

FRED COUPLES (-12)

Q. The par on the 18th, how big was that leading into tomorrow?

FRED COUPLES: Well, I mean, every shot's big. I got a little sloppy the back nine, and I honestly thought I hit a good second shot but I left it in a good place and I wanted, like we were talking, to be short of the hole, not pin high with that big breaker. But it was a good feeling. I stroked it well and it went in and dinner's -- as they say, dinner's going to be a lot better.

Q. You hit a couple kind of wild shots, as you mentioned. Maybe your back at times got to you a little?

FRED COUPLES: On those swings, believe it or not, it only hurts when I hit horrible swings. I made about three of them today and I just get stuck and then that's when my back goes in a position where I don't really want it, I want to clear through the ball. On 16 I was trying to hit a low bullet in there, not a great shot. I was just trying to get middle of the green and I fatted it and those hurt. But a lot of good swings, I made a lot of birdies. I tried to be really, really aggressive today because I was trying to figure out how a lot of these guys shot 7, 8, 9 under, I don't get it, and I did today, but it was because I putted well.

Q. Well, certainly we look forward to watching you tomorrow, and I'm not a doctor, but I think your back's saying "don't do that."

FRED COUPLES: No, it is, you're correct.

Q. So how important was it to make birdie on 17 after making bogey on 16?

FRED COUPLES: Well, it was important to somehow get it in the fairway. The two guys I was playing with hit driver and they looked beautiful, but they rolled through the rough. Bernhard wasn't as lucky and Kenny drove it so far. So I hit 3-wood, smoked it, and I hit a nice iron and I got it a little through the green and hit an okay pitch, so it was a good six-or seven-footer to make, and just as important on 18 to make that little four-foot curler. If you hit good drives on the par 5s, you want to make birdies. The 12th hole's pretty long, but on the other ones you're trying to make birdies because some of these holes are tricky. Pins were really brutal today, just over some of the bunkers. So, you know, I made a lot of birdies because I putted really, really well. Made a lot of putts.

Q. You finished well yesterday. Does momentum carry over one day to the next?

FRED COUPLES: Well, you know, not for me. What carries well is, to be honest, when I'm

on the range and I'm feeling really, really well, and it's been like that for months now. So when I go on the course, I feel like I can hit it where I'm looking and that's very important to me. Sometimes I wake up and I'm just so sore and stiff that I kind of maneuver the ball around. But, you know, what did I shoot, 7 under? You're not going to do that very often. I've never done it on this course. I've had a lot of nice rounds, but the weather is beautiful. I don't know what it is, 75 degrees.

Q. Hardly any wind.

FRED COUPLES: Keeps your body a little loose. And it's a fun course to play.

Q. I noticed on 18 that you had 3-wood I think initially and you watched Ken tee off and switched?

FRED COUPLES: Yeah, Ken's a little longer than me. I'm like, okay, well, it didn't go as far as -- it went a long way, but I was expecting it to go, you know, a little further. So I said if I hit 3-wood, I have a 4-iron to the green. So I hit driver and got it out there perfect. I'm watching Langer hit a 7-iron and he was a little behind me, went to the back edge, so I tried to hit a 7-iron up in the air and it came up short, which was weird, but it was a fairly easy bunker shot if there was anything like easy and I made that putt.

Q. Do you think it will take 5, 6 under tomorrow to win?

FRED COUPLES: I don't even know what the kid's doing. Is he 14? Yeah, I would think another good round. And someone else -- I just played Naples and I was struggling a little bit on Sunday but I was close, then I saw a leaderboard and Parel was 18 under and I was 12. I'm like -- so whoever has the hot round tomorrow will probably win, and that could be Stricker, someone at 10 or 11 under. There aren't many of them.

Q. You referred to Brett as the kid?

FRED COUPLES: Well, he's 50, right? Maybe he's older, I don't know.

Q. He's 50.

FRED COUPLES: Is he 50? Okay. So he's the kid, yeah. He's a very good player.

Q. What do you know of his story?

FRED COUPLES: Well, I've known him since we were on Tour. I don't really know anything about how he got in Morocco or if he had anything to do with the Champions Tour. He certainly does now. But he's a really good player. He's very long and that helps anybody play golf. When you win, you catch a lot of momentum no matter who you are.

Q. When you turned 60, how did your perspective on golf or even life change?

FRED COUPLES: Well, I've been counting the years down, so when I turned 60 that just gave me one less to worry about, and there aren't going to be too many more. That's basically it. I don't feel any different than when I was 57 and I'm sure when I'm 65 I'll be done probably. But I enjoy playing. If I can drive it like that, then an age is really irrelevant. It will become a struggle when I'm hitting it for some reason 30 yards shorter and all these holes I hit a driver and a 9-iron are now a driver and a 7-iron, I will not nearly be the player that I want to be so I will be bye-bye.