

Horizon Irish Open

Saturday, 9 September, 2023

Straffan, County Kildare, Ireland

The K Club, Ryder Course

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

Q. Best of the week, 66, 7 birdies, one bogey. Thoughts on your day today?

RORY McILROY: Much better. I knew I needed to put the ball in the fairway a bit more off the tee which I did for the most part, and I played the par 5s well, apart from 16, and just gave myself plenty of looks. Held some nice putts on the back nine and really pleased to bounce back on 17 and 18 with two birdies after the bogey on 16.

So yeah, I felt like I maybe needed to go a couple lower to get myself right in it, but the guys at the top haven't really went away from the field that much today. Excited to put myself right there and have a chance tomorrow.

Q. How aware were you during the round that they weren't pulling away and that your goal from yesterday was to get yourself back in this championship and it was very much a reality?

RORY McILROY: I think sort of in the middle of the back nine, for me, the guys were probably just on the 7th or 8th hole but no one had gone ahead of that leading score after the end of the second day, which was 13-under.

So yeah, sort of once I saw that, I was frustrated to hit it in the water at 16 and give a shot back there, but as I said really happy to bounce back on 17 and 18 and finish at 11-under. I'll probably still be three or four back heading into tomorrow if the guys play the par 5s well on the back nine but still have a great chance.

Q. We showed a beautiful piece of you making a young man's day, Michael Horgan, a little 7-year-old boy who suffers from a brain tumour. How special to be able to make dreams come true like that?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it's obviously incredibly fulfilling to be able to -- I took 15 minutes out of my day. It's not as if I did that much. But hopefully the impact that has on Michael and hopefully the memories that he gets from it and the boost from it helps him sort of on his journey. I was delighted to be able to do it, and just makes you feel



very fortunate for Erica and I have a healthy little girl and not have to go through what his parents, Connor and Anne have had to go through. It puts a lot of things in perspective.

Q. Tomorrow, a chance to win a second Irish Open, a championship that means so much to you?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it's really exciting. Last night, I thought I was maybe a little bit too far behind and out of it but I've played a really good round of golf today to get myself back in it. Excited to have another opportunity tomorrow.

Q. Moving up the leaderboard on a Saturday, how would you characterise the charge you put up?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it didn't really feel like a charge. I just felt like a really solid day of golf, giving myself plenty of looks and converting a few, which is probably the difference between the last two days and today. A really solid day's play and I needed a little bit of help from the leaders, as well. They haven't gone too far ahead yet. We'll see how they finish, but right back in the tournament which is great.

Q. How is your level of comfort and confidence continuing to grow to see it through tomorrow?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I've built on every day. Thursday I felt sort of rusty because I had not hit a ton of balls coming in here. Yesterday, I felt a little better, even though I didn't get as much out of the round, and then today, I feel like I just built on the last couple of days. It's been nice. I've been able to hit some more balls this week and get a bit of practice, and my body is feeling better. Overall it's going in the right direction.

Q. How much can you lean on The Irish Open and what happened in 2016 and what you were able to do?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it's hard to try to win your own National Open and try to get over the line. It's hard. It's hard to do. I was in fortunate enough to do it a few years



ago here and having those memories is going to be nice, and also having the support of the crowd out there as well is going to be incredibly helpful tomorrow. So hopefully I'm still in a few shots of the lead and it will be an exciting final day.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports