

ROUND 1 INTERVIEW
June 4, 2021



FRED COUPLES (-5)

Q. Fred, first of all, can you just tell us about your round?

FRED COUPLES: Yeah, it was a good round. I made a lot of little putts. I mostly don't -- I played the course for the first time yesterday, so I don't even know what holes I birdied. I started on the back nine and I was 4 under, and then front nine I couldn't get the ball really close to the hole. Made a nice putt on 7 for birdie, then hit two great shots on 8 finishing up and three-putted from about 50 feet and parred 9. 5 under, I'm very happy. I really liked the course My first time playing it.

I hit the ball in the right spot, and when I was in trouble, made some good pars. But it's a tricky little course and I don't know what the scores are like, but I'll take my score today.

Q. When you're playing a course like this for the first time, I mean, are you kind of learning it as you go?

FRED COUPLES: Well, I have a good caddie who walked it on Wednesday night and I played yesterday. You know, when you hit a good shot down the fairway, the way the fairways are sloped, you just kind of forget about it. And you get down there, yesterday and I had a sand wedge on one hole and then today I missed the fairway. It was a little into the wind, I had a 7-iron to the same hole. So it's going to play different, but you have to get the ball tumbling down the fairways. And that doesn't mean it's going to stay in the fairway, but the more it's in the fairway than rolls in the rough, you're hitting much shorter clubs. I did that a few times today Just like everyone else. Like I say, it's a short -- when you hit the ball in the fairway, it's a shorter course, but it's very tricky and it's hard to make birdies.

Q. Do you feel like the par 5s are the best opportunities for scoring out here?

FRED COUPLES: Well, I think par 5s are the best on any course. I parred them both on the front, which was my back nine. Like I say, I three-putted No. 8 from a long way. Yeah, but there's other holes if you hit a good shot into the green, the greens are absolutely perfect. If you're 10, 12, 15 feet, you're going to scare the hole. If you're 20 or 25 feet, you might make one or two a round, but the greens are perfect.

Q. What's it like getting in front of all these fans and having people back out walking the course?

FRED COUPLES: Yeah, it's great. I haven't played much at all. I've been withdrawing from every tournament with a back issue. Then coming here and having a lot of fans is fun. Just makes it more entertaining. And when you play well -- you know, if you shoot 73, you kind of

want to gripe all the way around the course. If you play great, then it's fun to have 5,000 people out there, which I don't know how many there are, but they're great crowds and it's a great event. I haven't played it much, but I don't play that much anyway.

Q. How do you keep the momentum going into Round 2?

FRED COUPLES: Well, that's a heck of a question. You know, I will say it seemed fairly easy today because I hit the ball really, really solid. So for me I just have to hit it -- they don't have to go where I'm looking, but they need to start where I'm looking. If they hook or fade, that's okay, I can figure it all out, but I just need to hit it solid. And I putted well today, so if I putt well tomorrow, I'll continue to be a factor. If I don't, I'll have to hit some amazing shots to make birdies.

Q. How about the Senior Open coming back to Omaha?

FRED COUPLES: Yeah, that's great.

Q. What are your thoughts on --

FRED COUPLES: Well, my thoughts are on tomorrow's round first so do I plan on playing? Yeah. I plan on playing in Tulsa. I planned on playing wherever the heck the one before that was. So I don't really know, but Omaha, I've got a chance at it.