

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT: KENNY PERRY
Sunday, November 3, 2013



PHIL STAMBAUGH: Kenny Perry, you win the 2013 Charles Schwab Cup, the only player this year with three victories including back-to-back major titles during the season. You end up with 3,273 points, 411 more than Bernhard Langer, but it got a little interesting at the end. Thank goodness Fred Couples up there won by 6. Talk about the Schwab Cup.

KENNY PERRY: Exactly. It's never over until it's over and I knew I had a pretty good lead, but if Bernhard wins, I had to finish Top 5. And I think even though I finished 5th, I had to finish 5th solo, so if he would have won the tournament I still wouldn't have won the Cup this week. So a big thank you to Fred Couples.

But starting the week I finished 29 against one, and like I was saying, I was trying to be the mayor of San Francisco trying to shake all the players' hands. I just said, I need one of you to get hot this week and keep him off of me. And it was so funny he played right in front of me today, Bernhard did, and I came to the 9th hole, which I knocked a driver and 5-wood on the green and I looked over at the board and he shot 4-under on the front nine and I'm thinking this guy just won't go away. I'm thinking I've got to play. And I birdied 9 and 10 and I got it to 4-under and I'm thinking, well, you know what? You just need to do this on your own. I three-putted 12 and I hit it in the bunker on 13, I made two bogeys back to back and I made a birdie on 16, but yet I didn't do enough to do it, so thank you Fred Couples.

But it's been a wonderful year. I mean, if I didn't win the thing I would have been disappointed, yes, but to win two majors, I should have won the Senior PGA, I had a three-shot lead with five to play and I couldn't get it done coming down the stretch, but my play in the majors this year was fantastic. Maybe I can get over the hump now and play better in the majors. Hopefully next year will be better, be as competitive. I don't know.

We'll cherish this year because, you know what, not too many people have one of these and to be able to say that I did it once in my career is a dream come true to finally, here at 53, to finally achieve something pretty significant in my golfing career. I got on TOUR in 1986 and I'm still fully exempt on the PGA TOUR. I've got three more years. I'm fully exempt next year, this year, '14, and I've got a top 25, top 50 all-time money I can use. I've got options. Has anybody ever won the Cup and then gone over and won the Fed Ex? I don't know. It's just been just a great accomplishment, I'm very proud of it.

Q. Talk about have you ever had a week like this where you're leading something real big and you're concentrating on trying to win the tournament

but also you have another goal out there, too?

KENNY PERRY: Well, no, I never had a week like this. I never had a week where I wasn't concentrating on winning the tournament. Like I said, Top 5 wins me the Cup and that was kind of my game plan, to finish Top 5 and I achieved it but it wasn't quite good enough. It was a very emotional week for me. It was neat to have all my family here, my three kids were here, my two grandkids were here to be able to come and celebrate with me. My daughter and her husband are newlyweds, they celebrated with me last week. They came in on Saturday, surprised me Saturday night, and I think that motivated me to win against Bernhard on Sunday, which was huge which really built my lead up. So been interesting. You know, I'm just glad it's over. I've had the lead since June or whenever and every week we talk about the Charles Schwab Cup and I'm finally glad it's over, I don't want to talk about it no more, I got it. Looking forward to some time off now.

Q. You mentioned a couple times this week having that exemption on the PGA TOUR. How much do you realistically plan to use that? How much would you play out there?

KENNY PERRY: That's a great question. Physically I've been struggling with being able to walk 18 holes this whole year. Thank goodness a lot of the tournaments I was able to take a cart. I had knee surgery in February, my second one, and physically just having trouble getting around. Obviously on the PGA TOUR there's no carts, you've got to walk. So I've lost -- I was at 242, I'm down to 216, I've lost almost 30 pounds, been really working hard on diet and exercise, and actually I'm strong enough now, I flew around this golf course this week. My knees were good, so I answered a lot of questions on my feet and my knees, been able to just get around and I played okay.

So I'm definitely going to play the Hawaiian Open starting out the year and I'll play Hualalai the next week and then I'll probably play LA and Phoenix, maybe Pebble Beach. I'll actually play pretty hard because we've got a pretty good gap between the two tournaments in Florida on the Champions Tour. I'll probably play Honda and I'll probably play Tampa, Innisbrook there, so we'll see. The first part of next year will be big for me because I'll be going at it pretty hot and heavy and if I still feel like I can compete out there on the regular TOUR and feel like certain situations if I can get in the hunt again, that may change my thinking about playing on the -- you know, as opposed to -- but I love this Tour. I love the guys out here. It's just a fun place for me to hang out and end my career, so it's nice to have options. We'll see, we'll see if the beginning of the year goes good, I may play a few more, I may not, we'll just see.

