

# BMW Championship

Saturday, August 28, 2021

Owings Mills, Maryland, USA

Caves Valley Golf Club

## Rory McIlroy

### Quick Quotes

**Q. 7-under 65 today, a bit of a crazy day out there with the swings. Were you paying attention at all to the leaderboard?**

RORY MCILROY: The only reason I paid attention to the leaderboard was because of all the cheers I heard everywhere. I felt like our group got off to a good start, and then behind us it just sounded as if everyone was going crazy. I think Bryson eagled 4 and Cantlay got off to a good start.

Yeah, just one of those days where it seemed like everyone got off to really hot starts. You can do that on this golf course and then you just have to try to keep it going from there.

**Q. For you in particular today, what were the key takeaways on having a really great day?**

RORY MCILROY: I didn't waste as many shots as I did yesterday. I maybe didn't drive it quite as good as I did yesterday, but when I put myself in position today, I was able to take advantage and make the birdie from just off the green. So I scored a little bit better. I don't feel like my game was that much different. Maybe holed a couple extra putts.

But yeah, if you go out here and play remotely well, you're going to have a chance to shoot a low score. I don't feel like I did anything spectacularly well today, but just everything was solid.

**Q. With how gettable the course seems to be playing, what sort of mentality are you going to bring to tomorrow knowing how low guys are going?**

RORY MCILROY: I think just the same thing. You've got a wedge in your hand, gettable par-5 second. 3 is a tough par-3, but then 4 and 5 are -- you don't want to put yourself under too much pressure to get off to a good start, but a good start is really important because then, as I said, you can get momentum on your side early and try to ride it from there.



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**Q. You've been really good at hard golf and you've been really good at golf where you have to make a ton of birdies. If you were going to choose between what the Playoffs should look like, what would be the right balance between soft and get-it-or --**

RORY MCILROY: You're really digging into this one, aren't you.

It's a blend of both, right. As I've went further in my career and I've become a little older and a little maturer and my game has sort of matured with me, I feel like I enjoy the harder tests a little more. I feel like you can lean on your experience a little bit and your patience and you have a better idea than maybe some of the younger guys what's a good score, what's a bad score, what the sort of winning score is going to be.

I do like the harder tests, but I don't want a really hard test every single week.

But East Lake will be a good example; 12-under wins. I think 12-under is a really good winning score for -- 8 to 12-under par is a good winning score on most golf courses, and I think it tests guys the right amount but also lets you make some birdies and gives you chances. I think there's a balance there to be struck.

**Q. There hasn't been a tournament here in 70 years, so I'm wondering in some ways, isn't it kind of nice to have a lot of birdies down here? People come out here, they've been wanting PGA TOUR golf for a long time. Maybe throwing a ton of birdies at them is a great product.**

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, it's exciting. I think everyone out on the course enjoyed it today. They enjoy watching us try to drive greens and make eagles on par-5s and all that.

Yeah, I think for -- again, I said this the other day. It depends what we're all trying to get out of the FedExCup Playoffs. I think one part of it is entertainment. It's certainly been entertaining this week. I don't think it'll be quite as -- it won't be the birdie-fest next week as it is this week, and I think that's a good thing, especially when you come to the final one and the top 30. I think the challenge is an important part of it, too.



**Q. This is your first time playing with Abe; how was it playing with him and what can you tell me about his game?**

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, I don't know if I've played with Abe before. Maybe I haven't. He's a great player. He's obviously become a -- he's had a wonderful year this year, and I really think the Presidents Cup experience in Australia helped him mature as a player.

Yeah, he's been on a great trajectory. He got that win in Memphis a few weeks ago, and he's been up there it seems like all year. Great player, really solid. Plays to his strengths. He doesn't hit the ball maybe as far as some of the other guys out here, but iron play, wedge play, chipping and putting is all really good, and that's the strength of his game.

Even someone like Abe who isn't one of the longest, he can still compete on a golf course like this, which shows you the sort of talent that he has.

**Q. Projected 21st right now; what's it like to start a tournament where you're behind like you will be next week?**

RORY MCILROY: It's okay. I think it lets you free-wheel a little more on the first day. So this will be the third FedExCup that we've done this staggered start, and I think I was four behind Brooks the first year, and then I was maybe minus -- was I minus 4 or minus 5 starting last year, and this year depending on how I play tomorrow, I might start a little further back.

But it's okay because I go out and shoot 6-under next Thursday and the leader shoots 2-over, and all of a sudden you're right in the golf tournament. I like the format. I think that all 30 players going into next week have a -- should feel like they have a good chance to win. Even when you are starting 10 back because you shoot a good one that first day, you're right back in it.

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