

DP World Tour Championship

Sunday, 20 November, 2022

Dubai, UAE

Jumeirah Golf Estates

Rory McIlroy

Press Conference

BRIONY CARLYON: Rory, you've finished No. 1 in the DP World Rankings here in Dubai, and you're obviously world No. 1. Just sum up what's been an incredible year on the golf course.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, obviously over the last couple of holes today, I knew that I was still trying to figure out a way to win the golf tournament. I knew I had the rankings sort of over and done with.

I was speaking to Harry about it on the last couple of holes, and you know, he said to me, "A long way from San Antonio." That was sort of where my whole year turned around.

And then I played Augusta and played great there. My golf and my consistency levels just went to -- I don't think I played as consistent in my entire career as I'm doing right now.

It's been a fantastic year both sides of the pond. Whenever the PGA TOUR, the FedExCup was over and done with mid-August, I turned my attention to try and win over here, and played quite a bit. You know, played Wentworth and Italy and the Dunhill and now here, and it was nice to achieve that objective.

So great way to end the year, and it's been busy for a lot of reasons, and looking forward to some down time.

Q. Are you normally a man for -- like that or did it occur to you after the FedExCup, let's get Europe, as well?

RORY McILROY: I think it just occurred to me. I think because of how the schedule has went over the last few years, it's become increasingly more difficult to do well on both. You really have to focus the majority of your year stateside for the most part, and September, October, November and basically is the time to sort of shift your focus back over to this side of the Atlantic.

I think the thing that really set the foundation for why I won



these rankings is my performances in the majors and my performances obviously in the bigger events on this tour. Feels funny winning this without having an official win on this tour this year but I think that speaks to the consistency levels I've played with over the course of the last few months.

Q. Seems to be the trend in the schedule that you built it to focus on America, and then jump ship, as it were.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, maybe hopefully down the line with the strategic alliance that you'll start to see more of a PGA TOUR DP World Tour than -- or something like that. I'd say for next year, it's going to be pretty similar in terms of I'm going to play back here in Dubai at the end of January, and then I probably won't play in Europe again until July. And then you play your three FedExCup events in August, and then again, you come back over here, and I'll play probably The Irish Open before The Ryder Cup.

Yeah, it sort of seems like that's the way the schedule is going to be next year, anyway. 2024 is still up in the air because there's a lot of things to be decided on.

Q. What are you looking forward to next year, and what do you think will happen?

RORY McILROY: I don't know but hopefully I can just keep my scoring average the same or better than what it is right now. I guess all I can really do is focus on not just keeping this level of golf going but trying to build on it and trying to see if there's any incremental improvements I can make going forward.

But I said in an interview just after today, I feel like if my driving is not on one day, I feel like my putting will bail me out. I feel like if my putting is not on, my iron play will bail me out, and if my iron play is not on, my short game will -- so again, I used to rely very heavily on one or two aspects of the game where now, I feel like now I'm pretty efficient at all areas of the game.

And that's been a huge thing this year. I think when you know that you're a putter or you know that you're going to hole your fair share of putts, I think it takes pressure off your ball-striking. You don't feel like you have to hit it quite as close, and then off the tee, you don't feel like you have



to, you don't feel as under pressure to hit fairways to then hit a green to give yourself a chance. I feel like if you're a good putter, it can sort of feed through the rest of your game and that's how it's felt this year.

Q. And the other things that have been going on this year, we haven't mentioned the elephant in the room; how do you see things will pan out next year?

RORY McILROY: I don't know. I wish I had a crystal ball and I can tell you. I have no idea.

You know, our first idea would be in February, and then after that, we'll just have to, we'll just have to wait and see. But as I said, right now it's in the hands of lawyers and judges and all that. Very much outside of my control.

Q. Nobody's ever done that before, Race to Dubai, European No. 1, U.S. No. 1 and world No. 1 in the same year. Apart from the major -- best to be able to do?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it is. I probably sound like a broken record but it's been eight years since I won a major, but I feel like I've done everything else in the game since then. I've won three FedExCups since winning my last Race to Dubai.

So you know, I've done a ton of stuff and all I can do is keep my head down, work hard and play the way I have been playing. But as I said, I've been really encouraged with how I've played this year in the majors, how I've started and that's something to really build on for next year.

Yeah, it's an amazing achievement, an achievement I haven't been able to accomplish before, and I've been able to win this tour rankings and finish the year as world No. 1. But to do it in America, as well, yeah, it's very cool. I keep saying that I've been a pro now for over 15 years, and to still try to figure out ways to try to accomplish new things, that's what keeps me coming back.

I feel like I'm healthy. I'm 33 and I feel like my body is in as best shape as it's ever been and hopefully it's just moving ahead and keep on moving on.

Q. Three questions rolled in one, actually. How are you going to plan the rest of the year? What's the leisure activities that you already have in your mind, and how are you going to relax from what you have really achieved, the amazing things you have achieved this year? Second is, how do you make this year better? You're world No. 1, and you said you've accomplished almost everything that you've done. And is there any area, any one particular area in your game, that you want to become better at next year?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, so first question, I'll probably just get away from the game and golf a little bit. I've got a few things to do. It's Thanksgiving week in the States next week, so I'll sort of get into that.

But the week after I have a few things going on, playing this match with Jordan, J.T. and Tiger on the 10th of December.

After that, I might take it easy up until Christmas. But the season rolls around pretty quickly again, and you know, most likely going to play that first week in January in Hawai'i before heading back over here.

Not much downtime, but the downtime that I do have, I'll just try to get away from it. I vowed to turn my phone off for a week or so. It would be nice to just really get away from everything for a little while, so hopefully I'll be able to do that.

Yeah, I think in terms of improvement, you can improve on everything. There are certain things that I can improve on. You know, I still think there's room for improvement with my wedges. There's certainly -- you know, there's room for improvement in all aspects of my game, certain shots, different trajectories. I'll continue to just keep trying to improve on all of that.

And then I guess for me, it's hard to just pinpoint the majors and whatever. But you know, that's the last thing over the course of the last few years, it's the one thing that I haven't achieved that I would love to achieve again.

So you know, we get four opportunities a year. I want to make sure that I'm in the best possible shape and the best possible position to take advantage of those four opportunities.

Q. You said if there is plan for someone from LIV, PGA TOUR, European Tour, a plan to have a meeting, would you like to be a part of it? What do you see to be found?

RORY McILROY: A meeting in terms of -- I don't -- I don't need to be a part of it. Frankly, I wouldn't really want to be part of it. I mean, I guess it would be, you know, whoever -- whoever the top people are.

You know, that's certainly above my pay grade. That's not something I want to get involved with. I'm a golfer and I'm trying to stick to that line of work.

BRIONY CARLYON: Congratulations on the season. Look forward to having you back in January.

