

BMW Championship

Thursday, August 26, 2021

Owings Mills, Maryland, USA

Caves Valley Golf Club

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

Q. This may seem like an obvious question, but what is it about driving this golf course that you have to do really well?

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, I think it lets you hit driver, first and foremost. I think there's a lot of courses we play nowadays where a lot of fairways pinch in at 300, 310. It doesn't allow the long hitters to hit driver a lot, last week being a pretty good example of that. Whenever you get a big golf course like this that allows the big hitters to hit driver, that's usually a big advantage.

Yeah, it's just nice to get driver in your hand and be able to feel like you can let it fly a bit.

Q. You were able to reach the green at 16. Was that a new 3-wood?

RORY MCILROY: New old 3-wood. It's actually a 3-wood I used last year. I went home, I went down to Florida after Northern Trust on Monday night, went into the garage and rummaged through a few different things, got my old putter back out, got my old 3-wood, brought a few shafts out, tried different shafts in the driver, went to a new shaft in the driver, and it seemed to work out today.

Q. What does that do for your confidence overall?

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, especially the way I've been playing the par-5s. I played the par-5s very poorly the last few weeks. Even the front nine today, not making birdie on either of the par-5s on the front side, I was sort of thinking, here we go again. It was nice to play the par-5s better on the back.

Q. 13 of 14 fairways today, third in strokes gained putting. I know you mentioned you've been doing some tinkering, but how much is this due to tinkering and working on the technique and the golf swing and how much is it due to maybe liking this golf course?

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, so I think it's a combination of all of those things. It's not as if I was driving the ball badly.



BMW
CHAMPIONSHIP

Like I just had a driver I felt was spinning a little too much, so a couple of times last week into the wind I'd hit it and it would balloon up in the air and then if I wanted to try to hit a cut off the tee, I was not comfortable doing it because I felt like I was losing too much distance by hitting the cut.

Getting a driver that just spins a little less just makes it more comfortable for me to aim up the left side and peel it off if I want to.

And then the putter, I sort of -- it's funny, I thought about it, I said to Harry after the first round last week, I'm thinking about going back to the Spider, and then I proceeded to gain four strokes on the greens over the next two days with the blade.

But I think the thing with the blade is the good days are really good but the bad days are pretty bad, as well. There's quite a lot of inconsistency in it for me. It's almost like I need to practice with the blade at home because you have to get your stroke spot-on to hit good putts with that style of putter.

But then when I come out here, I started hitting putts with the Spider again, and it felt so easy. Felt like I couldn't not start it on line. It was sort of there's a lesson in there somewhere about maybe just keeping the blade at home and practicing with it and then coming out here and putting with something that's got a little more technology in it.

Q. We talked a lot this week about fatigue, tiredness, crazy season. Does that free you up a bit with your mentality when you come out here?

RORY MCILROY: I think so. I mean, it's not -- I've went through playoff stretches before where you're always in that lead group. You're either one, two or three in the FedExCup, and that can sort of take its mental toll over the few weeks where I'm in a position where I just -- I need to play well just to play next week. There is an element of free-wheeling, I guess.

And the energy thing; I was super tired yesterday. But you get a good night's sleep and you feel a little bit better the next day and you can go out and play well. Another good night's sleep tonight and get up, get back out on the golf course and try and do the same stuff that I did today.



Q. In certain parts of the country at this time of the year, it's just not going to be firm; it's always going to be soft at every course. What's your perspective on what would make a good playoff? Is it a thing where everybody has to go out and get it and guys got to shoot 65 to keep up, or is it something where maybe grinding would be a little bit more indicative? What's your perspective on that?

RORY MCILROY: So I think if you rewind it back 12 months to this tournament last year at Olympia Fields, that was a little more of a grind. They were able to get the golf course firm, rough was up, and the scoring -- it was really tough.

Yeah, look, it's an area of the country here where it does get hot and humid, and bentgrass, it's not going to have the characteristics that you want to have a really challenging golf course.

I don't really know where you could go this time of the year where that's not going to happen without it being like over on the West Coast or northwest or whatever.

I think -- I certainly think the FedExCup Playoffs are different than the majors in terms of the -- like the TOUR is a -- this is going to sound a little -- not bad, but I think it's more of an entertainment product rather than the majors. The majors are set up a little bit differently and it's supposed to be the toughest test that we face all year. It's a little bit different. A lot of the golf courses we play are uniform and you get the same conditions each and every week, and players like that. I like that. I like that you don't have to come and spend three or four days at a golf course learning it every week, and if you're playing week to week, to have setups like this is a good thing.

Q. What's your club stash look like at the house? How many clubs are we talking about? Is this like going into a PGA TOUR Superstore?

RORY MCILROY: No, not at all. Basically I have from 2014 onwards, but there's a lot of stuff I just give away or give back. But I'm not a hoarder. I keep a bunch of shafts that I've tried over the years and a bunch of stuff. I have a couple of sets of irons that I've won majors with and that sort of stuff. But yeah, there is; I've got a few things in there, and every so often something catches your eye, like oh, I remember that, or I'd like to try that again.

But in terms of what I can actually play with, like current product, I don't have that much. I sort of try to keep it to a minimum because I know if I have too much stuff I'll just start to tinker, and that's not a good thing.

Q. Just the driver, 3-wood and putter you switched out this week?

RORY MCILROY: Yeah.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports