

**ROUND 3 INTERVIEW**  
**January 25, 2020**



**RORY McILROY ( -9 )**

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**Q. Looking very smart in blue, I have to say. How nice to move up the leaderboard but also really take care of that back nine today as well.**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, that was better. Obviously a disappointing back nine yesterday, let a few shots get away from me. But yeah, today I -- if you hit greens here and be really dialed in with your iron play, even if you're not making that many birdies but if you keep giving yourself chances, it's one of these golf courses that you feel like you're playing really well, you might be a couple under. But that's okay, no one else is going that low. Keep doing the same thing tomorrow and should be right there.

**Q. Did the golf course kind of play as you expected today? Obviously it's a little difficult when the fog's coming in and it's cool out there.**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, again, struggled with the pace on the greens early on. I think with the fog coming in the greens were a little slower starting off. I was surprised how fast they were yesterday when we started off. That's probably the reason why I haven't holed as many putts as I would have liked this week, my speed just hasn't been quite where it needs to be. But again, as I said, not everyone is holing a lot of putts out here, so just got to keep hanging around.

**Q. And it's also that mindset, isn't it, it's about that patience, you put yourself in that position now, you keep doing the right thing surely, but also making sure that mentally you're not getting too far ahead of yourself?**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, exactly. I mean, if you sort of just get out there and take care of what you need to do. My goal today was birdie the par 5s and if you can knock off another couple here or there, and that's sort of the way I'm hitting my driver, the way I'm hitting my fairway woods, if I can play those par 5s well and knock in a couple here or there, then I won't be far away.

**Q. Rory, great play today, man. When you're playing as well as you are, how can you take time off, stay solid with all the good stuff and really find something to work on as solid as you are?**

**RORY McILROY:** I don't know. I mean, I guess I took six weeks off, I didn't hit a golf shot for six weeks and then I came back. It's just about trying to replicate those things that you were doing well the previous year. I mean, it's not as if you're trying to reinvent the wheel in any way, you're just trying to strike it solidly, make sure you've got all your shots, fades, draws, high, low, and if you can do that and replicate that, then go work around the greens

and work on your scoring clubs.

You know, I definitely, I still don't feel a hundred percent, but I'm getting it around. My iron play was much better today and that's why I made a few more birdies.

**Q. I think the players are pretty happy you might not be at a hundred percent, they might have a little bit of a chance, but with this round today, could be a tough one. You're going to have a great opportunity on Sunday.**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, you know, it was nice to shoot a good third round here and get myself a little bit closer. Obviously depends on what Jon and Ryan and a few of the other guys do that are on the golf course, but if I'm within two or three going into tomorrow, then I'll be looking forward to that and give it my best.

**Q. Not always so many guys -- not so many shots back, it's how many guys are in front of you, and that doesn't look like too big a number right now.**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, not at the minute, but someone could come out of the pack tomorrow. It is a very bunched leaderboard. There's a lot of guys like 6, 7, 8 under par. Need to go out and try to replicate what I did today. If I can do that, I'll have a good shot.

**Q. After two years, do you feel like this --**

**RORY McILROY:** 3-wood.

**Q. Do you feel like this course was sort of built for your game, tailor made for you?**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, I think the way -- I mean, the way it's set up this week, I think it's built for me, especially with how I'm driving the ball. It's playing long, we're not getting much roll out there. The rough's up, fairways are pretty narrow. Yeah, I mean, if it was really built for me, I would love bent greens instead of poa, but I guess you take what you're given. Yeah, I mean, tee to green I do feel very comfortable on a track like this.

**Q. You've been through this before, but what was the process yesterday afternoon (inaudible)?**

**RORY McILROY:** What did I do? Not much. Trying to look to go somewhere from dinner and it was a 35-minute drive to everywhere, so ended up just eating in the hotel.

I don't know, it wasn't a great finish but I thought I played okay. I played okay and just didn't get anything out of it. It wasn't -- I didn't hit many poor shots. There's a three-putt in there, a couple of loose ones, but nothing to really cause me any concern. It was just rest up, get a decent night's sleep and start again.

