

The 149th Open

Quick Quotes

Friday, 16 July 2021

Rory McIlroy



Q. Give us your reflections on both days.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I thought yesterday I hung in there well. It was probably a little more difficult than the afternoon than it was in the morning.

I felt like I hung in there and played the last five in 2-under to shoot 70, so was looking forward to getting out there today and trying to capitalise on the good finish from last year.

And then two bogeys in the first two holes sort of put me behind the 8-ball a little bit. But I played well for a good stretch of holes there, very solid, making three birdies and getting myself under par for the tournament.

Then a mental error on 16, trying to get too close with my tee shot. I hit a club that was barely going to get over the bunker if I hit it exactly right, it just didn't quite cover.

Then 17 was a bogey, it was a short missed putt. And then again, it was nice to birdie 18 and at least make sure that I'm here for the weekend because I think at 1-over I would have been sweating a little bit.

Q. The 4th green is an incredibly complicated green. Looked like you hit this hard and high to ensure that it did stop.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, hard, high, and you need a little bit of luck. You've got to -- basically a two-yard area where you can land that ball to get it close to the pin. I knew 9 was on the limit.

It was just one of those ones, step up and hit it as hard as you can and hopefully it works out.

Q. Your wedge play is definitely improving, an example at 12.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, that was nice, sort of back in off the right so I could sort of hold it against the wind a little bit and spin it. It was from, whatever it was, 75 yards or 70 yards. It was use the slope a little bit on the right. As wedge shots come on this golf course, that was one of the easiest ones you're going to face.

Q. How special to play a major with the support you're getting?

RORY McILROY: It's brilliant. Yeah, it feels great. I think everyone has missed this tournament for the last couple years. It's nice to have it back. I've had a great support out there the last couple days, and as I said, pleased at least to get in the clubhouse and make sure I get a bit more support over the next two days, as well.

Q. Do you look back on today's round as one of pride for having fought back after those first two holes or with a degree of frustration?

RORY McILROY: Probably a little bit of both. Obviously it wasn't the ideal start, bogeying the first two holes. But then I steadied the ship and I played a nice stretch of golf there where I made three birdies and no bogeys and then just a mental error on 16 trying to get too close to that flag. It sort of tempted me into trying to hit a really hard sand wedge and didn't get that up-and-down.

And then a little short one on 17.

Q. Nice finish to what I'm sure was a frustrating round.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, a little bit. I was saying over there I was really happy last night birdieing the last and sort of finishing that round on a positive note, looking forward to getting out there today and trying to build on it, and then to bogey the first two was not the ideal start. But I battled back well, played a nice stretch of golf there where I made three birdies and no bogeys in whatever it was, 11 or 12 or 13 holes.

And then just a mental error on 16. I tried to hit sand wedge into that front right pin, and I needed as much help from the wind as possible, and I needed to absolutely button it. I hit it good. I just didn't hit it good enough to clear that bunker and made bogey there. A bit of a mental error. That pin sort of tempted me into going for it.

A little missed putt on 17 out of nowhere.

Yeah, I felt a little nervous going to that 18th tee. I knew I needed a par at least, but birdie to at least be comfortable this



afternoon while I watch the golf.

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But yeah, it's close. I guess that's the thing. I feel like I could have squeezed -- if I was really on my game and sharp with how I've played the last two days, I probably could have been 6- or 7-under. But it's just not -- it's close, it's just not close enough.

Q. Do you feel you're too far back to challenge the leaders over the weekend?

RORY McILROY: Geez, I know I need to go out and play really well tomorrow and then I need to pray for a bit of wind in the afternoon and see where that gets me. Right now I'm just trying to play my own game and not even look at the board, just try to play a good solid round of golf tomorrow.

Q. How disappointed were you that, as you say, it's close but it didn't quite click today?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, that's sort of been the way for the last couple months. It's felt close, but it just hasn't quite been close enough. Just got to keep working on it and persist with it and keep my head down and keep going.

Q. Is it a case of you wanted too much or trying too hard?

RORY McILROY: Not at all. I've got four of them. Geez, look, I've got -- I'm the luckiest guy in the world. I get to do what I love for a living. I have a beautiful family. My life is absolutely perfect at the minute.

I want for nothing, so it's not a case of trying too hard for sure.

Q. When you approach a major, you want to play your best.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, you want to play your best, but you go out and you play golf and you try to play as best you can, and that's it.

Q. You came back from two bogeys, but the final hole you birdied again. Looking back at it, are you feeling good?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it's tough to be here and just say I'm glad to be here for the weekend, but the position I find myself in on the 18th tee, that's the reality.

But it was nice to birdie the last and guarantee some weekend golf, and just got to try to make the most of that.

Q. Is it difficult to remain patient as you go through this process?

RORY McILROY: No, not really. It's fine. I go back two years and I was walking away after Friday in this tournament, so it's not -- no, not at all.

