

WGC Dell Technologies

Match Play

Thursday, March 25, 2021

Austin, Texas, USA

Austin Country Club

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

Q. After what happened yesterday, how big was it for you to come out today and get this done?

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, it was big. Obviously winning the match today keeps me in the tournament and gives me a hope for tomorrow. Obviously it looks like Cam and I, whoever wins that match, Lanto is going to have to do a favor and beat Poults. But yeah, it was good. I didn't play that badly. I hit a couple of destructive shots yesterday, but overall both of us played well, deserved to win the match, but I didn't feel -- the score line didn't sort of match up with how I felt like I played. And then the same thing today. I played solid. Lanto didn't have his best stuff, but I played solid and kept it in play and holed some good putts when it mattered. Yeah, just happy to be still in with a hope.

Q. We know when you're home you work on your game a ton. Out here on the PGA TOUR we don't see you grind and grind on the range all day long like some guys do. Apparently you hit 11 bags of balls on the range after you lost yesterday. What were you trying to accomplish?

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, I think as everyone knows who's played this game, it's a very difficult game at times, and I feel like it's testing me a little more than it has done in the last few years. I feel the only way to get through it is to put your head down and work on the right things and sort of trust the process of maybe put in the hard work, and my dad always said, you get out of it what you put into it, and that's the attitude that I'm sort of bringing with me to the course each and every day. There's going to be some good days, there's going to be some bad, but I feel like I'm on the right path.

Q. I know good players can struggle day-to-day, but I think great players bounce back right away. I'm not sure you had your very best stuff, but I know that was a big bounce-back for you. It has to do wonders for confidence, as well, doesn't it?



RORY MCILROY: Yeah, for sure. I hit some better shots today. I drove the ball very well. I didn't feel like I played particularly badly yesterday, I just hit a few destructive shots that cost me in the end, but I played solid today. I hit some good shots, hit some good iron shots, hit it well off the tee, hit a couple of decent putts. Yeah, overall just really happy to win the match and at least have a chance going into tomorrow.

Q. I always think your game is built around your driver and I think it golf course is built around a driver, too. This golf course plays so much easier from the fairway. Even though the Bermuda isn't long, you still get a lot more opportunity to control the spin.

RORY MCILROY: A hundred percent. Playing off the fairway is key obviously this weaning, but most weeks, as well, and I've sort of realized that over the last few weeks. I just haven't been putting it in play as much. It's a real focus of mine going forward to get the fairways hit percentage up a little bit and get myself playing out of the fairway more, and then when I can do that and I'm improving with the irons and the wedges, then I know I'll be back to having a chance to win tournaments.

Q. Talk about the biggest differences from yesterday to today.

RORY MCILROY: You know, I didn't -- I played okay yesterday. I hit a few destructive shots that cost me, obviously, but I felt like the score line sort of didn't really represent how I played. Poults played very well, obviously, but I made a good birdie on 8 yesterday to get back to 1-down and then I made a couple mistakes and he rattled off a few good holes, and all of a sudden the match was over.

Today I played good. I played solid, hit a lot of good shots, a lot of good drives, a lot of good iron shots. Felt like I let Lanto back into it a little bit on the front nine but then I made a good birdie on 10. He hit a bad tee shot on 12 and sort of gave me that one, birdie on 13 and then I took control of the match again.

It was good to win today, and obviously I need to go out and win my match tomorrow and hope Lanto does me a favor and beats Poults.



Q. Did you feel like your session on the range yesterday kind of paid off today with the swing?

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, I mean, I doubt that one session is going to pay off that much, but I think it's just a process, and it's something I'm going to have to continue to do each and every day and put my faith and my trust in the fact that what I feel like I'm trying to do is the right thing and go forward.

So yeah, if anything I just got a little bit of clarity on the feels that I'm trying to get into my swing yesterday on the range and just really tried to commit and trust it out on the course today.

Q. This week because it's different than a normal stroke play week where you have to wait for Sunday to get the final result, you're kind of getting that every day. Is that a good thing given where you are with your game right now?

RORY MCILROY: I think so. As I said, it's not just about this week, but it is about this week at the same time in terms of like you want to win matches and you want to get through, but I think every day, even like a day like yesterday, I tried to take the positives if there were any, and I hit a good shot here, or that swing felt good here. There was obviously some stuff that I felt like I needed to work on after it, but you have to -- it's hard, a score line like yesterday, you have to just try to brush it off.

I think try to focus on what you did right and then go to the range and work on the things that -- regardless of whether you win or lose, work on the things that you need to work on.

Q. I know it might be old news, but can you walk us through the idea of why you brought Pete into the fold?

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, so I think I need to preface it with Pete and I have known each other since I was 13 years old, so it's not as if this is a new relationship. Pete and I have known each other forever. He's worked with a lot of players that I've been close with over the years, Darren Clarke, Graeme McDowell, Lee Westwood. I just felt like it was a natural fit in terms of Pete knows my goal. He's seen me grow up swinging the golf club. I don't think he has any preconceived ideas in his head of how I should swing or -- and I think he puts -- with what I'm struggling with in my swing at the minute, I think his coaching philosophy puts an emphasis on that in terms of getting structure in the right arm and getting that supported at the top, and I just felt like he maybe had some ideas and had

maybe a little more knowledge on that part of the golf swing than what I currently had, and that's the reason that I -- and all the other stuff, all the great players he's worked with. His short game expertise is unbelievable, as well, and I think just picking up those little nuggets from him is only going to help in the long run.

Q. Michael will still be involved in the process?

RORY MCILROY: Yeah, Michael is like a second dad to me, so it's not as if -- Michael and I's relationship and, I guess, agreement is still the same. It's just the fact that I haven't been able to see him as much recently, and then the times that I have, because there hasn't been much continuity there, it feels like it just got a bit -- every time we saw each other it was almost like we were trying to do too much, so it felt like -- not a rebuild, but it just felt like, okay, where I think Pete is out on TOUR enough, as well, to sort of give me maybe feels that I can play with and then stuff that I can work on on the range, because as everyone knows, it's so hard to go out on the golf course and think so much about your golf swing. You need to be able to let that go and just be able to play shots. But if you have a couple little feels in there, it can help, and that's sort of the reason that I've went down this road.

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