



Rory McIlroy

Press Conference

Saturday, April 12, 2025

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome back, Rory. Fantastic round today.

RORY McILROY: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Four birdies, two eagles, six straight 3s, a Masters record to start with. What an exciting round. Do you want to talk us through a little bit about the round and how you feel?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, obviously it was a dream start to get off to the start that I did. Hit two perfect shots on 1 and converted.

Felt like I hit sort of three perfect shots on 2.

Three perfect shots on 3.

It was such a great way to start, and you know, just to come out of the blocks like that, I think, as well, from finishing yesterday afternoon to teeing off today, it's quite a long time. You know, there's a lot of anticipation and sort of anxious energy that builds up. You just want to get out there and play.

So you know, with all of that, to go out and start the way I did, was amazing.

And then I had that a little bit of a wobble around the turn there with the bogey on 8, the missed chance on 9 and then the three-putt on 10.

I thought that the par putt on 11 was huge, just to sort of get some momentum back.

You know, to get through 11 and 12 at even par was great. And then, you know, all I was trying to do then was take advantage of the par 5s coming in, and thankfully I was able to do that.

Q. I was out on the course, and a Patron next to me said, "I want Rory to win so bad." What does it mean to you to just have the crowd behind you the way they are?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, look, it's amazing to have the support. You know, these Patrons and these galleries are a pleasure to play in front of, each and every year we come back. They are some of the most knowledgeable golf Patrons or spectators that we play in front of.

Yeah, look, it's a pleasure to play in front of them and to have that atmosphere and that support. Tomorrow in that final group is going to be -- it's going to be a little rowdy and a little loud. I'm just going to have to settle in and really try to keep myself in my own little bubble and keep my head down and, you know, sort of approach tomorrow with the same attitude that I have tried to approach the last three days with.

Q. If you had to write the headline to your round today, what would it be?

RORY McILROY: I'm not a headline writer, so I have no idea (laughter).

Yeah, I'll let -- I'll let whoever you work for figure that out (laughter).

Q. So then let me go with the second question, which is when was the last time you were in a pairing like this with someone like a DeChambeau and having had what happened last year?

RORY McILROY: I'm not sure. Thankfully I've got a pretty short memory.

So I don't know. I have honestly no idea.

Q. How much do you even allow yourself to soak all these emotions in, the support in? Is there a fine line being concentrated and letting these emotions get to you a little bit?

RORY McILROY: Absolutely. I think I am quite a sort of momentum player. So I have to -- there is a balance, though. You know, you have to sort of try to ride that momentum as much as you can but then also temper it with a little bit of, you know, rationale and logic.

And so it is, it's a fine dance. But I certainly don't want to be a robot out there, but at the same time I don't want to be too animated, either.

Q. Yesterday Justin said that it's always very difficult to follow up a low round with another one. A 66 and a 66; just, like, low, and then low again. Do you have any thoughts on that?

RORY McILROY: Not that low (laughter). It's not as if it's 62 or 63.

Yeah, look, they are very, very good scores. But yeah, I mean, I think when you're playing well and you've got four par 5s to take advantage of, you know, those are the sort of scores that are out there.

Q. Congratulations on your round today. You've obviously been in this position before. I wonder if you can remember how you spent your Saturday night in 2011, and how you might do it differently this time around?

RORY McILROY: That was 14 years ago. I have no idea. Again, I'm glad I have a short memory.

Q. How will you plan on preparing for your final round, and what will you do tonight?

RORY McILROY: I'll have some dinner. Maybe try to make it through the second episode of the third season of "Bridgerton." Fell asleep during episode 1 last night. And that's it.

Yeah, sort of put the phone away. Don't look at it. Try not to look at it until tomorrow night.

Q. Similar. You did mention the bubble you want to live in tomorrow, given the energy that will be around you all day. But tonight what will be your process to make sure that you stay in the moment and not let your mind wander to your Masters dreams?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I think I still have to remind myself that there's a long way to go, just like I said yesterday, 18 holes. I, just as much as anyone else, know what can happen on the final day here.

You know, I've got a lot of experience. I came in here talking about being the most complete version of myself as a golfer, and you know, I just have to keep reminding myself of that and remind myself that no matter what situation or scenario I find myself in tomorrow, I'll be able to handle it.

Q. Following up on that, are there specific mechanisms that you use to try and stay in the bubble?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I mean, there's -- you know, I have a few little notes written in the back of my yardage book that I glance at every now and again while I'm walking the fairway. You know, just little reminders. Little, you know, one- or two-sentence things.

And yeah, that's really it.

Q. Do you mind saying what they are?

RORY McILROY: I mean, all the cliché mantras that you've heard before, really.

Q. Maybe you didn't envision six straight 3s, but the drives on 1 and 2, did you come out with an aggressive purposefulness today?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I was fast on the range. You know, that's -- talking about even that anxious energy that built up, I was probably three or four miles an hour faster on the range than I have been all week, which is nice. So I knew I didn't have to worry about the bunker on 1 or 2 if I just made a good swing.

It wasn't really about being aggressive. It was just, you know -- it was making good, committed swings and knowing that if I did that, I could set myself up on those first few holes.

Q. The message from Bob after Thursday was not to go chasing on Friday morning. Was there a message --

RORY McILROY: That was my message to him, actually. I actually said that to him.

Yeah, look, the message going into today was just keep doing the same thing. You know, we've had the chats. We've had the -- there's nothing new here.

It's go out there, and you know, I've talked about trying to chase a feeling out there, you know, if I can have that feeling. And if I can go home tonight and look in the mirror before I go to bed and be like, that's the way I want to feel when I play golf, that, to me, is a victory.

Q. I'm just wondering, did what happened Thursday help you at all mentally today sort of like, something lousy already happened and I got my way through it? Did it calm you at all?

RORY McILROY: No. No. I mean, it's gone. It's two days ago. You can't do anything about it.

I don't feel like it -- I didn't even think about it. So I guess that's a good thing.

Q. How is your book going? And with the late tee time tomorrow, what will the first half of your day look like before you come to the course?

RORY McILROY: Book is going okay. I'm probably only on like chapter 6. These are busy weeks, and by the time I get home and get dinner and shower, it's like, you know -- again, it's either a toss-up between a show or a book. I think right now I'd just rather watch the show.

And then this morning, you know -- I'm sure it will be a similar tee time tomorrow as it was today. So I watched a little bit of Premier League football this morning, and then I actually watched "Zootopia" with Poppy. Very, very good movie if anyone's interested.

And then by that time, I try to get to the golf course three, three and a half hours before I play, and then I feel like those three hours when I get here go pretty quick from locker room, up to the gym, warm up, back here, back in the locker room, food, shower, get ready, go to the range. I feel like that three hours goes really, really quickly.

It's just that trying to fill that time between sort of 7:00 and 10:30 before heading to the golf course. You know,

thankfully there's some good options.

But the one thing I've tried to do a good job of this week is just not being on the phone and just trying to stay clear of that and do other things.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much, Rory. Really appreciate your time. Best of luck tomorrow.