

RBC Heritage

Thursday, April 18, 2024

Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, USA

Harbour Town Golf Links

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

Q. Rory, can we talk about the last two holes because it appeared on 17 you were not thrilled with the tee ball that ended up 15 feet away.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it looked better than it felt, let's put it that way. It was a little thin. I've been catching a few iron shots thin today. It just didn't feel great, but it came off pretty good. Because I hit it thin, the wind didn't affect it too much, and it went pretty straight.

It was great to birdie those last two holes. I made two good swings at the last to put it in there close, and nice to finish with a 3.

Yeah, started pretty good, then managed my game quite well during the middle when I didn't have it, and a nice way to finish. Feel like I've got a good chance now to get myself right in the tournament tomorrow morning. I could have definitely made a couple more bogeys around the turn there, and I didn't. Made some good up-and-downs.

Yeah, pretty pleased with the day.

Q. Second shot at 18, you had a club, called Harry back in, went back to the bag. What was the thought process there because that also worked out pretty well.

RORY McILROY: It did, yeah. I had 170 to the hole. I hit my pitching wedge around 150, so I didn't know if there was quite as -- and then with the wind funneling down, if you don't quite get it high enough the wind can knock the ball out of the air.

So I was sort of thinking a three-quarter 9, but then the wind freshened a bit. I thought, you know what, I can just hit a wedge up in the air and it should be able to get there.

Honest at the minute full shots feel a bit more comfortable than the three-quarter ones, so went ahead and hit a good wedge and hit it in there nice and close.

Q. You'd only been here a couple times prior to this



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year, but playing in this signature event, how thrilling is it to be back in this tournament on this layout?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it's nice. I'd forgotten how nice it is here. It is, it's a beautiful golf course. There's a great feel. It obviously gets really good support from the fans.

Yeah, it was a great first day, and as I said, good to be back. Looking forward to the next three.

Q. Are you pleased with the overall round or did the last two holes help a little bit?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, the last two holes definitely help. I'm going to go to the range here and hit a few balls, but yeah, the last two holes gloss over maybe a little bit of scrappiness there in the middle round.

I feel like I started pretty well. But it is, it's one of these golf courses you just have to manage your game, put it in the right spots, and it didn't feel amazing for most of the round, but I was able to manage my game well and put together a solid round of golf.

Q. A place like this off the tee, does it heighten your focus a little bit more because of the corridors you've got to put it into?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it's corridors, it's obviously dispersion, but then it's also distance, as well. You've really got to lay back sometimes to not have some of these overhanging trees in your way. Yeah, it's definitely more of a precision golf course, but even with the tee shots, you need to hit it into a certain section to give yourself a good look for your second shot.

Q. Did you hit the mini driver at all today?

RORY McILROY: I hit it a little bit. I actually think I only hit it three times. The way the wind was today out of the south means I didn't hit it -- some of the holes I hit it in practice, I was hitting 5-wood off the tee and then there was a couple of holes where I hit mini in the practice round, then hit driver because the wind was into.

But it's a great club. It's versatile. I'm sure I'll use it quite a



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bit over these next few days.

Q. You said at the Masters you were loving golf quite a bit at the moment. What has you loving it right now?

RORY McILROY: I think the challenge more than anything else. Don't feel like I'm quite on top of my game. But I'm determined to sort of get on top of it. Yeah, I'm liking the challenge at the minute and liking trying to figure it out.

Q. What part of your game do you feel like you need to excel at a little bit more to get on top of your game a little bit more?

RORY McILROY: I think just the iron play. I'm hitting the ball pretty good off the tee. Look, I see signs that the iron play is getting a little bit better, but it's just not -- playing with someone like Ludvig who is completely in control of his game at the minute, yeah, I just need to get a little bit more in control, and if I do that, then I'm going to be a bit more sure of myself and make more committed swings.

At the minute, it's just -- it's a process, but I'm working at it.

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