

The 153rd Open

Press Conference

Monday, 14 July 2025

Shane Lowry



STUART MOFFATT: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm delighted to welcome the 2019 Champion Golfer of the Year Shane Lowry into the interview room. Obviously fantastic memories for you here. How does it feel to be back, and how much are you looking forward to the challenge ahead this week?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, it's great to be back as well. I was here a couple of weeks ago. I was here last year for the first time, but I was here a couple weeks ago, and all the grandstands were up and that's when everything really starts to flow back to you. It was pretty cool to kind of get that out of the way.

Then I came up here yesterday, I played nine holes last night and nine this morning, and great memories. I'm looking forward to the week.

But obviously I know that's quite a while ago, and no matter what I done then, it doesn't give me any God-given right to do anything special this week. I just need to get my head down on Thursday morning and get after it and see what happens.

Q. Some brilliant videos from the night you won in 2019. Can you walk us through that night and the celebrations or what you can remember of it?

SHANE LOWRY: Interesting first question, isn't it? Here to talk about golf and all anyone wants to talk about is drinking.

Yeah, I celebrated pretty well. Golf is a funny game like where you lose a lot more than you win, and I've always been a firm believer that when you win, you need to try and celebrate those victories. So I did that that night.

Q. Rory was in here saying that over the last five, six years you guys have become really close and he's grown to really admire the way you're able to separate your life from golf and really get away from it. What do you admire most about Rory?

SHANE LOWRY: I think his constant work ethic. And yeah, we have become quite close over the last number of years, and I think it's helped both of us. I think I help him but he helps me as well. I think I certainly feel like I've learned a lot from his work ethic and how I apply myself to the game now.

We spend a lot of time together. Where we live in Florida, we all -- there's a lot of players that live there, and you go up to the range and there's never a day that goes by where you get there and some of the top players in the world are not there. So you're like, well, if all these guys are here, we need to be doing it as well.

I think my biggest thing for him is how much -- he's done everything there is to do in the game. He finished that in April. And his constant drive to get better every day is admirable.

Q. Going off that question before, there does seem to be this narrative out there that you're this big drinker and big partier. Are you kind of over it?

SHANE LOWRY: Look, I'll let people believe what they want to believe and I kind of do my own thing. The people close to me know what I'm like. Don't get me wrong, I do enjoy it from time to time, but I know when I need to put my head down and work. I know when I need to do that.

You can't be at the top level of any sport if you're not applying yourself well, and I feel like I do it.

Q. What have you made of the reception so far? Also, Padraig was the last to win it back-to-back. Have you been leaning into him for any advice?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, I wouldn't say back-to-back. It was six years ago. Xander has a chance to go back-to-back this year.

Yeah, it's amazing to be back. It's pretty cool that we're back so quickly after such a short period of time. We've only had five Opens since the last Open here in Portrush, which just goes to show what the R&A and the organisers think of this venue.

Obviously I'm a little bit biased, but I think it's one of the best venues, and you look at it in this weather, and I think it's just incredible. The golf course, I played it this morning, I think it's perfect right now. I think it's ready for a great week of golf.

I think -- trying to judge the scoring. I think the scoring will be a little bit difficult, and it's going to play quite tough.



But yeah, it is amazing to be back. Look, I'm there and I'm -- obviously there's a lot of memories and there's a lot of thinking back to what I did. What I did was very special, and to walk down the 18th hole with a six-shot lead, I'm probably never going to do that again so I'm not going to try and replicate that this week. I'm just going to go out and try and play the tournament as well as I can this week.

I've prepared as well as I can for this tournament. I know I have. Then it's just up to me to stay out of my own way on Thursday morning and go and get after it and see what happens.

Q. Regarding Rory, we talked to him a little bit earlier today, and he was talking about how ill-prepared he felt going to the first tee in '19 here with the adulation and he was taken aback by it a little bit. I'm wondering if you can relate to that to any degree in how overwhelming that can be and if you and he had ever spoken about that experience that he had in '19?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, I reckon that first tee that morning in 2019 was the most nervous I've ever been on the first tee of a tournament. All you want to do is get the ball down the fairway, and obviously Rory didn't do that.

