

Chubb Classic presented by SERVPRO

Friday, April 16, 2021

Naples, Florida, USA

Tiburón Golf Club

Fred Couples

Quick Quotes

Q. Incredible round today, 9-under par 63. What was the key to today's round?

FRED COUPLES: Well, I think anytime I putt well and feel like I'm seeing the putts, I'm going to make a few. A lot of wedges, but I hit a lot of fairways. I don't know if I hit every fairway, but I kept the ball in play, kept it below the hole, and like I say, the hole got big there for about a five-hole stretch, and I hit the ball solid all day. But hitting the fairways was huge.

Q. You speak about the fairways. I noticed you didn't hit a lot of drivers. You had it looked like a new 3-wood in your bag; is that the case?

FRED COUPLES: You know, I was down in Florida and I got fitted for a TaylorMade 3-wood - I've used my old regular 3-wood for about 20 years - and I really like it. Today was a great day. I drew it, which gives me a little extra yardage, and I had a lot of 9s and wedges to these holes, but again, the 3-wood was key for me today.

Q. A lot of players almost four weeks off on the PGA TOUR Champions. It seems like you put a lot of work in before playing the Masters last week. Did you see that work paying off this week?

FRED COUPLES: Well, I do this week. I did work -- I flew to Florida, work with Sam Reeves at Seminole and played with a few TOUR players down there and I started to hit the ball well, and I went to the desert after I flew home, and then I got to Augusta and I just kind of froze on a few shots out there. All that practice didn't pay off.

But I can promise you today was a good day ball-striking, and I have practiced pretty hard, so it's pay off today.

Q. This was the first time that you saw the Black Course at Tiburón. Why does it fit your eye so well?

FRED COUPLES: Well, I think it was intimidating the first



few holes I stepped out there, but I kept hitting 3-woods. I watched a little bit what the guys were doing today. I had the tee a lot, but when I didn't I watched what Stricker or Weir was doing for tomorrow, too, but I did hit 3-wood almost every hole but maybe four times or three times, and those holes I drove it really, really well. Everything seems small. It doesn't mean I'm going to do well tomorrow, but I grew up in Seattle, the courses are brought in, my eye can see down those trees, and if I focus and drive it well, I seem to do okay.

Tomorrow is another day. It's not an easy course, but if you're in the fairway, you can get it going.

Q. (His thoughts on the course.)

FRED COUPLES: It's intimidating trying to learn it because it's so tight, and as a player you want to get the ball further down the fairways no matter how tight it is, but for this particular course so far, if it stays like -- it's not like I can't putt, but when I start putting like that and hitting it well, it seemed easy. Tomorrow is another day where I have to go out and I've got to keep it in the fairways, and if I don't, then I've got to start figuring out what's going on. But today I hit them all.

Q. Was this would you say one of your better rounds?

FRED COUPLES: Yeah. I mean -- yeah. But again, I can't go over the whole round, but a lot of wedges, a lot of 9-irons. I didn't hit the ball great. I drove it great for me. I will say that. But my iron game was good enough, and on the tougher holes I played them pretty well. There are some very difficult holes out there, and there are some ones that are tight, but if you hit the fairway, as long as you play your second shot the right shape and distance, you'll be okay.

But there's some stuff out there that other guys probably could come in here and say, geez, it looked like on 14 I hit a pretty good second shot, it caught this bank and trickled down to the water. All that stuff it out there. But today I drove it long and very straight and had a lot of wedges.

Q. I think you made one off the green. Is that just



reinforcement --

FRED COUPLES: That's all I want. You're shooting for that. The hole before it -- I'm getting mixed up. 7 was the par-3, I made about a 30-footer on the green. And then 8, it never got to the green, it spun back, and I was probably 30 feet again, and I made it from off the green. That's the hole you're talking about. And then I hit a couple good shots on 9, the par-5, so I made an easy birdie there, and then I just kept kind of going.

Q. Even 18 was a good two-putt for birdie, right?

FRED COUPLES: Yeah, I nuked that wood, and when I got down there, it wasn't as bad as I thought because when I moved my ball, the gallery is right there, the attendance up in the boxes, so I got to putt it from there, and I hit a great putt with perfect speed, and it ended up going five or six feet by, but that was probably as good as I could do, but I left myself a pretty uphill, easy putt and made it.

Q. Does a round like this give you a lot of juice for the weekend?

FRED COUPLES: Well, it's hot. The juice I'm going to go drink right now in a minute. But yeah, I played so poorly at Augusta and I worked pretty hard to get there. I didn't kill myself, but I worked pretty hard. Played a lot of rounds. Just -- it's a hard course. I played really, really hard and I didn't do well.

I had from last Friday to today to think about it, seven days to figure out, am I a 79 shooter or am I better than that, and today was a good day.

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