

Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions

Thursday, January 29, 2026

Orlando, Florida, USA

Lake Nona Golf & Country Club

Dwight Freeney

Quick Quotes

Q. Dwight Freeney, thank you for joining us today.

DWIGHT FREENEY: Thank you for having me.

Q. Great playing out there. You're tied for third. Mardy Fish and Aaron Hicks are ahead of you. Only two players ahead of you in the field. Talk about your day, please.

DWIGHT FREENEY: Well, I had fun today. Usually in my first round it's usually just a disaster. Usually just like oh, my goodness. I got nerves, I'm doing this, doing that.

But today was a better day because I was finding ways to get up and down. That's a good feeling to have. When you can get up and down, you're hitting the ball terribly, but you find ways to get up and down you have a place to go, now I know, okay, let me see if I can get on the green in regulation tomorrow.

So the putter was working. I had fun.

Q. Yeah, that's great. If you could just talk about this tournament in general and how it's unique playing with the LPGA players and what's special about that.

DWIGHT FREENEY: Yeah, it's an awesome tournament. To be honest, you sit there and you watch you ladies hit the ball and you're like, how is that even possible? Look how far it's going; it's so smooth; I'll never be able to swing like that; may be in my next life.

Those are the thoughts that come when you're out there watching these girls play. But it's also great from a competitive perspective. You know, retired athlete, you have a chance to kind of trigger those emotions and those feelings of getting after it a little bit.

So when you're going out there and playing, playing against people that you played against maybe in the field in football for me, but also get a chance to see other players



from different sports and entertainment, which is also great.

Q. That's great. Talk about the game of golf a little bit and what you like about golf.

DWIGHT FREENEY: You know what? The thing I would say is this: It's nobody else's fault but your own. That's the part that I love. You don't need anybody else to go out there. You can go out there, drop a ball, and just work on it all day if you want. You can kind of figure it out.

No other sport's like that. Football obviously you need to have 11 guys out there with you. Basketball you can shoot free throws and jumpers, but it's not the same.

I think this is one of the only type of sports you can go out there and just spend five hours just working on chipping and putting and just kind of do the whole grinding thing and you can go out there and do it by yourself.

Q. When did you get bit by the golf bug?

DWIGHT FREENEY: It happened probably earlier in my football career. I would say early 2000s. You know, Indianapolis, I love Indianapolis, but ain't much to do Indianapolis, so I had to pick something up. It was one of those things, like I said, it was just go out there, I didn't need anybody else, grab some clubs, just hack away, kill some grass.

Eventually kind of figured certain things out, and then you have people teach you along the way. That's how my journey started, but it's just the competitive part about it, that it's nobody else's fault but your own why this ball doesn't go where you want it to go is what hooked me.

Q. Where did you play in Indianapolis and where do you play now?

DWIGHT FREENEY: Favorite course in Indianapolis, I shed tears because they shut it down, was Wolf Run. Wolf Run was a jewel, a gem. There was no course like that, so when that shutdown, you know, I kind of -- now I just stop in at -- Crooked Stick is there. I love that course. Some



other great courses. Meridian Hills. But Wolf Run was my heart. Right now I'm a member of Ballensisles in Palm Beach Gardens, and a member at The Grove in Hobe Sound.

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