

# BMW Championship

Wednesday, August 17, 2022

Wilmington, Delaware, USA

Wilmington Country Club

## Rory McIlroy

### Press Conference

MARK WILLIAMS: Rory McIlroy, thanks for joining us for a few minutes with the media here at the BMW Championship at Wilmington Country Club. You've just come off the pro-am. You've had a couple looks at the golf course --

RORY McILROY: Just a couple.

#### **Q. Just talk about your first impressions of the place.**

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it's a good golf course. It's a golf course that's sort of is a little more up my alley compared to say last week in Memphis. I was a little rusty last week, as well, but a lot more drivers off the tee, a lot of room off the tee, a lot more, I guess, scope to hit driver. Length is an advantage here, where in Memphis it's not really. Sort of just my short of golf course that I feel like I can excel on.

It's been good to have some early looks at it. I got here Friday night after the missed cut, and I've been here, so I've been on the course every day since Saturday. But it's been good. It's nice to get back out and prepare and get to know a new golf course, get a little bit of a head start on everyone else.

I like the track. It's a good setup.

#### **Q. I know you made a youngster happy today. You granted a wish for a Make-a-Wish youngster. Can you just talk about that experience today and what it meant to him, as well?**

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I think one of the coolest things if not the coolest thing that happens when you get some notoriety or you've had some success is the fact that you can make someone's day very easily. So yeah, to play the 15th hole and have Killian walk down there, have him hit a shot, hit a hell of a shot, too, 7-iron from 190, baby draw to like 12 feet, I think it's just a really cool part of what we do.

The fact that people look up to us for some reason. Yeah, to be able to just make someone's day by not really going



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out of your way that much to do anything different, it's a really, really cool feeling, and hopefully Killian enjoyed it as much as I did.

He was under a little bit of pressure there with the tee shot and he stepped up and hit a great shot. Yeah, it was a really cool moment.

#### **Q. Why did you opt to stay in Wilmington since Friday, and how did you spend your time when you weren't playing golf?**

RORY McILROY: My family are in upstate New York, and they were at their cabin, and I wasn't going to -- if I went there, I wouldn't have been practicing or playing, and the one thing I needed to do was practice and play. I just thought looking at the weather forecast, like the environment to practice and play was better here than it was in Memphis, just from a heat standpoint and draining myself and whatever.

Yeah, just came straight here on Friday night and got back to work on Saturday.

#### **Q. Just by yourself?**

RORY McILROY: Me and Harry, yeah.

#### **Q. What specifically about this golf course do you think makes it so that it suits your eye? It's very different from both Memphis and East Lake next week because it's much longer, much bigger greens, much bigger golf course.**

RORY McILROY: Yeah, if you look at the trend of the golf courses at the BMW Championship over the last few years, they've been predominantly golf courses similar to this. You know, longer golf courses, room to hit driver, big greens. I'm thinking of Caves Valley last year, for example, I don't think the scoring is going to be quite as low here as it was at Caves, but similar sort of golf courses. These sort of big northeast style golf courses, and they've sort of -- they're great venues to play tournaments on and they're big pieces of land so you can hold big tournaments here with the infrastructure.

They're the sort of golf courses that I typically do well on.



**Q. Ergo, courses that allow you to hit it 330, correct?**

RORY McILROY: Exactly, where I can actually have my length be an advantage.

**Q. It seems like the TOUR makes it out to Philly about every four years; how does it feel to be back in the Philly area?**

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it's good. I guess the last time was probably Aronimink in 2018. Hopefully we get better weather this week than we did then. It was a little wet.

Yeah, it's good to be back. Actually this is how bad my knowledge of the area is. We landed in Philly, and I was like, that seems like it's a long way away, and it's like a 25-minute drive to here. Sort of shows you how my knowledge is of the area. But yeah, it's good to be back.

**Q. There's a lot of interest obviously in the meeting last night. What can you share with us in terms of what came out of it and where you hope to go?**

RORY McILROY: I think the one thing that came out of it, which I think was the purpose, is all the top players on this TOUR are in agreement and alignment of where we should go going forward, and that was awesome.

**Q. Where should you go?**

RORY McILROY: That's not for -- I don't think that's for a public forum right now. I think that's between the players and between the executives at the TOUR to try to sort of manage a way forward.

**Q. Over the last month or so we've heard different generic comments about what needs to improve or how the TOUR needs to get better, et cetera. Without getting into any details, what would you say is kind of the one general area where you feel the TOUR is lacking?**

RORY McILROY: We need to get the top guys together more often than we do.

**Q. Aren't there featured pairings --**

RORY McILROY: I'm talking about all in the same tournaments, all in the same weeks.

**Q. What about Tiger's presence in person? Obviously he could have done this by phone, Zoom. The fact that he flew up here, what does it say --**

RORY McILROY: It's impactful, and I think it shows how

much he cares about the TOUR. I think it shows how much he cares about the players that are coming through and are going to be the next generation. Like it or not, they can't really sell Tiger Woods anymore. The TOUR had an easy job for 20 years. They don't have Tiger -- yes, they've got a bunch of us and we're all great players, but we're not Tiger Woods.

We're moving into a different era, and we just have to think about things a little differently.

**Q. What role does Tiger play then?**

RORY McILROY: I mean, he is the hero that we've all looked up to. His voice carries further than anyone else's in the game of golf. His role is navigating us to a place where we all think we should be.

**Q. Is his impact greater on the TOUR or on players? I think I'm speaking mostly of the ones coming in behind you even.**

RORY McILROY: It's both. I think he's carried the TOUR for a long, long time. I think we as players that were his contemporaries that were a little older than me but even the guys coming behind, we've all benefitted from that. But as I said, how can we keep benefiting from that going forward.

**Q. Did Tiger take like a leadership position, or was he just one of the guys talking when you guys all met?**

RORY McILROY: I mean, I think it's pretty apparent that whenever we all get in the room, there's an alpha in there, and it's not me.

**Q. Are you surprised at all that he's taken this on?**

RORY McILROY: No. No. He cares a lot. He cares a lot.

**Q. Sports fans tend to be an impatient bunch. Were there actionable steps potentially taken from what you guys discussed for three plus hours last night?**

RORY McILROY: That's what we're working through, right? What's the short-term, what's the medium term, what's the long-term. That's something that we have to figure out.

**Q. Have you learned in your years the value of this tournament as it relates to next week? In other words, there's people who are locked in, but there's also --**

RORY McILROY: Yeah.



**Q. What were you last year, five behind or something?**

RORY McILROY: Something like that. I'm trying to think. All the years get mixed up. Where did I finish here in 2019, though? I won the FedExCup in 2019, I feel like I was four back maybe. But it's a very important tournament to put yourself in position, especially with the way the format is next week with the staggered start.

Yeah, it's really important. The closer you can start to that 10-under par mark, the better.

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