

# The 150th Open

Mixed Zone

Friday, 15 July 2022

**Rory McIlroy**



**Q. Well done today. Give us an assessment at the office?**

RORY MCILROY: It was pretty good. It was a completely different golf course than the course we played yesterday with the wind switch. Playing the first few holes sort of down and off the right and the last few holes off the left. Completely the opposite wind than we had yesterday.

Felt like I adapted well. Had to sort of make some club decisions. Like, at the start of the week there was no way I would have hit driver on 13 and had to hit it there. Seeing driver on 15. Change your lines off tees, coming down those last few holes.

Overall, yeah, I felt like it was a good day. There was a couple of short putts there that I could have held and could have been a bit closer to the lead. Two really, really solid rounds to open and really happy with that.

**Q. After the big birdie at 17 we could see your frustration at 18. Do you think that round could have been even better today?**

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, it definitely could have been, but after birdieing 17, it would have been nice to make a three at 18 but I would have taken playing the last two at 1-under anyway. I just did it in the reverse of what I was thinking I would do it -- 4-3, instead of 3-4.

But overall, I'm in a good position going into the weekend. That's all I can really ask of myself.

**Q. Your plan for next two days, did you say you've done (indiscernible) and put yourself in exactly where you want to be?**

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, just stay patient, keep hitting good golf shots. Limit the mistakes. I made two bogeys from, two three-putts from just being too far away on the green. But apart from that, you know, that's sort of just keep plugging away, birdie the holes that you're supposed to birdie out here. Minimise the danger whenever you can.

And I've played those last few holes pretty well the last couple of days. And, again, try and make your score over the first 12

and then play smart in the wind.

**Q. You had two really good starts at majors, at the U.S. PGA and U.S. Open. Now, you didn't quite back them up probably as much as you would like. But you have today. Was there a mindset out there today keeping in mind that the fact that the U.S. Open and U.S. PGA, you had that experience there?**

RORY MCILROY: Watching the coverage earlier on, the course looked easy -- it was one of those, you needed to go out and make birdies. It wasn't like you could be defensive at all. You had to go out and play well and make birdies because everyone was doing that this morning. So sort of just tried to play a little bit more on the front foot and be a little more aggressive.

And I got off to a quiet start, but then I sort of came to life around the middle of the round. But yeah, it depends on the wind tomorrow. If the wind is similar it's going to be the same. You're going to see guys go out 4- or 5-under par and hang on coming in.

You're sort of having to keep pace with sort of getting off to a fast start. And, again, as I said, trying to make your score over those first 12 holes. And then try to play smart in the wind.

**Q. What do you gain from being in contention in three majors this year so far now? Because this hasn't been the case. For several years you haven't been as frequently in contention as possible as you would like. But you've been now consistently in contention, would that feed into your challenge this weekend?**

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, I mean, all I can do is -- I mean, we play so much golf. I'd have to actually think about what I did at the U.S. Open. I'd have to remind myself I don't even know at this point. But just play good golf and keep hitting good shots and hit a good shot and hit another good shot after that and just try to hit good golf shots until you run out of holes.

**Q. When was the last time you had this much control of your game?**

RORY MCILROY: It's been like this all year. I felt pretty much in control of everything. And I think the results and the



consistency have backed that up.

**Q. Tiger says you doffed your cap when going up there. Said it was a pretty cool moment. Was it a cool moment for you?**

RORY MCILROY: It would have been a cool moment if he was 8-under par instead of 8-over, whatever he was. A little bit. Yeah, I just hope -- everyone hopes it's not the end of his Old Course career. I think he deserves, we deserve him to have another crack at it.

Hopefully The Open's back here in four or five years' time and he does get another crack at it because with how good he's been throughout his career and how good he's been at The Old Course, I think that's not the way about him he's got better in him.

**Q. Would you like to see similar conditions the next couple of days or would you rather --**

RORY MCILROY: No, I'm happy with the way it is.

**Q. You called the front nine quiet. Was it hard to not get frustrated that you weren't making the birdies early, like you said you want to on those first holes?**

RORY MCILROY: Not really. I's always going to be tricky when they're putting the pin six or seven paces over the burn. Two was a very tough pin to access. 3 and 4 -- I had chances on 3 and 4. But I think the thing is you always know you're going to have chances here. Par-5 5th, then you've got a few short par-4s in a row. You always know. I think there's reason to be patient because you know there's so many chances coming up.

**Q. Does it feel like it's within your grasp (indiscernible) the best part of the year? Does this one feel (indiscernible)?**

RORY MCILROY: I think in my game, I know I've got the game. That's all I need. I just need to go out and play my game and play my golf over the next two days and that's all I can do. Cam Smith goes out and shoots another two rounds like he did the first two days, I'm going to have a really hard time to win the tournament.

So I've just got to go out and do the best I can and worry about myself and hopefully that's good enough.

**Q. You're relaxed, on top of (indiscernible) are you relaxed going into the final two days?**

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, I get on the 1st tee and hit a good shot and try to just keep hitting -- just keep hitting good golf shots until I run out of holes.

**Q. The shot on (indiscernible) --**

RORY MCILROY: It came out a touch hotter than I thought it was. So luckily I was thinking it was going to land in that bottom section there before the slope and it landed right into the hill. So it probably flew, I don't know, maybe 8 yards longer than I thought it was going to. So thankfully I had the hill there to stop it. But it just came out a touch faster than I --

**Q. Everybody (indiscernible) -- is that an important moment in --**

RORY MCILROY: I think so. I think 16 and 17 were important after making the bogey on 15 to make a nice par save on 16 and then to birdie 17, that was a nice little turning point in the round. It would have been nice to follow that up with a 3 at the last as well.

But that was big because I didn't want to make two bogeys in a row. That was a big putt on 16. And then to follow that up with a 3 was, I felt like I saved a couple of shots there.

**Q. Do you look at the caliber of names on the leaderboard, and does that change the way you think about anything going into the weekend or try not to?**

RORY MCILROY: Not really. You just look at where you are on the leaderboard. But 13-under leading, it doesn't matter what name is beside the 13-under. They played two really good rounds of golf. Obviously playing well. Not really. I don't look at that.

It's more just whenever someone's up around the top of a major championship leaderboard, you know they're playing well. It's just about how far you're back and what the number is and sort of focusing on yourself to try to shoot the best score you can.

**Q. Tiger was saying he felt the brotherhood a little bit there on 18 when he was coming up. Do you feel that connexion as well? What's your sense of that?**

RORY MCILROY: I do. I've gotten pretty close to Tiger over these last few years. And especially after the accident, and I think we've all sort of rallied around him down there in Jupiter. And we all want to see him do well.

He was all our hero growing up, even though I'm maybe a touch older than some of the other guys. But we want to see him do well. We want to see him still out there competing. And this week was obviously a tough week for him. But we're all behind him. We're all pulling for him. And hopefully he's -- again, as I said, hopefully he's back here in the next four, five years and playing in another Open Championship on The Old Course.

**Q. With Tiger having that emotional moment, did it make it harder getting into your round thinking about that while**



**you were getting started?**

RORY MCILROY: No, not really. I think that the wind switch I got on the wedge shot was what was more the struggle. And then that 60-footer back towards the burn, and you're thinking wouldn't really look good if you putted one into the water there. So not really.

It was cool to be on that fairway when that was happening. But I was concentrating on my start to the round.

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