I remember talking to him a little bit in the lead-up to that, and he did put a lot of pressure on himself, talking about it being the biggest tournament he's ever going to play and stuff like that. You live and you learn, and I'm sure he's not going to do that this week.

Look, it is a big event for all us Irish people here this week. It's huge. We are going out and all we want to do is give ourselves a chance come the weekend, and if you give yourself a chance, you never know what could happen if you do something very special.

Yeah, we've talked about it at the odd time but not that much. He doesn't want to talk about what he did on the first hole. I don't mind talking about what I did, but no, not that much.

Q. Obviously you took the decision not to play Scotland last week. Where did you play, what courses, and can you talk a little bit about your love of links golf and the difference it is to that target golf --

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, so in the last two weeks I've played Portmarnock, The Island, Baltray, Waterville, Hogs Head and Adare Manor. So I've played some of the best courses we have in the country.

I feel fortunate that I have that on -- not on my doorstep, but I can go do that pretty easily. I've only played Scotland once in the last eight or ten years, and then I went to Hoylake and

missed the cut. That didn't work out well.

I went and I parked myself down in Waterville last week, and I spent the week down there. I played golf every day, played a lot of golf. The weather was almost too good, that was the issue. There wasn't enough wind. The sun was shining too much and it was too warm. But it's been an amazing couple of weeks.

I haven't been home to Ireland since Christmas as well, so I've been home for the last three weeks. So I've had a nice time being back home, and I kind of feel like a little bit rejuvenated and ready to go again. I've had a busy season, and it's about to be another kind of busy next three or four months, as well. I feel like I'm ready to go again.

Q. Just wondering what you make of your current form, some solid results recently, but majors maybe not where you exactly want it to be, and if you felt any pressure trying to prep for this week and feeling good about it?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, the last sort of -- obviously the last two majors I missed cuts, which I kind of pride myself on not missing cuts, especially in the big events. I feel like I can always get myself there or thereabouts in the big events and I have done over the last number of years.

But I've been consistently quite good this year. I've given myself a couple of chances to win, which I'm very disappointed that I didn't, but we've got a few months left to kind of redeem myself and get a win on the board.

No matter how well you're playing the season, if you don't have a win beside your name at least once, you don't really class it as been very good. Yeah, but my season has been going -- I've got a good FedExCup ranking at the minute and things have been going all right.

I do feel like I played too much golf in the lead-up to the U.S. Open. I played 9 of 11 weeks, and I feel like that really got to me. When the going got tough, I wasn't there for it mentally, and that's my own fault.

Like I said, I've had a couple of weeks to kind of take a step back and put a decent bit of work in over the last sort of week and get ready for this week, and I do feel ready. I really do.

Q. When you look back to here and what you did and the way you played, how much of it was a shot in the arm of confidence going forward, and how much of it created any frustration for wanting to be able to do it again, which is not easy to do?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, I think you have to -- you can't look at -- doing something like that is a lifelong dream. You can't look

at that as anything other than in a positive way. If you look at it any other way, you're in the wrong game or I don't know what you are, but you're very pessimistic anyway if you do look at it like that.

I think since 2019, apart from the COVID year, I feel like my golf has been okay. Like it's not been -- it's been very consistent. I feel like I've -- obviously not won as much as I would have liked, but it's hard to win out there. You just need to keep going with day-to-day, week-to-week, and give yourself the best chances.

I've still got certain things that I'd like to achieve in the game, and I'm working very hard at that, but I do feel like since 2019 I've been a different person, different golfer, and I feel like I've been better for it.

I feel like I'm a better golfer than I was in 2019. I am a better golfer than I was in 2019. But it doesn't mean I'm going to go out and win by seven this year instead of six. It's just golf; that's the way it is.

I think, as a golfer, you always have to look at it as the glass is always half full. You can't look at it any other way. If you look at it any other way, you're going to be in trouble. So I try and look at it that way all the time.

Q. Just on 2019, what's your sense, and has it changed since then, of why it all came together for you that week?

SHANE LOWRY: I've spent the last six years trying to figure that out. I think at the time I didn't understand why, but I think if you look back, my results had been really good going into the tournament. I feel like I had -- if you look at the majors that year, I missed the cut at the Masters, but I think I shot 5-over the first round of the PGA and finished eighth. I think I shot 77 the first round of the U.S. Open, and I had a great second round to make the cut and finished like 20th or something.

Then I finished second to Rory in Canada, and I'd been playing pretty solid, like really good golf the whole year.

Then I came to a place that I knew and I loved, and it just all clicked. I was playing some of the best golf of my life.

Even some people said it to me this week, a couple of people that are close to me, in walking practice rounds that week in 2019, they sort of knew that I was playing really well and that I was ready for it.

But I said, I wish you'd have told me because I remember that week I was quite antsy and quite uptight about the whole thing, but that's just because you want to perform so well, or so much.

I still don't know why. You never really know why. I think as a golfer, this is the way I look at it anyway, I try to do the day-to-day stuff very well and then just keep going day-to-day. Then hopefully you get to some Sundays and you've got chances to win tournaments.

I can't control what I'm doing next Sunday or like right now. I can only control what I'm doing here and there and what I'm going to do after this and when I wake up tomorrow morning what I'm going to do. I can't control anything else or what I've done in the past.

I don't really -- there's no real answer. It just happened. I'm very lucky.

I always count myself quite lucky. I've always done well. I've achieved some good things in my career. But some of the big things I've achieved in my career has been pretty nice. I always say no matter what happens, I'll always have, like even Baltray in 2009 was very special, and here in 2019 was something special that no one will ever be able to take away from me.

Q. Just wanted to talk about there's a fantastic mural --

SHANE LOWRY: I'm happy I have to drive the other way. I don't have to drive past it every day.

Q. Murals have become a huge thing in recent years in terms of immortalizing sportsmen. It's almost the ultimate recognition of something that you've achieved in your life. I remember the day when you won here, and there was a lot of former Irish soccer players tweeting you and putting messages out on social media and things like that. When something like that happens to you, how does it sit with you, because it's a life-changing event? To be immortalised like that with that mural is -- you kind of almost realise that it's happened, if you know what I mean?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, I think the thing is you very rarely sit back and think that, like -- obviously I know when I won here in 2019, it was, like, very, very special. It was an amazing day for the country and me and my family and everyone around me.

But I don't think it actually changed me much as a person. I didn't sit back and think, like you say, all these people tweeting me. I didn't sit back and scroll through all the tweets, or when my mural was put on the wall, I didn't think I've immortalised myself. Honestly, I'm just myself. Day-to-day, like I'm just myself. I just happen to be okay at golf and lucky enough that I got to achieve some pretty cool things. Honestly, that's how I feel about it.

Q. But it is the ultimate sort of --

SHANE LOWRY: It's very special. It is very special that -- I remember when they asked us about this. It was obviously over a year ago now or a good while ago. I didn't know what to make of it at the start, and then when they did it, yeah, I was like -- then people kept sending me pictures. Everyone keeps sending me pictures. Everyone that comes up here sends me pictures standing beside it. Some of them I can't say what they were doing in it (laughter), but it is very special. I've done something special in my life.

They've obviously acknowledged that here over the last year, and I think that's very cool. It is cool, yeah.

Q. Rory was in here earlier talking about the emotions of 2019 and the Masters and the internal battle and the battle being with himself rather than the golf course. I'm just wondering, having spent a lot of time over the years with Padraig and his emphasis on the mental game, how your mental game has changed and evolved over the years. What kind of handicap would you give yourself in the mental game department and how much do you work on that?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, I guess -- I don't know how to answer that. You look at what Rory did in 2019 here, and I remember at the time everyone thought, this is the end of the world. Rory is out there missing the cut, he's out there making 8 on the first. This is the end of the world. Golf will never be the same. Then you move on and you forget about that pretty quick.

I think you realise that what you do today actually doesn't -- it's not the end of the world. It really is not. Just apply yourself as well as you can and then go out and give it 100 per cent. That's all you can do.

