

Travelers Championship

Thursday, June 23, 2022

TPC River Highlands

Cromwell, Connecticut, USA

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

RORY McILROY: Anytime you start with a 62, you're going to take it. I feel like the start I got off to was sort of slow in a way. I birdied the two holes on the back nine that you should, 13 and 15, and then made a nice one on 18 to turn in 3-under par. Then once I got going on the front side there, that's when I started to really feel it and started to hole some putts and hit some quality shots.

Yeah, as you said, I had to get it up-and-down a couple times, but overall a really good round of golf and a great start.

Q. Coming off a major, I guess you always wonder how players will be mentally. The last month has been a grind for you mentally because of all the other things you've had to answer questions about. Did you feel good today? What's your mindset as you came out today, and how good was it? Were you surprised how good it was?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I didn't hit any golf balls Monday and Tuesday. I flew back down to Florida for a day, spent the night in my own bed, flew back up Tuesday, didn't come to the course, and then yesterday playing the pro-am in the rain wasn't really great preparation, but I feel -- I played well at Brookline. I'm not going to lose it in two days. I knew my game was good.

I think at this point it's just -- energy levels are okay. I'm feeling a little under the weather, but it's just concentration at this point. I've got three more rounds left until I have a couple of weeks off and prepare for the Open Championship. I'm going to put everything into those three rounds.

Q. You said that you felt a little fatigue from the last few weeks and then you go out and shoot 62. What got your energy level back up and was it just a matter of concentrating?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, just concentrating and focusing on what I need to do. Thankfully in a round of golf you only need to concentrate for about 10 minutes in that five hours



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that we play. It shouldn't be too much of a struggle.

I feel like I'm doing a good job of switching on and switching off. Yeah, I'm not going to see a golf club or a golf ball for the rest of the day and go and rest up. Yeah, just sort of conserve energy a little bit for tomorrow and the weekend.

Q. Is it too much to suggest that those who are the most protective of the PGA TOUR are trying to prove it on the golf course right now with their playing?

RORY McILROY: I don't think so. I just think it so happens that the most protective of the PGA TOUR are the best players in the world right now. I'm not going out to try to prove anything to anyone. I'm in a good run of form. I'm playing well. Whether that gives me a little more confidence to speak up on certain issues, maybe. But I'm just going out there trying to play my game and trying to win some more tournaments.

Q. Did you see Jay's press conference yesterday, and what were your thoughts?

RORY McILROY: I didn't watch it. I didn't see it. I spent some time with him -- well, I spent a lot of time with him on Tuesday. I spent maybe 30 minutes with him after the press conference yesterday. He's been consistent. He's addressing top player things. He's addressing everything that he said he would address.

Some of the things that he said yesterday I think are great. Some of the changes that were made to the schedule, to -- I think Webb was talking about it, it'll make the regular season much more competitive.

I think that's the thing, I was talking to the guys out there, like everyone starts at zero at the start of the year. Everyone has the same opportunity to make the big events with the big prize funds and whatever. I think it'll make it more competitive and make it a more compelling product, honestly. I think it'll be good.

Q. Do you think that stuff that Jay brought into play yesterday will make a difference for some of the guys



on the fence potentially to go or stay?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I think so. As he said, there's only one reason that the guys are going to the other side, and it's because they have an opportunity to make more money. Even though Scottie Scheffler has made \$13 million this season and it's only June. There's opportunities to make a lot of money out here.

But like everything always has been in golf, it has to be earned. I think we appreciate that as players, and I think the people that watch us appreciate that, that again, we all start at zero at the start of next week and we all go again.

But I think some of these changes to the schedule and some of these increases in prize funds, I'm sure it'll have some guys that were thinking about it to think twice and maybe reconsider their decision.

Q. With all the outside turmoil that's going on, obviously you've been very vocal about it. Is it exhausting? How do you feel?

RORY McILROY: I feel fine. I mean, I'm like -- I don't let it -- I get asked questions, I answer questions, and I move on with my life. What the other guys do doesn't affect me. All I can do is go and try to play the best possible golf, be a good person, be a good dad, be a good husband, and like that's all I do. I try to stand up here and answer your questions truthfully and try to tell you what's on my mind.

Sometimes that's to my detriment, I guess, in some ways. But I'd rather be honest and speak my mind than just stand up here and give you mundane answers that aren't indicative of how I am actually thinking and feeling about the whole thing.

Q. You talked yesterday about coming off of Memorial which is a hard golf course, being in contention at the Canadian, U.S. Open. How refreshing is it for you that you get to come to a golf course like today, and yeah, it's 62 but it's going to give up a lot of good scores?

RORY McILROY: It's nice. It's like the anti-U.S. Open here. It's like U.S. Open rehab coming here. You're like, oh, I can actually make some birdies. This is nice.

I like coming here the week after the U.S. Open. It sort of gives you an opportunity to shoot low scores and get after it, and that's nice. I like that.

Q. You said you were kind of under the weather today. Is it anything that might threaten the weekend?

RORY McILROY: No, I mean, it's just a sinusy -- Poppy

brought something home from daycare last week, and Erica and I, we talk on the phone and we're both losing our voices, and we're like, why are we even doing this; I'll talk to you whenever we're both better. Yeah, so we're both a little under the weather but nothing to be concerned about.

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