

Hero Dubai Desert Classic

Saturday, 18 January, 2025

Dubai, UAE

Majlis Course at Emirates Golf Club

Rory McIlroy

Press Conference



A Rolex Series Event



Q. 3-under par 69 represents your best score of the week. How would you assess your play today?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, got off to a slow start again. It was eight pars and one bogey on the front nine, and then played much better on the back. Birdied a couple of the par 5s.

Yeah, hit the ball well today. The conditions are pretty tough, windy. Hard to get the ball very close to the flags. And then when the wind is like this, on these greens, and they are getting a little faster, the wind can affect the ball a little bit.

So yeah, I mean, overall tricky conditions. I would have liked to have shot a few shots better but yeah, pretty happy with how I played.

Q. You had to replace your new lob-wedge. Did you have a spare?

RORY McILROY: I had a spare thankfully. I was just hitting a few bunker shots to warm up and one of the balls came out a little funny, and I looked at my face and there was some big massive score mark up the middle of the face from a stone. Luckily I had a brand new one in the locker that I could replace it with. It worked out okay.

Q. Still a lot of holes to play. That back nine is usually very scoring. What represents a decent score on that back nine?

RORY McILROY: I would say you've got the three par 5s, 18 is playing pretty difficult into the wind. But 10 and 13 are downwind and then you've got 17 downwind, as well, and then you've got some tougher par 4s back into the wind.

I would say a couple under, if the guys could -- yeah, a couple under on the back nine, especially if you're up around the lead, you're certainly not going to lose any ground.

Q. We know you're capable of going low here even if the conditions are difficult. How many shots behind do you think you can be and still have a chance?

RORY McILROY: Depends on what the conditions are tomorrow. I would say it won't go much -- I don't think the winning score will go much past 13, depending on obviously the conditions. But I mean, 15, so I'd need to go out and shoot 63 tomorrow. If the conditions are right, I've been able to do that before, especially if you can make a score on the front nine before, as you say, that scorable back nine, my key tomorrow is if I can get off to a faster start and shoot three or four on the front, then I have a chance.

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