

# Dubai Duty Free Irish Open

Thursday, 1 July, 2021

Thomastown, County Kilkenny, Ireland

Mount Juliet Estate

## Rory McIlroy

### Quick Quotes

#### Q. Level par 72. Was that a frustrating day?

RORY McILROY: A little bit. I feel a bit bad. I saved par the last three holes coming in, so it could have been course. But yeah, it sort of was. I didn't get off to the greatest of starts.

Yeah, I just didn't feel like I did that much wrong. I just didn't hold many putts for birdies, and yeah, just was sort of one of those days. There was a couple holes I didn't hit it close enough with wedges. Overall just a bit of a sort of no momentum going forward and in the end, I did well to keep it at level par.

#### Q. Do you take some encouragement from the fact that you were 2-over after 8 to get it back to level par?

RORY McILROY: It was good, I hung in there and made a couple of birdies on the back nine which is good.

But yeah, there was a couple loose shots in there and felt like the hole looked like a thimble for a few holes and didn't get anything to go. But held a couple on the way in.

I just need to play -- I think I played the par 5s, I may have played them a little under but made bogey on the 8th hole out of nowhere. Just a little sloppy in places. Tomorrow should be good. We'll get better greens and that will be nice. Hopefully should be a good one.

#### Q. Was it a priority for to you get the Irish Open back on your schedule this year?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I knew, I guess with the Irish Open was played last year at Galgorm at whatever time of the year it was, September; I felt by July this year that COVID would be completely gone.

So yeah, it was always on the schedule. It wasn't like I was thinking about not playing it, and the plan was to play here, week off and then The Open. But now that I'm over here, I'm going to play the Scottish next week, as well.



#### Q. Funny day, wasn't it?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it was. I just couldn't really get anything going. Yeah, I hit a few iron shots left, I know that. So I'm going to go to the range after this and work on a couple of things. Apart from that, the putts that I did miss, I hit good putts and I misread them or they didn't do what I thought they were going to do.

Yeah, it was just one of those days. I just couldn't get anything going. But as I said, it could have been worse. I saved par the last three holes, and you know, at least got in at even par and can get a good night's sleep tonight and get out fresh in the morning. It's obviously out there. Tommy played a very solid round of golf. Didn't really do anything spectacular and shot 5-under par. There are scores to be had out there.

#### Q. When you put a number on what you might need tomorrow to feel like you're in contention because it looks as though the scoring will be very, very low this weekend.

RORY McILROY: I just need to play better and if I play better, I'll shoot a better score. I think it's a bit early in the tournament to start to try to shoot certain scores and see what I need. If I play better tomorrow, I'll shoot a better score and we'll go from there.

#### Q. 72 was not the score you were hoping for or expecting today. Tell us about your day from your point of view?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it just wasn't -- I didn't start well, and 1-over through four, birdied 5 to get back to even and thought, okay, now I can go from here. Missed the green with a wedge on -- three-putted 6, missed the green with a wedge on 7, bogeyed 8, and then from there it was just a matter of trying to get it in with something respectable, and I made a couple birdies on the back nine but missed a few chances, as well. Saved myself a little bit coming in.

Just one of those days nothing happened. I was stuck in neutral for most of the day. Going to go work on a few things on the range here in a minute and see if I can start a bit better tomorrow.



**Q. You told us that last week you spent a lot of time with the family and didn't get much chance to practice and whatever. Did you feel there was rust in will?**

RORY McILROY: A little bit. I hit a few shots out there that I didn't see at all at the U.S. Open a couple weeks ago. I'm going to go here and get it straightened out.

**Q. The Irish fans out there supporting you?**

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it's brilliant. It's so nice. Obviously it's very limited in terms of the fans but it felt like pretty much every one of them were with our group today which was nice. So it was a great atmosphere out there, especially some of the greens on the back nine where it's like that real amphitheater feel, they are all sort of by the green and a few rows deep. I hit a good shot into 13 and a good shot into 14. To hear those claps that echo in the trees, they are the sort of claps you only get this part of the world; just sounds different, and it was nice to hear again.

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