As my own mental game regards that, I've had a couple of episodes this year, but golf is hard at this level. And there's been times where, yes, I've been not at my best. But I feel like I'm pretty good at going out there and competing against the best in the world week in and week out and giving myself the best shot.

I've put a bit of work into it over the years. I work with Bob Rotella a bit now, and Neil is obviously very influential in my whole kind of setup and getting ready for tournaments.

I try to make myself feel ready when I go out to play. Weeks like Oakmont where I massively underperformed, I just don't feel like I was sort of ready for what was -- they was going to throw at me.

Sometimes, honestly, I'm my own -- sometimes when everything is going really well, I get complacent. Then all of a sudden before I know it, I'm like 3-over through 5 and you start to have a panic because you feel like you're going to do well.

I feel like when things are not going well I think is when I'm at my best, or when I don't feel like things are going well, like go back to 2019 here, I had a meltdown on the Wednesday because I thought I wasn't going to go out and play well, but then that focuses me in a little bit more. If I can keep my complacency away and my expectation down, that's when I'm at my best.

How am I feeling? I'm feeling great the last two days, so that's not great. (Laughter).

No, honestly, I've had a great week. I've had a great week of practice. I just need to play shit for the next couple of days, and I'll be all right. (Laughter.)

Q. You were saying the course is playing pretty tough out there. It's been decidedly tropical in this part of the world the past few days. Can you compare and contrast how the course was playing in 2019 and if it'll change the way you approach the course this week?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, I think it's a little bit firmer than it was, but we're going to have a little bit of rain over the next few days. I don't know if that rain will have a massive effect on the course, depending on how heavy it is. I don't really plan to approach the course any differently.

I think the course is -- I forgot how well-bunkered it is. There's a lot of options off tees. You just have to go with what you feel. You're going to see a lot of people hitting different clubs off different tees, playing the golf course differently.

But I wouldn't be able to sit here now and tell you now what the winning score is going to be. I know a good score on a day like today with that breeze blowing is probably under par, but winning score, I have no idea. But it is going to play a little bit tough, I reckon.

Q. You played great last year. You led at the halfway stage at Troon, but you got horrendous weather on the Saturday and it derailed your challenge a bit. Would you prefer to play in benign conditions, or are you happy to throw a bit of hardship into the mix? And just the second part of the question is you obviously are aiming to win The Open on the same course for a second time. Very few in history have actually managed to achieve that, some of the greats like Tiger and Seve. It's a nice target to aim for, isn't it?

SHANE LOWRY: Yeah, I didn't know that.

Last year at Troon -- I'm getting old and soft, so I like nice weather. I think today is perfect. I think that's a perfect Open test out there today. The problem is when it gets showery and really heavy downpours, get them on the wrong holes, you can kind of get a little unlucky at The Open.

Nice breeze, a nice stiff breeze and a little bit of rain is not the end of the world.

But the Saturday evening at Troon last year, yeah, it was -- that was a tough one for me to take. But then I did sit back the week after the tournament and think about it, and if you go back to 2019 here, we got blessed with the weather in the afternoon the Saturday, and I shot 63 and it helped me win the tournament. You kind of have to take the rough with the smooth and get on with it.

Yeah, look, I think the one thing you have to do when you get to an Open is take what you get, take it on the chin and just be the best you can. That's all you can do.

Q. In 2019 you said you went for coffee with your coach. I think it was on the Wednesday before the tournament, or the Thursday. Do you plan on doing something similar like that because you said your game was in a good place? Are you staying in the same accommodation? Are you keeping things the same from 2019 that were lucky for you?

SHANE LOWRY: No, different house, like not the same. No, I don't try and -- I am a little bit superstitious, but I don't try and do stuff like that. We do go for a little chat every evening, myself and my coach, and we try and figure out what we're going to do the following day and how I'm feeling.

Q. Who's going to win on Sunday, Cork or Tipperary, in the hurling final?

SHANE LOWRY: I think Cork will win. But I don't really want to say much else on that because I'll lose a few fans, in Tipperary or Cork.

STUART MOFFATT: We'll bring things to a close. Thanks very much, Shane, and best of luck this week.

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