**Q. With regard to what Tiger has done, just the records he's set and whatnot, what's**

**to you more impressive, the number of majors or the number of wins overall?**

**RORY McILROY:** The wins, the wins. So much the wins. You know, it's relentless. Winning that much, you know, a really good season these days is three or four wins a year and he was doubling that year on year on year on year. To me, that is -- because, you know, to be that -- to be on a pursuit that's just so, as I said, it's relentless. You could win a few majors, take your foot off the gas a bit, life's good, but it was just foot to the floor and just keep moving forward. That's to me the most impressive thing.

**Q. If he gets to 83, that in your mind would be the ultimate --**

**RORY McILROY:** I mean, I think it already is the ultimate because Snead's 82 is questionable. No, it's true, no?

**Q. You talked about bringing your aggressive attitude in week to week. How confident are you that, come majors, you're going to be able to bring that same attitude into major championships?**

**RORY McILROY:** Just got to imagine I shoot 79 every -- the first day and then I usually bounce back well, couldn't be a little more free. I don't see any reason why a tournament like this here this week is any different. It's 18 holes of golf. You've got to go out and you've got to beat the same players that you play against every week, sometimes on the same courses that you play every year, so it shouldn't be any different. Obviously the stature or the prestige of the tournament is a little higher, but if you break it down to its simplest form, it is the same.

**Q. What do you feel like is going to be the most important thing for you tomorrow if you're going to win?**

**RORY McILROY:** Probably just staying within myself, not looking around, not looking at what other people are doing. If I can go out there and set myself a target and commit to that and maybe not look at a leaderboard until the back nine if I really have to. You know, I went out and set myself a number today of 66. I didn't quite get it, but I shot 67 and I'll need to do something similar tomorrow.

**Q. Rory, can you say what you know about that World Tour? Have you been approached or where --**

**RORY McILROY:** Those guys have been talking to a few of us for six years. They approached me at the end of 2014.

You know, it's a hard one. I think it's -- like I love the PGA TOUR, but they definitely, these guys have exploited a couple of holes in the system the way that -- the way golf at the highest level is nowadays and how it's sort of transitioned from, you know, a competition tour to entertainment, right? It's on TV, it's people coming out to watch. It's definitely a different

time than what it was before.

But I love the PGA TOUR, I love the way golf is set up right now, so it might be that -- it might be the catalyst for something a little bit different out here as well, who knows.

But I certainly wouldn't want to lose what's been built in the last 40 or 50 years, tournaments like this, tournaments like Riviera in a couple weeks' time, everything that we have gotten to know and love over the years. I'm still quite a traditionalist, so to have that much of an upheaval in the game I don't think is the right step forward. But I think, as I said, it might be a catalyst for some changes on this tour that can help it grow and move forward and, you know, reward the top players the way they should be, I guess.

**Q. In the offseason, is there anything like sensors or cameras that's like helped you change or improve your swing?**

**RORY McILROY:** I've actually tried to get away from a lot of that stuff. I'm trying to play a lot by feel, even reluctant to see my swing on video these days. So yeah, I've done all that before. I've been to the biomechanics and I've done the 3D stuff and it's all good and it helps, but I think at this stage of my career I know what works for me. If I'm hitting it good and I'm hitting it on the center of the face and I'm feeling comfortable, I know that everything's okay.

**Q. So do you change the channel when you come on and you're watching a pre-broadcast or something?**

**RORY McILROY:** I try not to watch at all. I know I'm involved somehow with the Golf Channel, but I try not to watch that, especially when I'm on, especially when I'm on.

**Q. Are you more impressed with your 26 wins or your four majors?**

**RORY McILROY:** Oh --

**Q. Sorry.**

**RORY McILROY:** No, it's a good question. That's a hard one because I'm very proud of the 26 wins, and to be able to have that and win for the last 10 years on Tour and stuff. Yeah, it's always hard to not look at the majors and sort of have some nostalgia about them and sort of feel a different way about them, I guess.

But again, from the outside looking in, I see what Tiger has done with 83 and he himself might feel --

**Q. Eighty-two?**

**RORY McILROY:** Eighty-two. Eighty-three at some point, I'm sure. He might feel

differently. He might say the 15 is more impressive.

**Q. But he's closer to a number though, isn't he, a number meaning 18, which has been kind of a benchmark?**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, I'm not close to that.

**Q. Progress.**

**RORY McILROY:** Progress. I'm getting there.

**Q. You're younger.**