

Zurich Classic of New Orleans

Sunday, April 28, 2024

Avondale, Louisiana, USA

TPC Louisiana

Rory McIlroy

Shane Lowry

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: 2024 Zurich Classic of New Orleans champions Rory McIlroy and Shane Lowry. Just some opening comments on what it means to experience this together here this week.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, absolutely amazing. I think, yeah, to win any PGA TOUR event is very cool, but to do it with one of your closest friends, we've known each other for a long, long time, probably like over 20 years, so to think about where we met and where we've come from, to be on this stage and do this together, really, really cool journey that we've been a part of, and yeah, just awesome to be able to do it alongside this guy.

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, it's amazing. You know, we both felt like we needed to come in here and maybe have a very strong week because we wanted to get our summer going, and we've got a lot of big golf coming up soon. Would be nice to get that jump up the FedExCup that we both wanted.

It's nice, it's great to get a win. It was great fun all week, everything about it was just brilliant. I've enjoyed every minute of it, like having this man by my side is just -- yeah, you seen the drive he hit up the 18th, the 72nd hole. When you've got him doing that, it's pretty easy to play golf from there for me.

I made it look hard at times, but no, it was amazing. We went out there, we had loads of fun, and we won the tournament. You couldn't ask for a better week.

Q. You personally get into the three remaining Signature Events of the season --

SHANE LOWRY: That's great because I wasn't going to be in Quail Hollow. I was hoping to get an invite for Memorial. I was hoping to get an invite there, and Travelers I really didn't know what was going to happen. I knew I needed to make up some FedExCup points, and this gets me in those, and it means I can plan my schedule



now. With family stuff and my wife and kids going back to Ireland in the summer, it means I really don't have to stay over here and grind it out too long. I can do more what I feel like I wanted to do. It's freed me up a lot this summer. Hopefully we can both kick on now. We've got three majors left. Hopefully we can get one each, or maybe two and one.

RORY McILROY: That would be nice.

SHANE LOWRY: That's the plan for the rest of the summer.

Q. What was required to overcome -- it wasn't the ideal start today and you showed a lot of resilience when you started slow. Talk about how you managed that.

SHANE LOWRY: Just patience, I think. You're sitting there having your breakfast this morning before we go out, and you see the trees out there, they're whipping. It's pretty windy. Like the boys shooting 63, that is an unbelievable score in those conditions, in that format.

We get off to a slow start, we see we're five back. The boys have already finished. We thought maybe if we'd try and get to 26 -- we never really spoke about it, but that's what I thought in my head. But to play the last 12 holes in 5-under I think was very, very good. It showed a lot about our characters and how much we wanted to win this thing.

Q. Rory, you mentioned the fans out there. Talk about the energy following you and what that means when you're in a tournament like this that's so close.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it's amazing. The fans and the atmosphere all week has been incredible. People have come out in the thousands to support us. It's not lost on me how cool that is. Every time I get to play in front of thousands of people, the little boy in me just thinks it's so cool and so exciting.

Really grateful for everyone to come out and show up and let us play in an atmosphere like that, and yeah, especially in front of all those people, coming down to those last few holes, yeah, you start to feel it and you start to -- it felt like



a big-time atmosphere and a big-time tournament. The crowd really made the weekend.

Q. Did the crowd kind of help you the last two days? You were seven down yesterday, three down today. Did the crowd fuel you a little bit?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I think getting the support out there definitely helps. I think more than anything else, having this guy to lean on, that was what fueled me and what -- I think being able to rely on each other a little bit, I think that's what really helped us over the last 10 or 11 holes yesterday and over the last 12 holes today.

Q. Two weeks ago you were answering questions about whether you should reassess your game. Is there any element of this week just wanting to come here with Shane and have fun and not feel all that pressure?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, absolutely. The reason that Shane and I both started to play golf is because we thought it was fun at some stage in our life. I think sort of reinjecting a little bit of that fun back into it in a week like this week, it can always help.

