

**FRED COUPLES**

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**Q. Fred, thank you for joining us here at the Galleri Classic. Just to start, how does it feel to be back here?**

**FRED COUPLES:** It's great. Like I said last year, I lived here for a long time at Mission Hills and I played this course a bunch with John Cook and George Brett. It was always fun to be here. I moved down to La Quinta now and I'm so happy we have a tournament here. I'm old and a cripple, but I played last year and hopefully I have a couple more years of playing in this thing. It's great for the town, great for the community. A lot of old friends. Look, it's high 70s today and it's beautiful.

**Q. You probably knew this course better than anybody last year with maybe the exception of Cookie. What do you think maybe the seniors learned or were surprised about when they came here, because most of them had never really seen it?**

**FRED COUPLES:** Yeah, I don't know how many pros, trying to -- maybe one played in the -- did they have a World Cup here maybe?

**Q. Langer.**

**FRED COUPLES:** Langer, there you go. He played in everything. First, it's in mint shape, it's old school. A lot of people think Palm Springs, there's going to be this and that, but this is a great, great course for us and for the girls. When the girls played here, I watched it all the time. I knew the course, I knew where they were driving it, I knew where we would drive it. It's certainly not easy. I honestly don't know what David Toms shot last year.

**Q. Sixteen under.**

**FRED COUPLES:** So that's pretty darn -- that's great golf. But it's in perfect shape. Grif, who's caddying for me, he called last night and said the course is absolutely mint. It's not a shock when we're in Palm Springs, I think almost every course is perfect.

But the guys like it here. And also we just played in Tucson, I think there was a week off, then we played Newport and then here and that's pretty easy traveling for everybody, including myself, which I enjoy. I enjoy being at home this week. But it's a great course, it really is.

**Q. You withdrew last week in the second round.**

**FRED COUPLES:** Yeah.



**Q. How are you now?**

**FRED COUPLES:** I'm really not much better, so I'm just -- I played on Tuesday and we'll see today what's going on. I have a great group, I played with them last year, Hillery and three other guys from Thunderbirds, so I'm definitely going to play with them. I can get it around. Last week part of the problem was there were a couple times in the group where I'm playing with guys on a par-3 and they're hitting a 6-iron and I have a 4-iron out just trying to dink it up there. I tried to hit a 5 on one hole and it just didn't work out well, but that would have happened the next hole or the next day. On Saturday I just couldn't even swing. It was raining and freezing and I couldn't get loose and it was just a waste of time even to continue to play.

So I tried to rest a little bit. The weather's awesome. I know it's not supposed to be great Saturday and Sunday, but that's the way it goes. I'll get it around today and I'll see what's going on tonight. I just don't feel very good.

**Q. But it's desert rain.**

**FRED COUPLES:** Yeah, correct. If it's sprinkling, maybe the cart might get wet. It's a great event. A lot of people last year, too. Again, we're lucky to play all these tournaments that we have, but I'll tell you for being a desert rat for four years, I'm hoping I'm healthy enough to just get it around, but I'd like to play at least two or three more years here. It's a fun course. It kind of suits my eye a little bit, you've got to drive it really well. And obviously if you don't putt well, you're not going to be 14 or 15 or 16 under like Toms and some of those guys.

It's nice to be here. Everyone loves it. All the players have probably been to Palm Springs to practice at some time in their careers, but now to have a tournament. And I think we're here for a long time, I hope, because it is a very, very good event.

**Q. There's a tournament going on down in Texas right now that you won 20-some years ago.**

**FRED COUPLES:** Yeah.

**Q. What's your thoughts of that event that week when you were back on it?**

**FRED COUPLES:** Well, I played the Houston Open a long time, I went to school at Houston. I won on another course. Now they're at a place where Paul Marchand and I, we used to hit golf balls, it was an actual park with a golf course, but we used to hit at the Memorial Park. Mr. Crane has done an amazing actually job or what he's -- for charities and what he's done there. It's a hell of a course. Believe it or not, I completely forgot, I need to look, see what the scores are like. I forgot they're down there.

But Houston meant a lot to me and winning there was a trip. It was so long ago, I beat Hank



Kuehne and John Daly I think by one or two shots, I birdied the last hole. Cougar red, it's always in my blood. Everyone saw Jim Nance last week in more red than I don't even know if I have in my closet right now.

I'm not like Jim Nance's, but I don't know if I bleed Cougar red, but I certainly check the paper every day Houston plays. But I actually forgot they were in Houston this week, which is kind of embarrassing.

**Q. That was an emotional win though for you?**

**FRED COUPLES:** Well, it was. There was a lot going on. Someone said they showed something last night. You know, I hadn't won in a long time. I changed teachers for a little while just to see what I could do, although the Harmons and Marchand, they all teach kind of the same. I think if anything Butch maybe kicked my butt a little more than Paul would have, but Paul is my teacher forever.

Winning there, the whole thing, winning in Houston, I don't even know the last time I won before that, it might have been five years ago or five years before that. It was a big deal.

**Q. Did you text Nance after that --**

**FRED COUPLES:** Oh, I text him during it, after it, before it, yeah. Put the TV backwards, took pictures of it, sent it to him and Blaine McAllister and John Horne, and of course the first thing he says, we all got to get to Dallas. I'm like I've got a golf tournament, Jimmy, I can't just go somewhere to watch the Cougs play. We're working on it. They've got to beat Duke and then we'll worry about maybe Sunday.

**Q. Where are you going to watch that game tomorrow against Duke?**

**FRED COUPLES:** I'll watch -- I'll be at home probably with -- I got a buddy staying with me who's caddying for Vijay, so he and I will watch. Hopefully we can hang tough and close it out at the end.

**Q. You mentioned maybe play two, three more years here. Does that mean two or three more years full time on this tour or just --**

**FRED COUPLES:** Well, you're on the ball, I have some hand picked ones. I'll play in Newport because I can get around there, I'll play here, I might go up to Pebble and play. But I'm not going to travel around and play -- I've actually felt OK in Hawaii and in Naples, but I just, I can't -- I'm so afraid to hurt myself by practicing for a couple hours and I don't feel well. When I was 35 it took me a long time to figure out, OK, what do I have to do so when I'm 36 that I can get through these 18 tournaments. Now that I'm 64 my goal is to not come play a golf tournament and feel bad and finish 45th. That's like not much fun. I'm not saying there's anything wrong with it, but I'm past that. So I'll play a handful of tournaments and play with my buddies and enjoy golf.

