

PGA Championship

Friday, May 19, 2023

Rochester, New York, USA

Oak Hill Country Club

Rory McIlroy

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Rory McIlroy is joining us on the second day of the 105th PGA Championship. We'll get right to questions.

Q. You said earlier that patience was super important for you in this tournament. What did patience mean for you today?

RORY McILROY: It meant a lot. Jeez, I need to be patient with the way I'm hitting it off the tee.

Yeah, look, it's that sort of golf course. I feel like with the way it's set up it's sort of easy-ish to shoot 72 but pretty difficult to shoot 67.

Yeah, when I'm working on the range, I hardly miss a shot on the range, and then it's just trying to get it to go from the range to the golf course that I'm finding difficult.

I stayed really patient today. I think my patience was rewarded with a couple of good breaks and a couple of birdies coming in.

Q. You're only five back heading into the weekend. You said, obviously, you're not feeling like you're swinging at your best. Is it better to be five back when you feel like there's still another gear to hit, or is it better to be five back when you feel like you're playing well but you're just not getting anything out of the rounds?

RORY McILROY: I think how terribly I've felt over the golf ball over the last two days, the fact that I'm only five back -- yeah, not saying I could be up there with one of my best performances, but when I holed that putt at the last, I looked at the board, and I thought, I can't believe I'm five back. I guess that's a good thing because I know if I can get it in play off the tee, that's the key to my success over the weekend. If I can get the ball in play off the tee, I'll have a shot.

Q. Then is there a shot that you can try to go to? I don't know if it's a little cut or something you can just

use to try to keep it in front of you.

RORY McILROY: Yeah. I think at this point I might just tee it high and just bomb it everywhere. I tried to hit that little cut off the tee on 16, and it nearly went OB.

I hit my last two tee shots on 17 and 18 really hard, and they actually were really good tee shots. As long as you miss it, there's -- every hole one side is sort of trouble and one side is not. As long as you're missing it in the right spots off the tees, I might as well just go for it and swing hard at it.

Q. How would you describe how the 6th hole is playing right now?

RORY McILROY: It was actually playing a bit easier today because they moved the tee up. Whenever we got there, the wind was sort of straight off the right. The wind is pushing your ball away from the trouble, and that sort of little corner of the water that's, like, probably 300 cover was -- if you hit a good tee shot, you were getting over that today.

Today it was probably playing a little easier than yesterday, but it's still a really tough golf hole. You have to stand up and hit two really good shots. Then once you get on the green, it's -- the green is quite slopey, so you still have a bit of work to do after that.

Yeah, for sure the most difficult hole on the course over the last couple of days.

Q. How would you characterize that whole stretch because 6, 7, and 9 are three of the toughest holes right now?

RORY McILROY: Yeah. Look, they're holes where you just try to make 4s and move on whatever way you can. They're big-boy holes, and you have to step up and hit some good shots.

Q. You mentioned yesterday that your Whoop score recovery was low. How are you feeling today?



RORY McILROY: Yeah, better. Not saying that I don't look at my Whoop after I've slept and then that tells me how I've slept. I felt like -- I felt better today, and my Whoop definitely told me that as well. I was back in the green, which was a surprise, but a pleasant surprise.

Hopefully that trend continues over the weekend.

Q. From what we had earlier in the week when you think some passing showers today and then what's in the forecast for tomorrow with more rain, can you say how the shots will become easier from the fairway and will they be more difficult out of the high grass?

RORY McILROY: Yeah. Even the little bit of rain that we had today, the rough definitely got a lot stickier and thicker, and the ball was coming out slower out of the rough those last few holes.

But saying that, off the fairway, these fairways are so tight. What happens is your spin rates with the short irons go down, and then your spin rates with the long irons go up, so it sort of -- it makes your short irons go a little further, and it makes your long irons go a little shorter. It's just trying to gauge what way the ball is going to react.

Q. In term of receptive, the greens a little more receptive, would you find yourself?

RORY McILROY: They're receptive, but they're not spinning back a ton. Even I hit a pretty spinny 8-iron into the last there, and it pitched right on top of the slope, and I was expecting it to spin back down the slope, but it stayed there. There's still a nice bit of firmness in them.

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