

Hero Dubai Desert Classic

Friday, 27 January, 2023

Dubai, UAE

Majlis Course at Emirates Golf Club

Rory McIlroy

Press Conference



A Rolex Series Event



Q. The three holes that you played today, 6-under for the round, before we get into the specifics of today can you summarize your overall performance?

RORY McILROY: Honestly not very good. I struggled out there most of yesterday. I thought did I well to be under par by the end of the day. I fought back after some very sloppy rusty golf over the first sort of 14 holes.

And then yeah, today I came out and I don't really know if anything clicked because I don't think I hit enough shots to know. But it was definitely needed. Like I would have been happy with anything around 70 the way I played, and then to come in and shoot 66 is quite the bonus.

Q. Looks like it was definitely worth the wait, starting with a birdie through the first hole of the day, but talk us through the second shot on 8.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, you know, I wouldn't say I'm the best fairway bunker player in the world. The desert is a little nicer, it's a little more packed down, so you get some better lies.

All I was thinking about was catching it clean. My tendency out of those lies is to hit it a little bit heavy. As soon as I struck it, I knew it came out really nicely and it was right down the pin. Again, anything inside of 20 feet, I would have been happy with, so that was certainly a bonus.

Q. What was the yardage?

RORY McILROY: It was 116 yards, and I used a 54-degree wedge. Went down the grip a little bit just to make sure of the strike and just tried to put a good swing on it.

Q. I'm sure the amateurs at home are definitely taking notes. What's your biggest motivator this week? Obviously Jon Rahm is on fire at the moment, but you also mentioned at the start of the week that you feel as though you've got unfinished business.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I mean, I can't control what anyone else does. Rahmbo has got off to an unbelievable -- it is an unbelievable start of the year but building off what he did at the back end of last year as well.

I'm not really paying attention to the World Rankings or anything. I'm just trying to get off to a good start to my year, trying to work on some things in my game and concentrate opponent myself. I still have some work to do as I said. I didn't play well at all yesterday, so a little bit of rest and some practise over the next 24 hours before I go out and play again tomorrow.

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