



INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT: FRED COUPLES
May 4, 2011

MODERATOR: Fred, thanks for joining us and waiting this afternoon with things, but you had the chance to play the course, maybe just your first impressions. You have played here before in 1990 at the PGA. Just what your initial thoughts were after your round today.

FRED COUPLES: Well, it's a long golf course at the moment. I didn't play yesterday, but I was here and I watched it rain, and playing this morning, you know, it's a great place. I'm very excited to be here. I think that this is a major and we're playing a course that has hosted two majors and this is a great, great golf course. So for the Champions Tour, I believe this is going to be one of the best events. The U.S. Open is another one, but this one here will take off. The people -- I played with Nick Saban today, who probably will draw a lot of people wherever he plays, but there were people following a lot of the pro-am groups and that's nice to see, and I heard we're going to have great galleries this week.

Q. Were you torn between here and Charlotte this week, Fred? What was your line of thinking?

FRED COUPLES: Well, no, I was always going to come here. I have a house in Charlotte now, but this is a great event. That also is, but I played Houston, I played Augusta. I haven't played in three weeks, so I need to be here. I'm hoping to feel like I have the last couple days and get through this week where I can make a little progress. I did play well at Augusta. I wouldn't say I felt good but I did play well in the Houston. Those are the last couple times I played, I felt like I played as well as I could and finished about 50th place. But at Augusta I did well and I expect to play well. I've played two rounds of golf since Sunday at Augusta and that's really not too promising, but I've been trying to get this back thing better where I can start to play a little golf. That's where we're at, or that's where I'm at.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about your memories of 1990 and how many of those memories came back today when you were back on the golf course, you know, maybe for the first time since?

FRED COUPLES: To be honest with you, I remembered a few of the holes, not all of them, the shapes and things, but I don't really remember much about 1990. I know who won. I know I finished second. I made a few bogeys coming in, but I don't remember how I made bogeys and I don't remember how I made any birdies. But I remember Lee Trevino in '84 making a putt on the last green and kissing his putter to everybody. But as far as '90, I honestly -- I don't recall any shots except -- is 13 a par 3? If it is, I was playing a great round on Sunday and I hit an iron right over the flag on 13 past the hole and putted it by. I think I 3-putted and struggled from there finishing the round, but I don't remember any shots. It's a long time ago.

Q. After playing today, what are the challenges of this course and what are going to be the big challenges this weekend?

FRED COUPLES: Right. I think today it played really long so I hit driver on every hole, but I guess it will be the 14th hole, which is probably the shortest hole on the course, and I hit a lot of 4-, 5- and 6-irons to a lot of the greens. So if it dries up, the challenge will be getting the ball to the corner, that's all you really have to do. So if I can hit a 3 wood, get a few bounces, I'd be right where I was today with a driver.

But again, it was windy today. I don't know if it's going to be windy the next few days. But the challenge is, you know, for me I think it would be a lot of second shots after you hit good drives, just like any other course. I don't think the rough is particularly long, but it is -- you can catch some jumpers and flyers and I think right now if the course is playing long, the greens are soft. But when it all dries up over the weekend, you're going to have to play some really good golf. The greens are very -- they're well guarded, they're tough and there are some unbelievable pins.

Q. Freddie, are you feeling better now than you thought you might or worse after three weeks off?

FRED COUPLES: Well, after Augusta I went down on Tuesday and had my back worked on, had some shots and all that, and then since then I've actually -- well, before I started hitting a few balls, I couldn't have felt any better. Then the golf thing kind of screws that rhythm up, but I do feel better. Like right now I finished and I actually hit maybe 30 balls with a 5-wood just to swing a few more times and try to think I'm going to be ready for tomorrow. But I feel okay, so I'll know more after a few more of these rounds. And if not, then I've got to go back down there and do some other things. If I do get through this week and tell them I feel good, I have two more weeks off, so I'm going to try and practice every

other day and try and get the playing, you know, where I felt like I was a month ago, which was decent; not great, but decent.

Q. Are there things during the weekend that you do to help get through with your back? Do you have the same routine every weekend that you're playing to try --

FRED COUPLES: No, I travel with a little machine and I'll go home and I'll use it. It probably runs its course, 50 minutes and I think 72 minutes and then I'll do that in the morning. So like this morning I was up at 5:00, just -- it breaks up the inflammation. Then I go play golf and I don't -- no stretching, no touching, no massage, no nothing, just let it thaw out on its own and let this medicine do what it's supposed to do. So that's what I do every day.

Q. How long have you dealt with this and how long have you been --

FRED COUPLES: You know, well, it's been really in pain since last October where it's been this toothache, which is not a lot of fun. A bad back, I can live with that, but I mean, I've been struggling for, you know, a lot of years but not like the last six or seven months. I don't foresee feeling like that and doing much more golf unless I play five times a year. It's just -- it's not really worth it.

Q. Is that an electrical stimulation machine?

FRED COUPLES: Yeah, it's a micro current. It's a couple gloves that you put one in the front and one in the back and it shoots through and breaks it up. I feel better, but then I'll go play golf for four hours and I've got to put it right back on, but you know, I can get through the days. It's not horrible. It's just -- you know, it's just this pa-poom, pa-poom all day long, even when I'm laying down. But there's a lot of worse things going on than that. But the three weeks I had off, the first two weeks, I mean, I was doing everything that I would like to do and then I started to try and practice for this and it just doesn't feel right. But, you know, he thinks it will go away in a few months, I hope.

MODERATOR: Who is he, Fred?

FRED COUPLES: He's just a doctor in Dallas.

Q. A guy you've been to for a while?

FRED COUPLES: No, that guy's in Waco, so I see him, too. Thank you. We'll see you this week.