was basically because the greens were softer. The golf course is immaculate. The greens are a perfect pace. They're going to get firmer and bumpier and you're not going to make every four-footer and you're not going to make as many birdies Saturday and Sunday, but for the first round, you know, they let us have it and it will get harder and harder as we go.

Q. Is it a good feeling coming here?

FRED COUPLES: A good feeling?

Q. Yeah.

FRED COUPLES: I haven't played any golf. I played San Antonio. The feeling I had

there was to go play and get four rounds in and then come here and be better. I needed to go to San Antonio anyway, but I was fairly pathetic there. Then I came here and I played yesterday and hit the ball really solid today. I hit a lot of really good shots. I love the course, which helps.

Q. You said yesterday you didn't hit the ball that well.

FRED COUPLES: That was yesterday.

Q. What was different?

FRED COUPLES: Well, to be honest, I told Casey, I went for a little walk, it's the first I've really played in cool weather for a long time and my body just kind of, you know, it stiffens up, and I don't even think yesterday was cold. But I've been in Palm Springs where it's been 90, San Antonio was 80 degrees and everywhere we've played it's been hot. So I figured today I needed to pay attention to what the hell I was doing and practice and hit more balls and really try and get loose. I got off to a good start. It's a nice day, it just was a little cooler yesterday.

Q. Your back or your neck? Yesterday you mentioned --

FRED COUPLES: My neck to my back is crazy. I would rather have a back problem than a neck problem, that much I'm finding out, but now I've got them both. But I've got three more rounds and then I'm going to get x-rays next week in LA and see what they say, but I don't feel great. I can swing, but my neck's really killing me.

Q. When did the neck stuff start?

FRED COUPLES: Oddly enough, right after the Presidents Cup, and I felt great. I didn't do anything, I didn't slip, nothing. I woke up one day and I couldn't move, and then the next day was worse and it's kind of been that way for two weeks, maybe longer, three weeks.

Q. Are you spending much time in the trailer then?

FRED COUPLES: No, I'm afraid to really do anything. I'll wait until I see what -- I think I need some x-rays for someone to look. I don't want anyone feeling around and then be in a headlock and not be able to move. I can move, it just hurts.

Q. Seems like you and Mike had a pretty good gallery.

FRED COUPLES: Well, Mike has boys out there, so it was fun to play good. I played with him one other time, he shot 61 out here, so that was unbelievable. But he plays really well and he did make a couple par putts, but if he had putted like I did, he would have shot 65 or whatever. He's in every fairway, on most every green, and if

you just follow him around here you'll do okay.

Q. Why do you think the scores -- you mentioned the greens. Were the greens just receptive enough that the scores are --

FRED COUPLES: I think so, yeah. It's an absolutely perfect day.

Q. Not much wind, right?

FRED COUPLES: And the greens are a little softer.

Q. Someone said they were almost too hard in the practice round.

FRED COUPLES: Well, they were hard, but I don't want them to water them every day. I think they put them on last night and each day it will be a little firmer. As long as the weather stays like this, they'll figure it out. I think Saturday and Sunday there will be some tough second shots and today they were easier.

Q. We talked yesterday about the four runner-up finishes and being so close and just hitting some poor shots when you needed to hit some good ones. How restless are you to get back in that, give yourself another chance this week?

FRED COUPLES: Well, I mean, I am. Almost every week I try and play. Last week I wasn't, I was getting the kinks out. But it's interesting, I'm watching Bernhard play, he's, I don't know, 17 Top 10 finishes, so he's in the hunt every week and it's just easier. I'm not playing that much, so like I said yesterday, I look forward to all that. I don't panic when I get in the lead, but I need to play better this week, next year, to win these things. You're not going to beat Bernhard Langer and Kenny Perry if you're not playing the last nine very good, that's for sure.