

Friday, July 15, 2011

## **Holtz's Final Rounds at the American Century Championship**

South Shore, Lake Tahoe, Nev. – Lou Holtz let ESPN talk him into being a college football analyst for two more years, but the fit-looking 74-year-old was sure that this would be his last visit to the American Century Championship.

“There comes a time when you have to step aside,” said the affable retired coach before he headed to the first tee to begin play on Friday. “I can’t reach most of the fairways any more. But from 100 yards and in I’m still okay. They need to let us old guys move up so we can be competitive.”

Holtz’s game showed signs of a former brilliance, but from more than 6,800 yards at Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course, he was playing double-bogey golf most of the day. He once was an 8-handicapper, and as recently as 2005 he won the member-member tournament at Augusta National Golf Club.

Holtz shared the round with another College Football Hall-of-Famer, Steve Spurrier, the man who succeeded him in 2005 as head coach at the University of South Carolina, and Jack Del Rio, the current head coach of the NFL’s Jacksonville Jaguars. Between them, they have 67 years of head coaching experience. But the 48-year-old Del Rio was the baby of the group, with just eight years as a head coach at his current post.

“I’m just listening and taking in the wisdom,” the long-hitting and erratic Del Rio said at one point. The group alternated between talking football and listening to Holtz’s quick-witted one-liners.

After an up-and-down stretch of birdie, triple bogey and then a perfect 300-yard drive for Del Rio, Holtz quipped, “I don’t want to hear you getting on your players for being inconsistent.”

On another occasion, Holtz hit his second shot on a par-4 hole and said, “There, now I’m out there with your drives.”

After Sunday’s final round in the 54-hole event, Holtz will get ready for another college football season alongside his colleague Mark May and share his wisdom as “Doctor Lou.” And he may just have more insight into the upcoming season for South Carolina, which has the “Old Ball Coach” pretty excited.

*By Craig Smith, former director of media relations for the U.S. Golf Association.*