

WGC Dell Technologies Match Play

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

Austin, Texas, USA

Austin Country Club

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

Q. There was a lot of talk yesterday about putting the new putter in play and the new shaft. How much of that had to do with your play and how much has to do with getting ready for Augusta?

RORY McILROY: I think just has to do with my play. I think it's funny, I think -- it's hard because you look at strokes gained off the tee and you would think that I'm driving the ball well or I have been driving the ball well.

Then you look at my driving accuracy and it's down around 50%, which is quite low for me. Strokes gained, I'm hitting the ball a long way so strokes gained over -- maybe overvalues length sometimes depending on the course.

So, yeah, I knew I just needed to change it up a bit going back to a driver length that I'm a little more comfortable with. But the thing is, going to 44 inch driver with the previous shaft I was using I was too stiff and I couldn't spin it.

I needed to go to a slightly softer shaft and I can hit more shots with it and feel a bit more comfortable sort of playability-wise.

So it was good to see. It was good to put it in play today and have to perform pretty well. Drove it well, especially on the back nine.

So, yeah, I mean, obviously this part of the season you've got one eye on what you're doing now and one eye on Augusta. It's trying to do both.

Q. What are your expectations? How do you manage them at an event like this, a format like this compared with a regular...

RORY McILROY: Yeah, go out and play solid. I think it was good. I had to respond a couple times to what Scott did on the back nine, so it was nice to sort of feel that little bit of pressure and have to hit a shot or have to make a



putt.

Q. On a Wednesday.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, but especially with, for example, a new putter in the bag and getting comfortable with that.

So, it was good. It was solid. I made six birdies and one bogey and I played solid today.

Q. Is the putter a replica?

RORY McILROY: Pretty much. Just it has a line on the top just on the top line instead of on the flange. So, yeah, it's basically the same, but it's...

Q. What happened to the old putter then?

RORY McILROY: I think my dad has it. Yeah, I don't know. I think my dad has it somewhere.

And they made me one back in 2016 when Nike went out of the equipment business, when we all sort of were figuring out what to do, which was an exact replica. I just think what I'm trying to do with lining the ball up, the line on the top instead of on the flange matches up a little bit better for me.

Q. Augusta last week, some reports that you burned it up and someone said 19 putts in a round; is that true?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, look, I had two good days. (Laughter.) We played 54 holes in two days and it was good. I was really happy with where my game was.

It was sort of good to see that after struggling THE PLAYERS.

Q. What do you make of 13 then?

RORY McILROY: 13, I think overall it's a little like 11 in terms of the change. I think they made the tee shot easier because you don't really have to do anything with the tee shot anymore.



Just hit it sort of straight up the chute. The second shot, much more difficult. A little bit like 11. The second shot on 11 is much more difficult with how they've contoured the front of the green.

I used to hit 8-iron from a flat lie into 13 and now I hit a 5-iron from the ball way above my feet. Just makes you think a little bit more about the second shot which I think is good.

Q. You talk about the ball and Augusta. If they went to the reduced white ball, what holes do you think would be most affected? Would it be on the back nine?

RORY McILROY: I think -- I mean, personally for me, I wouldn't be able to carry the bunker on 1. Wouldn't be able to carry the bunker on 2. I'm able to carry both those bunkers.

Couldn't drive it on the third green. I can drive it on the third green at the minute. There are a lot of holes that would be affected.

Again, for me it's trying to just keep the integrity of what the game was supposed to be, and when this game was invented -- and obviously innovation happens, but I don't think people imagined golf the way pros play the game right now. I think it's just got a little -- I'd love to see just a little more versatility put back into the game, and I think that's what this change would ultimately do.

Q. Would you have to come to Augusta with a new game plan if that was the case? Would you have to go maybe and figure out a new game plan?

RORY McILROY: Not really. It would be like me going back to my 2015 equipment. I've gained 15 yards in the last six or seven years, and they're saying it's basically a 15- to 20-yard reduction in distance if you hit the ball the speeds that I hit it. It would just be like me playing golf again in 2015, and I seemed to do okay then.

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