

The Memorial Tournament Presented By Nationwide

Friday, June 4, 2021

Dublin, Ohio, USA

Muirfield Village

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

Q. Wednesday everything okay?

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, it's fine now. Just a little bit of a family emergency.

Q. Is it better off than the golf course or how would you describe that?

RORY MCILROY: What do you mean?

Q. What's your thoughts on the golf course, but, I mean, and how it's going this week.

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, I mean, I played okay. I played all right. It's a tough track. Jack's made it a bit tougher this year, the rough's really thick, obviously with all that rain yesterday it's super lush today. It's hard, because they haven't been able to get the mowers on it. You'll hit a tee shot that's a decent tee shot, maybe a little bit off line, going towards one of the fairway bunkers, but it's happened to -- it happened to each of us at least once today, Viktor, Adam and myself, where a ball's going in a bunker but it stops in this really thick rough around it and it's really tricky and so you can be only slightly off and be penalized pretty badly around here at the minute just because of, I guess, the conditions and a little bit of the setup.

Q. I noticed, and it's pretty small sample size, I realize, on par-5s there's a lot of laying up. Are you finding the same thing and is that condition related?

RORY MCILROY: No, it's the redesign of the holes. Especially the 5th green, I went for it today and hit a pretty good shot, but even -- I hit a great shot straight over the pin into the back bunker and, I mean, you would rather be 90 yards away hitting a sort of a nice wedge shot in there, you can get it way closer. So I think people are just realizing it's -- you're probably more likely to make birdie just by laying up and, which is a shame, because it's sort of exciting to get to go for par-5s and it's sort of taken that a little bit out of play.

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Q. Will it matter if the course dries out? Accessibility to the par-5s?

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, I think it will just make people even more --

Q. Dumb? I'm sorry.

RORY MCILROY: It will make people even more wary of going for the par-5s in two. Like I went for one par-5 today and made 6 and laid up on the others and had birdie chances. I've made more birdies this week by laying up than I have going for the green.

Q. Where did you make your 6?

RORY MCILROY: 15.

Q. What did you do from that back bunker?

RORY MCILROY: On 5? I hit, I hit a really, really good bunker shot to 20 feet. I mean, I couldn't have made better contact with it.

Q. Do you think with the redesign here -- and then I heard you talking about Torrey Pines -- do you think that they're trying to kind of combat length to some extent by making it harder for you guys to hit driver in places?

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, I think what's happened here is everyone is just now playing from the same spot with their second shot, so it's really become -- and it's not an easy driving golf course by any means, but everyone is hitting to the same spot. So there's no -- I guess there's no different strategies off the tee, it's just sort of everyone goes and does this and then they go from there. So it's sort of hard for, you look how condensed the field is, it's hard to separate yourself when a design is like that.

Q. You talked about, you kind of had like an up and down last month or so even though you won and Quail Hollow. Do you think that when somebody wins, like yourself, that we have added anticipation that you're going to do something more?

RORY MCILROY: I think so, yeah. I think everyone from

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

outside thinks, Okay, he's got it again, he's back, he's going to go on a run. But you never know. Like you never, you know, we all play this game and you, you never know. You maybe have a feeling -- like I felt like I was going into Quail Hollow with a pretty decent game and it's a golf course that I love and I play well at, so I knew that if I played my game I would have a decent chance.

And I didn't play that badly, I think I played the par-5s at Kiawah in 3-over and Phil played them in 11-under or 10-under and he beat me by 12 for the week. So if I play the par-5s like Phil at Kiawah and I have a chance to win.

And then I was saying as well, like if you look at my scores over the last few tournaments, they probably wouldn't look spectacular, but I feel like what I've done over the last three months say is I've basically just played the toughest venues on toured, played Augusta, Quail Hollow, Kiawah and here. So like I, it would be nice to shoot a few more rounds in the 60, but when you're playing courses that are this tough, you sort of, it sort of makes it maybe look maybe not quite as good as what it is.

Q. Two lame questions if you don't mind. A, do you have any thoughts on the great Brooks/Bryson feud? Do you think it's good for golf, embarrassing, none of the above, all of the above?

RORY MCILROY: I sent Brooks a message last Monday morning when it all came out I said, I don't care what happens to me for the rest of this week, this has made my week, this is like the best thing ever. Like it's fine, I think it's good for guys to show personality and pretty sure whoever leaked it from the Golf Channel got in trouble, I don't know if anyone's got to the bottom of that, but, hey, look, it is what it is, you're not going to -- there's certainly people out here that don't like me, I'm sure and there's a few people out here that I don't like and that's, you know, but that's --

Q. That never gets aired.

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, because I don't want it aired. That's life.

Q. You never know though.

RORY MCILROY: You never know.

Q. As a European does that, what is that like, the idea of them in the same team room together at Whistling Straights? Not an issue? That's something that Europe has thrived on over the years.

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, I think what we have done so

well over the past few years is like we rip into each other, but we're able to laugh at ourselves and laugh at the situations and don't take ourselves too seriously, I guess.

Q. What kind of prompted that actually was wondering, as good as you've been for as long as you've been, have you ever had to play with a chip on your shoulder?

RORY MCILROY: No. The only time I felt like I played with a chip on my shoulder, it wasn't really a -- it was sort of more when I was playing behind Phil and Rickie at the PGA in Valhalla in 2014. I saw them fist bumping coming off the 11th green together and it sort of felt like a two on one sort of. I was like, Well these guys sort of seem like they're teaming up on me, so I'm like, you know, I'm not going to take that. And that sort of gave me a little bit of fire in my belly to go on and play the way I did.

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