

ROUND 3 INTERVIEW
May 4, 2019

RORY McILROY (-9)



Q. 3-under par round today to get yourself in your comfort zone on this golf course, right?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, right there. Depending on what the guys do on the last hole there, I'm three closer to the lead than I was starting off today, so that's a good thing. Just sort of hung around all day. I stayed really patient. I could have -- coming back after that second delay, three-putting 12, I was a little bit angry at myself, sort of saying to myself on the 13th tee, "Why didn't I hit balls instead of just going to the putting green?"

Yeah, I birdied 14 and 15 after that, played the last three holes well, which you need to do. Didn't lose any shots there. As you said, right there going into tomorrow, so I'm excited for that.

Q. And your past successes at this golf course, you're one of the few guys in this field that can say, "I know what it takes on Sunday at this particular golf course."

RORY McILROY: Yeah. And I think as the course has gotten a little bit tougher over the past few years, you really have to pick your spots to be aggressive. If you can get through the first six holes intact, you've got 7 and 8, which are good birdie chances, 10 and then 14 and 15. So there are your chances.

And then if you can pick off a couple others here or there, then that's a bit of a bonus. This golf course really rewards patience and rewards discipline, and I feel like I was both of those today.

Q. How difficult is it to start, stop, start, stop, the delays?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, the first delay actually did me well. I was sort of stuck in neutral there on the front nine and came back with a nice birdie on 10, so that was nice. The second delay was the one that sort of got me a little bit. But it's the same for everyone, we just have to deal with it the best we can.

Q. When you look at the last two days specifically, can you think of a time or more so than your golf that you relied on your patience because you felt like something was coming?

RORY McILROY: Yeah. I mean, I probably just go back to THE PLAYERS in March, I got off to two really bad starts on Saturday and Sunday. You know, I was 2 over through 2 on Saturday, 2 over through 4 on Sunday and again told myself right in the thick of the

tournament but you have to stay patient and almost let it come to you rather than try to chase it. That was on that golf course.

I think it's similar here. As I said, you have to pick your spots to be aggressive and make your birdies, the par 5s, the two short par 4s. If you can do that and pick those off and you don't make many mistakes, you know, 68 or 67's always going to do you pretty well around here.

Q. How many happy birthday wishes did you get?

RORY McILROY: A lot, a lot, but it's awesome. I'm really grateful. I really, I felt the love out there. Celebrate another decade of my life and I get to do it on one of my favorite golf courses in the world, it's pretty cool.

Q. Talking about picking your spots, what was the toughest decision you had to make today?

RORY McILROY: Probably I hit a really good tee shot on the 8th hole and I was sort of pin high left and it was one of those if you're aggressive with the putt, it could go off the other side of the green. Or you sort of -- I was a bit tentative, I left it too short. But it was really knowing okay, if I leave myself 10 feet here, it's actually going to be a decent result and then try to rely on holing that putt for birdie after driving it nearly on the green.