

Fred Couples will play in the 2010 Boeing Classic

By Scott Hanson
Seattle Times

The Boeing Classic received good news when Seattle native Fred Couples indicated he will play in this year's Champions Tour event at the TPC at Snoqualmie Ridge.

Couples, 50, is a rookie on the tour for players 50 and older. He finished second to Tom Watson in his debut late last month. Couples will be playing in two local events in a span of a month this summer. He is the honorary chairman for the U.S. Senior Open at Sahalee in Sammamish from July 29-Aug. 2. The Boeing Classic is Aug. 27-29.

Couples said in an interview with the Champions Tour that he is looking forward to playing in both events. "The Boeing Classic ... I hope to play every single year, even if I'm 60 or so and hacking it around, because I grew up there," said Couples, who has won 15 times on the PGA Tour, including the 1992 Masters. Couples said his goal this season is to play in 12 PGA Tour events and 10 on the Champions Tour. "I haven't played 22 events for 20 years," he told the Champions Tour. "That's a goal. People want to know a goal. It's not winning, it's really to see if I can play that many tournaments." Couples said he plans to be strictly a Champions Tour player next year.

Couples earns first Champions Tour Victory

Stan Badz/PGA TOUR
Feb. 14, 2010

NAPLES, Fla. (AP) -- **Fred Couples** gave the Champions Tour a big boost.

The 50-year-old star won The ACE Group Classic on Sunday for his first victory on the 50-and-over tour, holding off **Tommy Armour III** by a stroke.

Couples closed with an 8-under 64 to finish at 17-under 199 at The Quarry, while Armour -- making his Champions Tour debut -- matched the Tour record for lowest score in relation to par with an 11-under 61.

Couples made a 5-foot birdie putt on No. 17 and a tap-in par on 18 to wrap his first official victory since the PGA TOUR's 2003 Shell Houston Open.

"That's a long time," Couples said. "I am very excited that I won and I'll keep trying to win out here and I have a couple chances on the PGA TOUR to make the cut. That's really not the idea of fun."

Couples and Armour, friends since college, had some fun earlier in the week, exchanging text messages.

"And then three days later I wasn't all that thrilled about the text when he was 11-under par after 53 holes," Couples said.

Armour started his charge with an eagle on the par-5 seventh, and birdied Nos. 8, 9, 12, 14, 15, 16 and 17.

"I wish he would've shot two shots higher," Armour joked about Couples.

Armour tied Couples with the birdie on No. 17.

"I hit an iron on the 15th green and I looked at the leaderboard and I was tied and seriously was shocked," Couples said.

After the second round was halted due to darkness Saturday night, Couples came back to play five holes Sunday morning to complete a 67 and take a two-stroke lead over **Dan Forsman**. Couples birdied four of the first five holes in the final round to push his advantage to five strokes -- six over Armour.

"I thought that would easily be enough," Couples said.

Armour's 11-under round tied **Walter Hall** (2002 AT&T Canada Senior Open) and **Tom Purtzer** (2004 Toshiba Senior Classic) for the lowest in Tour history.

"Birdied half of them and then one more," said Armour, who made the decision to move to the Champions Tour this year after undergoing back surgery last June.

Armour said he never looked at the leaderboard, but had a number in mind.

"I figured 15 under was as high as he was going to shoot, so I figured I had to get below 15, and I did, but he's a pretty awesome player."

Couples was in contention in his Champions Tour debut last month in Hawaii, but **Tom Watson** birdied the last two holes to beat him by a stroke.

"I got to watch that," said Couples, who was in the same group as Watson. "That was easier, I think even easier to take."

Couples earned \$240,000.

Scott Hoch, the 2008 champion, shot a 69 to finish third at 9 under. **Bernhard Langer** and **Mike Goodes** tied for fourth at 8 under. They also shot 69s.