

Dubai Invitational

Thursday, January 15, 2026

Dubai, UAE

Dubai Creek Resort

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

Q. Rory, thanks for joining us. Five weeks since your last competitive start on the world's major tours. How do you feel about your round 66 today?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it was good. I got off to a great start, played a very good first nine. And then the wind got up a little bit and felt like that front nine, which was our second nine, was the trickier one. And made a silly bogey on 3, and then didn't capitalise on the par-5 after that.

So I felt like I left a few out on that side, but I played a really good nine holes of golf. Overall, a nice way to start the year.

Q. Some new irons in the bag recently. Like the rest of us, you need a bit of help?

RORY McILROY: I do. If there's help to be had, I'll definitely take it. Yeah, I've been thinking about it for a while. And even in Dubai at the end of last year, I hit a couple of 5-irons that I mis-struck slightly, and instead of it maybe coming up 5 or 7 yards short, it was coming up more like 10 to 15 yards short.

So I asked the guys at TaylorMade to build me up a set. And I actually went down to Australia with them, and with that firm turf down there, I felt like those irons were going through the turf better than the blades.

And I practised with them at home since. And I've got a new golf ball in play this week as well, the new 2026 ball.

So overall, I like what I've seen at home, and today was a good test for it, and I felt like everything was pretty good.

Q. To compete at the very top of this sport, you have to put in the hard work, the practise, the gym work. What's your motivation to do that this year, having achieved so much and most of your dreams came true last year?

RORY McILROY: I like the work. I like the process. I enjoy doing challenging things. And I think if you can make

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that the important part, and you just make that routine, then you don't need motivation to do it. It's your lifestyle. It's what you do. And it's, I guess, who you identify as.

And I identify as a hard worker and someone that likes to do those things, and I think the more and more you do that, the more it just sort of becomes who you are. And I've done it for so long now that if I didn't do it, it would feel pretty foreign at this point.

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