Q. Is there any element of having an experience like this where you were kind of stepping away a little bit, have been a little bit of fun, that can help you for the rest of the year?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I think so, but I think also to play the sort of golf we did coming down the stretch when there was a little bit of pressure, I think that'll stand to us, also. But yeah, I've always felt like I play my best golf when I'm enjoying myself, and hard to not enjoy yourself when you're out there walking the fairways with Shane.

Q. Shane, on 16 what did you have to the hole, how far, and what did you hit? And Rory, if you can talk about the putt (indiscernible)?

SHANE LOWRY: That was huge. Obviously wasn't ideal Rory hitting in the bunker off the tee, but bunkers are a strong part of my game, and I'm pretty confident out of them. I knew once I seen the ball bounce and it didn't plug, then I knew I was going to have a swing and a shot at it. Yeah, 140 to the pin, and I just hit a wedge, hit a lovely shot in just left. Probably not where I was aiming. Pulled it a little bit. But Rory holing that putt, that kind of freed us up a little bit for the last couple of holes, but then I hit a poor tee shot on 17. The wind was kind of slightly out of the left on 17 today, and I just couldn't get myself to start it over the water because there's all sorts of trouble over there, gators and everything.

In my head I thought if I miss the green right, Rory is a good chipper, we get it up-and-down, and we can put it away. That's what I was thinking. We didn't obviously get it up-and-down but were fortunate enough to go on and win in the playoff.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, the putt was -- that green or that hole has been good to us over the weekend. We made a birdie there yesterday and then made another one today.

I looked at it quite a bit. It broke a lot, yeah. It probably broke a good couple of feet. I don't know what the camera angle was on TV, but there was a lot of break in it, and it was one of those where speed was more important than line. I just had to get the speed right and sort of match it up. Yeah, that was a huge putt.

Obviously as Shane said, we bogeyed 17, but that was a huge putt and gave us that little bit of a cushion that we could get away with making a bogey on 17, which is probably playing the toughest hole of the day.

Q. Rory, how advantageous is it going into a playoff that you just come immediately off 18 versus a team that has to sit four hours and go back out and play?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I think that was to our advantage today. I feel for Martin and Chad a little bit. They played an unbelievable round of golf. To shoot 63 out there in those conditions in foursomes is super impressive. Yeah, to be sitting around and not really knowing -- they might be in a playoff, they might not be, and then I'm sure they obviously had time to warm up and everything, but still, it's different than us just coming straight back off the golf course and straight back into it.

I think because of that, we probably had a little bit of an advantage on the playoff hole.

Q. The last guy to get a standing ovation at a restaurant here was Reggie Bush 15 years ago. What did that feel like?

SHANE LOWRY: It was weird for me. That stuff doesn't happen to me.

RORY McILROY: It doesn't happen to me, either.

SHANE LOWRY: He's getting old, but he can still move the needle a little bit. Rory brings a crowd, and people love him. We've got a lot of love this week in New Orleans, and we've had just the best week.

Q. Rory, have they tried to get you to sign up for next

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year already?

RORY McILROY: I don't think they need to try. I think we're coming back.

SHANE LOWRY: I'll be here anyway. I know that. I'll be here waiting for him.

Q. What restaurant was it?

RORY McILROY: Arnaud's.

Q. What was the best example of you guys picking each other up after wanting to have a shot back and the teammate came through and saved it?

SHANE LOWRY: I think I've gone through a little bit over the last couple months -- few tournaments where I've struggled on the greens a little bit. I changed my putter this week. It feels really good but I'm not trusting it as well as I would like. I missed a couple of short putts that kind of gets me down a little bit, but Rory is there backing me up this week, and he was a great teammate, and he made me believe in myself. It was good to have him there to do that, so yeah.

RORY McILROY: I think as well it takes the pressure off -- I hit a poor tee shot on 16, for example, and knowing that Shane can go ahead and hit a great second shot and sort of not make the tee shot --

SHANE LOWRY: We're out there trying our hardest and we know we're not trying to hit bad shots, and we don't say sorry. We get on with it and do our best and see where it leads us.

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