

THE PLAYERS Championship

Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, USA

TPC Sawgrass

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

Q. Rory, where is your back as it is right now, and are you still committed to play?

RORY McILROY: It's better. It's better than it was. I hit up until a 6-iron on the range there and it felt okay. I've got about, I don't know, is it 20 hours until I tee off, or until I'm supposed to tee off tomorrow. So, yeah, we'll see. I'm taking it sort of hour by hour. But it feels better. That's all I can say. Like I couldn't stand to address the ball on Saturday morning on the range at Bay Hill, and it's obviously better than that.

So, yeah, probably a game-time decision, but all indications are pointing in the right direction, so hopefully good night tonight. The drugs are working wonders, and then just keep it going from there.

Q. Can you talk us through what you've been able to do or not been able to do since Saturday and now hitting those balls?

RORY McILROY: Not a whole lot. Just like I drove straight from Orlando to the physio that I use down in West Palm. So saw him at about 5:00 on Saturday night. Then obviously been seeing him every day. Slowly, like, getting a little bit more movement back into it.

But honestly, that's really been it. I haven't really spent a ton of time on my feet. I watched a lot of press conferences the last couple days. But yeah, as I said, like feeling -- I feel like compared to Saturday, obviously feel a lot better than that.

Q. Are you in pain now just standing there?

RORY McILROY: No. No.

Q. Only when you swing?

RORY McILROY: I wouldn't even call it pain; I would say just more like sensitivity. It's not really on the site or like it's sort of more like the big -- like even just hitting balls there for a little bit, just feel like my muscles around the area just



getting a little bit, like, fatigued. Right adductor started to cramp a little bit. But it's fine; it's expected. But more like sensitivity rather than pain.

Q. The litmus test will obviously be the driver, will it, Rory?

RORY McILROY: The nice thing is you don't really need driver around here that much, especially with how firm it is. But, yeah, obviously getting into the longer clubs is something that I'm going to have to try to do tomorrow. But as I said, I hit up until 6-iron there and it felt okay.

Q. So if you do decide to play, obviously Harry has been out here doing great work for you, but how do you wrap your mind mentally around the fact that you now also have to play in THE PLAYERS Championship?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I've been playing here since 2009, so it's not like I don't know the place. We're going to go walk nine holes now with a wedge and a putter just so I can get a feel for the rough around the greens and how firm the greens are. It seems like a pretty different setup this year than what it's been in previous years in March.

So I would much rather do sort of short game and putting on the course rather than on the practice area, just get a better feel for the shots that you need. So I'll go walk nine holes with a wedge and a putter, but yeah, like lines off tees and clubs off tees, like that, I mean I know all of that stuff; it's just getting a feel for sort of how the ball's reacting on the greens.

Q. Will this sensitivity that you have with your back, do you feel like that will affect your game plan at all?

RORY McILROY: No, I'd like to think that the sensitivity will go down as time goes on. Like I had this TOUR Championship in 2023, and I remember like Thursday I was in so much discomfort and, like, chipping it around and got through the round, and I remember on Sunday I felt like a whole new person. So I'm hoping that it starts to progress like that.

But yeah, the sensitivity, it's not, again, it's not even in the back. It's more just the muscles around, like the glutes and



the hip flexors and like that's just all a little -- yeah, just a little tight and a little angry.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

RORY McILROY: Probably, yeah. Probably.

Q. How concerning is it that you could potentially aggravate it?

RORY McILROY: It's not. It's not structural, it's not joint, it's fine. It's purely muscular sort of discomfort and fatigue. So there's nothing I can -- I don't think, and what I've been told, obviously I'll listen to the professionals. But there's nothing that I can do that's going to harm that.

Like what triggered this, I'm not going to -- it was a hinge pattern in the gym, and I just overextended a little bit this way, but even doing this now is way easier, and I couldn't do that a couple days ago. So things are getting better, but yeah, I don't think it's something where if I play I'm at risk of doing any damage.

Q. How did the first shot you hit today feel, on the range?

RORY McILROY: Terrible. It was like a skulled wedge. I was trying to chip it 30 yards it went about 100. But apart from that, it was okay.

Q. You said you watched some press conferences; did you watch Brian's this morning?

RORY McILROY: I spoke to Brian for about an hour. I was supposed to meet with Brian on Monday night up here, so I spoke to him for about an hour on the phone on Monday. So he just sort of took me through everything that he was going to say to you guys today.

Q. Thoughts on the outline?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I think it's all -- yeah, it's all pretty positive. I think he's got into this job and realized how difficult it is to turn this big ship around, and there's a lot of cooks in the kitchen and a lot of opinions. So he's obviously navigating that. But, yeah, I think what he said today was -- it's obviously a really good direction of where the TOUR should be going, I think.

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