

FRED COUPLES: I got away with some bad shots, I hit some good shots, but hadn't played 9 through 18 so I was a little bit blind out there. Then some of the wind I didn't judge very well, but I think I did all right for the first time really seeing it. Had a good group, everyone played pretty well. I know everyone wants to shoot lower, but I thought we all played pretty consistently in the wind. I don't know about these 7, 8 unders. Those are great scores. I really -- I mean, I don't even know what wins here, I don't know what they shoot. But I played the same time as they are and 7, 8 under is pretty good.

Q. How did you feel physically out there?

FRED COUPLES: I feel all right. You know, sometimes you get into the wind, downwind and crosswind and they're honestly a little different swings from what I've been practicing just standing on a range making normal swings. So I know it all sounds funny, but that puts a little different move on your swing, really plays with your back. I just today tried to hit everything solid and if it went high, it went high because I'm not in any boat to be thinking I can hit low drawing 5-irons in the wind since I haven't played much.

Q. What did you think of the course?

FRED COUPLES: Oh, I love it. The course is phenomenal. I played the par 5s well. I did not birdie the last. Other than that, I think I played the par 3s, they're tough, and then the par 4s are tricky. If you hit good drives, you have short clubs. And then some of the harder holes played into the wind and they were pretty darn difficult. No. 9, 17 was hard, and I just didn't hit really enough good shots. I think is 15 a long par 4, too? Those are really good holes. But now, I don't know, I might play worse tomorrow or better, but it's a really good course.

Q. What did you hit into 11?

FRED COUPLES: I hit a 3-iron.

Q. How far was it?

FRED COUPLES: 220.

Q. What was your strategy there on the back nine since you had never seen it before?

FRED COUPLES: Well, to rely on them. Then I eagled a hole so I hit first for a few holes so I didn't rely on everybody, but kind of visually they're just kind of where -- I mean, I hit a drive on No. 10, I had no idea really -- I knew where to go, but I pulled it and it drew and I

had a sand wedge. The next hole I hit a beautiful drive and made eagle and hit a couple shots that turned out better than maybe they should have been. But it's a tricky little course for the first time really seeing it. It's not like bad tricky, it's just you've got to know where you play from with my length to make a hole play shorter.

Q. I think it was 12 there you hit that bomb of a drive and it ends up in the pine straw. What was going through your mind when you saw that?

FRED COUPLES: Yeah, I actually saw it when I was going up 11, I saw Jose playing from to the left of it. I didn't know the hole, I didn't know if there was water a foot off the fairway. When I got up there it was pretty open and so I just tried to blast it at those palms and I hit it right where I was looking. But Bernhard was past them so I don't know if mine slowed down through there. But there I got lucky that it trickled through and I got it on the green and had a birdie putt. Tomorrow, I don't know if the wind blows this way normally, I have no clue, but hopefully it does because then I'll be playing another new course and it blows the other way.

Q. You probably heard that Tiger pulled out with back issues of the next two tournaments. I'm sure you know what he's going through here?

FRED COUPLES: Well, I talked to him a little bit and he's really tight, so we had about a 40-minute conversation. I would like to say there's remedies, but I've been doing it so long that I'm not in his boat. So I know when he plays, he wants to win. When I was coming and playing, really I wanted to play golf and be as good as I could be and there's a huge difference. When he goes and plays against those guys and can't swing and play, then it's really, I don't want to say no fun, but for me, I didn't have a choice. I didn't win 90 tournaments and 14 majors and have \$500 million, but I feel his pain. I think people don't realize that to play golf, you don't have to be perfect but you cannot play with a bad back. It's almost impossible.

Q. When was that conversation you said you talked to him?

FRED COUPLES: In the offseason. I watched him play the Hero Challenge and I thought he looked really good. Then we did a Bridgestone thing together on Monday right after and he just was really stiff. I said, you know, that's why I don't play any. I play a week and I take time off, and I play another week and I take time off. There's no way you can do that. So I think in December, early December. He's doing well. I just think he's probably really working on his game and he'll figure out how many balls he can hit before he gets stiff.