



TOURNAMENT NOTES - WEDNESDAY, FEB. 6

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Daly Looking For Lightning To Strike Again at Oasis Championship

Two-time major champion John Daly knows his best golf is behind him.

He needed a sponsor exemption to get into this week's Oasis Championship.

But that doesn't mean he can't win and it certainly doesn't mean he won't be the center of attention Friday when he steps onto The Old Course at Broken Sound.

That's because his game remains louder than his pants. He still grips it and rips it. He still goes for every par-5 in two and he rarely leaves his putts short.

We all know how he came out of nowhere to win the 1991 PGA after entering the week as the ninth alternate. Could lightning strike again this week?

"I love the Florida swing, I always did on the regular TOUR," Daly said. "I love the golf courses in Florida. Put me on Bermuda (grass) every week, there's always a chance that I might do something decent because I'm a Bermuda guy."

Daly has won one event on the 50-and-older circuit in 49 starts, with six top-10s. Some thought Daly would overpower the PGA TOUR Champions, but it was tough from the start. And it gets tougher every week as more proven players such as two-time U.S. Open champion Retief Goosen turn 50.

"With (Steve) Stricker coming out a couple years ago, this tour's getting stronger and stronger every year," Daly said. "With Retief here and Ken Duke ... Ken, God bless him, he's not the longest hitter in the world but he's one of the straightest. He's going to kill this tour the way he putts."

At 52, Daly may be looking at asking for more sponsor exemptions to remain playing. But he's OK with that.

"I gave up on goals," he said. "I'm not going to be a ranked player ever again. I just want to come out, enjoy it. Just even for us, we want to try and get better every week."

Couples, Goosen, Toms in featured pairing: Former major champions Fred Couples, Retief Goosen and Toms will likely draw the biggest gallery in Friday's first round of the Oasis Championship.

The trio goes off the first hole at 11 a.m. Goosen is making his PGA TOUR Champions

debut. He turned 50 on Sunday, but hasn't played much competitive golf in the last four months.

"Playing fit, I'm definitely not," Goosen said. "My plan is to get playing because standing on the range and hitting balls ... you need to get out there and play and find your swing on a golf course. I feel like I'm playing okay, but you've got to go out and make the scores."

Another featured group is Daly, Miguel Angel Jimenez and Jeff Maggert (10:50 a.m., first hole). Eight-time Player of the Year Bernhard Langer of Boca Raton goes with defending champion and Kirk Triplett at 11:10.

Langer has a win, two seconds and two thirds in the Oasis Championship. He said The Old Course suits his game.

"It's a shot-maker's golf course," he said. "At first you think, yeah, it's nothing about it, but it's actually a very demanding golf course. You have to drive the ball very well. Pretty much all the greens are elevated so if you miss a green or short-side yourself, the ball always runs down away from the green and it's hard to get it up and down."

Langer almost became the first repeat winner in the tournament's 12-year history last year, but lost a one-shot lead to Calcavecchia with two holes left. Langer, who is second in career wins with 38, said it didn't take him long to get over that disappointment.

"When you put yourself in a position to win, you're going to win some, you're going to lose some," he said. "You're going to make some mistakes and you've got to pull off some great shots, and last year was a tough one bogeying 17 and not being able to birdie 18, but you move on. That's the good thing in golf, there's always another tournament the next week."

Gary Nicklaus, also making his PGA TOUR Champions debut, is grouped with Rocco Mediate and Brad Faxon at 10:20 a.m. on the first tee. Nicklaus' father, Jack, is expected to watch Gary play all three rounds.

The players are re-grouped for each round, based on their score. They will play in threesomes off both tees the first two rounds, but will go off the first tee in twosomes in Sunday's final round, weather permitting.

Tickets for the 54-hole event Friday through Sunday are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the gate. Kids 18 and under are admitted free and fans 70 and older, with proper ID, also get in for free.

Couples in Thursday's Pro-am: South Florida golf fans will get their first look at Fred Couples in Thursday's Pro-Am.

The Hall of Famer and 1992 Masters champion plays in the afternoon wave (12:45 p.m. shotgun), going off the first hole. Langer also plays Thursday afternoon, starting on the first hole just before Couples.

Calcavecchia plays in the morning (7:15 a.m. shotgun start), starting on the ninth hole. Goosen plays Thursday morning (18th).

Admission for Thursday's Pro-Am is free.

For more information about the Oasis Championship visit www.oasischampionship.com.

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PRO AM TEE TIMES THURSDAY

INTERVIEWS

Wednesday, February 6:
Click on the name to see the transcript.

[Retief Goosen](#)
[Bernhard Langer](#)
[John Daly](#)

Thursday, February 7:

~12:15 p.m. – Fred Couples (scrum on range before PM Pro-Am)
~12:45 p.m. – Gary Nicklaus (after AM Pro-Am)

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