

THE PLAYERS Championship

Friday, March 14, 2025

Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, USA

TPC Sawgrass

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

Q. Were you a little surprised that after your hole-out on 1 that you didn't hear a whole lot of other roars the rest of the day, not just for yourself but for the group? Even though you shot well, it just didn't seem like the crowd was like as boisterous as I would expect the top three players in the world to get?

RORY McILROY: Really? I didn't notice that.

Q. After yesterday, how do you feel like your swing was today?

RORY McILROY: Much better. Hit it much better off the tee. I think I hit more fairways in six holes today than I did in 18 yesterday. Yeah, got it in play much better and then from there was able to give myself some opportunities and obviously make some birdies early. Couldn't quite continue that on to the back nine, but it was much better off the tee.

Q. Apologies if this is like the existential question of golf, but do you have any general tricks for trying to forget bad shots when you're playing a course several days in a row?

RORY McILROY: Not really. I don't think there's a way to forget them. I mean, I guess just try to visualize and focus on what you want to do instead of thinking about what you don't want to do or what you've done before. So if you can make that thought just a little bit more powerful than the previous one, then that's sort of the secret.

Q. Talk about the discrepancy between your scores on the front nine and the back nine.

RORY McILROY: The front nine's much harder.

Q. (No Microphone.)

RORY McILROY: Depends on the year. Sometimes it is, sometimes it's not. Yeah, I just feel like you've got, it's a sort of, it's nine holes that sets up well for me. 11, par-5; 12, short par-4. Yeah, I definitely over the years have been a little more comfortable on that nine than the front



nine for sure.

Q. You've been No. 1 before and I'm sure you would like to be No. 1 again. Not that that's your only goal, but when you're in a group with Scottie and you've won already this year, is there anything that jacks you up a little bit for a round like the last two rounds like this?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, not really. I think all of us were just trying to put our heads down and put ourselves in position to go into the weekend. Look, I've always said I would much rather be a part of groups like that than not. It means you're doing something right.

But, yeah, you can't -- Scottie and Xander are obviously great players and but you don't want to be looking too much at what they're doing. You just want to try to focus on yourself.

Q. You almost never miss cuts, knock on wood, and you're in contention almost every time you tee it up. How proud are you with the consistency for that sustained amount of time? Where in the grouping of your accomplishments does that fall? Tiger always, one of his most proud things was his cut streak, for example.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I'm really proud of my consistency. I'm really proud of my body of work over the past 15, 16 years, whatever it is.

I've always -- I think there's only been maybe one or two years in there where I haven't had a win since like 2009. But, yeah, I've always tried to show up and do my best. I am super proud of that because I think as time goes on it's getting a little more rare to see these sort of 15-, 20-year careers, and I'm thankfully on track, knock on wood, with no injuries and everything, to sort of have one of those. Yeah, I'm proud of that.

Q. (No Microphone.)

RORY McILROY: It is, yeah. When I got to No. 1 in the world, Scottie Scheffler was, I don't know, 12 years old, 13 years old, so there's always new people coming up to try to -- and I think the fact that the battles I've had for like that



No. 1 spot in the world, whether it be with Luke Donald and Lee Westwood back in the day, all the way up to Xander and Scottie now and sort of everyone in between, it's nice that the common denominator sometimes is me, that I've been able to stay there. Yeah, I'm super proud of that.

Q. What was the difference in terms of the driving? You went to the range obviously last night, and was that a valuable time?

RORY McILROY: I was just getting a little underneath it, just getting a little too much sort of side bend coming down, sort of in transition. So just trying to keep my right side a little higher and just try to cover it a little bit more was really the thought.

Q. Which is your favorite snack after nine holes?

RORY McILROY: My favorite one is probably a burger, but that's not the right answer. I'm very boring; protein bars and protein shakes is my go-to.

Q. Weather, wind specifically Saturday and Sunday, 25- to 35-mile-per-hour gusts. I know you won at Pebble in tougher windy conditions, but on this golf course, what do you bring strategy-wise and attitude-wise with that much wind?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I'm looking forward to it. I think it's going to be really important to try to flight your ball and keep it under the tree line. I think once it gets above the tree line here it can start to really get hit by it. And it does, it does swirl a little bit, but I think when the wind is so strong, it will be a little more consistent. But, yeah, this course is challenging enough, but with a wind like that, yeah, I'm excited for that challenge.

Q. Why does it excite you?

RORY McILROY: Just trying to control my ball flight, trying to hit different shots, trying to play with some creativity is something that I think I've gotten a lot better at over the last few years.

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