

American Century Championship

Friday, July 10, 2026
Lake Tahoe, Nevada, USA
Edgewood Tahoe

Mardy Fish

Press Conference



Q. Mardy, how did it go today? You're playing well enough to pull this off after a couple more rounds?

MARDY FISH: Certainly played well today. We're happy with the score. There's a lot of rounds out there you have where you hit it really good and don't score well. I hit it great and scored well, which is fun.

I'm looking at it looks like 4 under so 68. I'm happy with that. Joe played awesome too. We had a great group. It was a perfect sort of easy round of just golf, just straight golf.

Played a lot of rounds with those guys and seen them play. Certainly seen Smoltzy play better, but he'll play better tomorrow. He's an awesome player. And obviously Joe is a phenomenal player, and we saw that last year.

Finishing there, two eagles in a row for him on 18 there. If he keeps making three there, he's going to be tough to beat.

Q. Is the intensity of the competition as strong or stronger than ever, when you look at the leaderboard right now?

MARDY FISH: Certainly. I won't say who, but there were times when I would come here, I'd just look at a number or two. Now you've got to look at a bunch of names, figure out where everybody is.

We have some new guys in here, Matt Boldy is a plus-2 handicap. He's a phenomenal golfer. Austin Reaves. This tournament is really difficult to play well the first, not even the first year, not even the second year. It takes five years to play well here, I swear to you. Just to get used to everything. The pace of play as well.

Obviously it slows down pretty good there on 16, just trying to navigate that and get used to it, and still being able to step up when you're waiting for 30 or 40 minutes there to

hit a good tee shot in front of a lot of people as well when you haven't swung a club in a while.

So a lot of that stuff is tricky to get used to. Again, those guys are going to play well eventually, but it's hard, it's tough. First year I came I finished 14th. I was devastated. I wanted to come and show everybody how good I was. There I was in 14th place, which isn't bad for the rest of the guys.

Q. What about a scoring record, considering all the points that are on the board?

MARDY FISH: What is it?

Q. The over-under is 73 or 4.

MARDY FISH: Certainly good start to that. You never know what tomorrow brings. The moment that -- the golf gods have a funny way of, right when you think you have it or figured out, it can humble you with a round or two.

We won't get too confident, and we'll just be happy with the start. I've certainly come into the first round and had some duds for sure and gotten out of here with 15, 16 points on the first day. If I would have done that and looked at the scoreboard right now and Joe at 29, that would have been a pretty big hill to climb.

Q. You mentioned you maybe didn't play as well as the score indicates. I guess how were you able, after that first bogey, rip off five birdies, no bogeys from there on, post a really competitive score?

MARDY FISH: The key out here is to take advantage, try to take advantage of the par-5s, obviously. They're all pretty reachable. If you hit a good drive on 3, it's reachable.

The rest of them are pretty gettable. Score well there. I played good on the par-5s today. I had three birdies and a par on 4, but I hit a good putt. I just misread kind of a six-footer. I could have birdied all of them. You sprinkle in one or two in there, and you come away with four, five or six birdies, that's what you're going for before the round.



Q. Pretty good score. Was there something about the conditions today that led to those scores, or just the competition level of the tournament is increasing?

MARDY FISH: Golf course is in perfect condition. It's always in awesome condition. It seems like this year, it's just better. I don't know. It just seems so green. Look, the conditions are perfect. There's not much wind out there at all. Certainly early in the day.

Once we hit kind of 16, you're sort of insulated at the green. You don't necessarily know how much wind is up there until you get to 17, really, and you get to 17. I saw Smylie Kaufman in the corner, he goes, man, five minutes ago it just whipped up pretty good; it's blowing pretty good. That was pushing every ball on 17. So 17 was just a good score to -- three is a really good score to get there.

Again, hit a good drive. Just ended up in the rough. Hit it a little short and get up-and-down, and again watched Joe make a lot of putts. I made a lot of putts today. I putted well. I've been working on my putting, so happy with that.

Q. You mentioned maybe taking five years to truly be able to compete here. Is that because of the crowd, getting used to the elevation, getting used to the golf course?

MARDY FISH: All of it. The greens as well. Poa annua can kind of be bumpy at times. Again, early on in the round, they rolled super super true, and you get to kind of 16 or 17 and guys have been walking all over it for the whole day.

The afternoons, the poa annua moves around a bit. It's tough to make putts, for sure.

Altitude is hard to get used to. I usually bring kind of a yardage book or whatever to pretty much every tournament that I play, but I don't need one here. I don't use one.

I actually gave it to Boldy, the one that I had. I don't know what he finished. But hopefully it helped him a little bit.

Q. Looking at Joe's game, I guess where has it gotten better over the last couple of years to go from, like, 24, 25, and now 26, it seems like he's made a jump.

MARDY FISH: I think ultimately for him it was like getting over the hump of winning a tournament. Just kind of getting that feeling of closing the door. He had been really close. And he was going to win -- he's going to win a lot of tournaments. He's obviously really, really good. He's way better than like Curry and those guys.

Joe's a phenomenal player, and this is a perfect golf course for him. It's fairly short. Most of, if not all of the holes, are dogleg left to right, if there's a dogleg at all, which is the opposite of where a lefty wants to hit it. Then he putts it awesome. So I really enjoy playing with him.

Q. You're getting close to the score you had when you rocked an 83 to win this event. How do you think -- what's your confidence level like going into tomorrow's game?

MARDY FISH: As soon as you feel confident in golf, we're going to pull it right back from you. The golf gods are always listening, and if you say, man, I'm hitting it so well out there and can't wait to get out there and hit it well again tomorrow, it just doesn't work like that. And we're not that good.

Q. Yes, you are. You wouldn't be here and you wouldn't have hit 83 a couple years ago.

MARDY FISH: Thank you. I'd love to continue to score the way I scored. I'd love to hit my wedges better. I think there's a little bit of room for improvement. I'm very happy with the way it went today.

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