

Hero Dubai Desert Classic

Wednesday, 17 January, 2024

Dubai, UAE

Majlis Course at Emirates Golf Club

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

Q. Time to reflect on last week's performance, runner-up, what have you taken from it and what do you want to brush up ongoing into this one?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I felt really good with where my game was last week. Opened with that great 62. Made a big number on the Friday. Felt like I played pretty good Saturday without really doing much. I struggled to hole putts early on but then got it going on the back nine.

And then Sunday obviously I made a couple of mistakes with the three-putt on 14 from very close range, and then put the ball in the water on 18; and even the ball in the water off 6, too. I think tidying up some of those mental mistakes.

The first week back, you're not expecting it, but you can see how those things just sort of happen if you haven't played in a while. So brush up a bit on the game management. Be a little tighter mentally with some of the stuff, and apart from that, I hit the ball well. I felt like I putted well for the most part and if I do the same again this week on a golf course that I know really well, I should have a good chance.

Q. You have that wonderful privilege of going back to golf courses you've won on quite a lot in your career, a testament to what you have won. Does this one have any extra significance because it was the start of the journey?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it was obviously the first win of my professional career, but I first played this event as an amateur in 2006. So I've been coming here for 18 years. I can't even believe it.

But Dubai has meant a lot to me over my career. I got my first win here. I feel like it's a tournament to give me one of my first opportunities to play on this tour, my first sponsor was from here, Jumeirah.

So I have a lot of great memories and I have a lot of great friends in this region. I lived here for four years, as well.



There's a big piece of my life has been spent here in Dubai, and I'm always excited to get back. I don't spend as much time here as I used to. It's always exciting to come back and spend a couple of weeks.

Q. You've talked openly about your quest for more major championships, decorated across regular events, 16 DP World Tour, 24 on the PGA TOUR. Do regular events still quench your thirst or do you desire so greatly majors?

RORY McILROY: They still quench my thirst. There would be no reason to tee up in these events if they didn't. Winning is winning and competing is competing and it doesn't matter whether it's the Dubai Desert Classic over here or whether it's the Honda Classic, or whatever it is. I love competing. I love to try to win golf tournaments. And you know, majors are really, really important in this game, but it's not the only thing that matters in my mind, and there are other things.

But look, the majors are important, and I would love to get my hands on another one, and I think mostly because I have done everything else there is to do in the game since I last won a major championship.

So to me, it's like the last step on this journey that I've been on this last few years is just getting my hands on another major trophy.

Q. Last week, McIlroy, Fleetwood, huge numbers across the global player in terms of viewership, attention clearly on the DP World Tour. Here last year, a showdown where you got up on Patrick Reed to win here again at the Hero Dubai Desert Classic. Where world golf is competing for attention right now, we know there's the effort for LIV Golf, the PIF to be a part of it in the future going forward with the DP World Tour and the PGA TOUR. Is there a continue for you at all where this tournament might sit if there is a triumvirate at the top of it all?

RORY McILROY: So not particularly because I think -- the way I view it is a bit like Champions League in football. It's like the best of the best in Europe, and then all of the other



leagues feed up into it.

All these players -- and there are, there's lots of different tours getting interest and a lot of great players. But if you want to create something that is real value for the game of golf, I think it's this top-level tour, and then all the other tours feed into it. That's my -- and there's promotion and relegation and you have to earn your way in, and you have to earn your spot to stay in, as well. I think that's really important, too.

I think it has to be global in nature, and to me, you need to figure out a structure where all these other tours feed into that so it gives people a chance to come up.

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