

Genesis Scottish Open

Thursday, 9 July, 2026

North Berwick, Scotland

The Renaissance Club

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

Q. Opening round of 65, which included an eagle, five birdies and two bogeys. Give us your reflections on your play today?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I thought for the most part, I played well. I felt like I drove the ball particularly well, and I started to see that at Shinnecock, as well, a couple weeks ago. A continuation of putting the ball in play, and then once I do that, I feel like I can attack courses and I can setup scoring opportunities. I did that today. I played the par 5s well. I think I hit all three greens in regulation. You know, one putt dropped for eagle and two 2-putt birdies. That always helps the card.

Overall, good to get my first round of competitive golf on a links golf course, and it's obviously a great start to the tournament.

Q. Your first round, you've only played four tournaments in the last 12 weeks. What are the benefits of playing such a light schedule, and what are the challenges?

RORY McILROY: The benefits are seeing my family more. Feeling like I have a bit more balance in my life.

And then the challenge is, I feel like even though I have played pretty sparsely over the past few months, the starts of my tournaments have all been really good. So it's not like I'm coming in and starting slow, and the little bit of extra practice I think actually helps in some ways.

I think one of the other benefits for me, like I'm nearly 20 years into this, and I need to do everything I can to keep my enthusiasm as high as possible, and playing a lighter schedule definitely does that.

Q. You said in the past that golf at this level is 75 percent mental. You played for a decade with immense pressure of trying to complete the Grand Slam and now facing a decade where all of that is gone away and you're freewheeling. How liberating is that?



RORY McILROY: A decade?

Q. Well, hope so.

RORY McILROY: We'll see. It's a very liberating feeling but again I can't get complacent. I still need to set goals. Scottie talked about it at Shinnecock a couple weeks ago, like if he were to go win the Grand Slam, the goal posts move and you have to figure out what else you want to do.

To me, I've said this a few times this year, I felt like the Grand Slam last year was the destination, and I realised it wasn't. It's a continuous journey. It's a journey until you decide one day that you want to step off and do something else, but as long as I'm on this journey, there will always be goals to achieve.

Q. Seemed like you had your complete game out there today. Did you feel like this was a complete performance for you?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, for the most part, I think it was. I'm pretty happy with how I've played out there. I drove the ball well, which has been something that, you know, wasn't there at the start of the year. I think switching to this driver that's a little bit heavier, a little -- got a little bit more spin on it as well, that's definitely helped me keep the ball in play a little bit more. I feel like my iron play was pretty good for the most part. Putted the ball nicely. I didn't put myself out of position too much. I hit a pretty wide drive on 18 and had to hack that one out but overall, I feel like on this golf course, if I put it in play off the tee, then I can attack from there.

Q. We talked about yesterday about the success you've had on this golf course. Are there specifics about this course that fits your eye and your game?

RORY McILROY: I don't think so. I mean, the one thing I do like is the framing of the holes. I like the -- I've always liked that on links courses, whether it be the bunkers or the long rough and all that stuff.

So I think when you frame a golf ball well, it helps the player see a shot a little bit easier. So that helps. But no,



it's sometimes nice to get back to greens that you feel are familiar in terms of like the speed and what you grew up with, and sometimes that can help, too.

Q. You and I were talking yesterday and you spoke with enthusiasm about summer in London and moving your family here. What has that done for your balance and your enthusiasm on the golf course, as well?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I would say I've ebbed and flowed over the course of my career between, like, wanting to play more in Europe and maybe wanting to play less at times. But I think now at this stage of my career, I really enjoy coming back here to play. It reminds me of why I started to play the game in the first place; links golf courses and the crowds are incredible, and the crowds next week at The Open will be amazing, as well. I think all of that, it's -- I don't want to say reminiscent of when I was growing up, but it's a comfortable environment for me to play in.

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