Q. You mentioned were feeling a little bit nervous earlier in the day today. Is there a point you can point to where you knew this was going to happen, that you felt like Couples had an insurmountable lead?

KENNY PERRY: Well, when he was 17-under and I was watching the TV monitor because I was coming in and he laid up on 16, I knew I had it because I hit driver about 10 feet from the hole and had an eagle putt, realistically could have made eagle there, and when I saw him lay up, I knew he had a 6-stroke lead, I knew he was playing smart, he was just going to get the job done, get his win, he hasn't won this year. I felt pretty good at that point, I really did.

Q. Kenny, you mentioned age 53, if you were to win a tournament on the PGA TOUR you would be the oldest winner ever. Does that come in your mind as a motivation to break that record?

KENNY PERRY: It would have been nice. I think when I had the Masters they were all talking about that at age 49. Oh, that would have been oldest major. You're saying oldest period. Sam was how old? 52. I hadn't heard about that, I didn't really realize that. I guess that could be something to shoot for. You never know, I'd like to beat those flat bellies. I antagonize those kids when I go out there now. I play pranks and tricks on them. I have a good time when I go to the PGA side, I like going out there to hang out.

Q. That's a lot of weight. How have you lost the weight? What have you been eating or not eating?

KENNY PERRY: Haven't been eating much. Basically it's kind of a low calorie diet. Basically I've stayed away from dairy products and maybe I have an allergic reaction from dairy but once I got away from dairy I started really losing. You know, just a lot of protein and staying away from breads and pastas and all that stuff. It's just falling off me. So I kind of found out what my body, you know, what it didn't like and once I kind of got rid of it, I really started losing weight fast.

Q. Freddy's talked about maybe playing more out here next year. How does that change the competitive dynamic if he stays healthy, plays more out here and gets in a groove because obviously you need talent?

KENNY PERRY: It's funny, you look at Fred Couples and you look at me, he only won one more tournament than I did on the PGA TOUR. Everybody thinks Fred Couples is up here and I'm down here. Isn't that funny? If I ever won the Masters, we would have had the identical career in tournament wins and everything. Everybody always talks about how great Fred Couples is, which I agree he is so talented and great. But you know what? I think there's a lot of quality players out here that welcome the challenge and we welcome him to play more and support the Tour, the Champions Tour. I don't know. He said he has back issues and I assume he does. He's always stretching and all that. I love Fred Couples. He was a great Presidents Cup captain. I just like hanging out with him. I like his insights. He's a huge sports fanatic, he loves all kinds of sports. He does have a lot of talent but there's a lot of other guys that have a lot of talent, too. It just makes the Tour more

compelling. If he wants to dive in at it head first and bring it on, I say bring it, let's see what you've got.

Q. Mark made similar comments yesterday because he had, Mark O'Meara, had very similar numbers too. Had one more win than Fred did.

KENNY PERRY: He's got another major. I thought Mark should have gone in the Hall of Fame before Fred.

Q. Mark thinks that, too, I think.

KENNY PERRY: Yeah, yeah.

Q. But my question is, you say Fred's up here and that is kind of the public perception.

KENNY PERRY: Exactly.

Q. Why do you think the fans embrace him so much more?

KENNY PERRY: He's cool. Everybody just likes Fred Couples. He's just so laid back. It's so funny how his personality really brings everybody to him. He's a really neat guy and people can relate to Fred Couples and I think he just brings them in. It's funny, I played with him I don't know what round, I played with him the first round last week at San Antonio. Huge galleries. He made 8 on the 1st hole, par 4. We had huge galleries all day. Then the next day I'm doing well in the tournament, I'm not playing with Fred and I've got like four people following me, and I look over and Fred's way up there and he's got the whole gallery because they're all following Fred Couples. It's pretty neat, they love him he's just the fan favorite.

Q. (Inaudible.)

KENNY PERRY: Not me, I like my personal private life, I like being left alone. Let me do my job and I'm out of here.

PHIL STAMBAUGH: Anything else for Kenny? Kenny, again congratulations on the Schwab Cup.

KENNY PERRY: Thanks, Phil. Thanks.