

**ROUND 1 QUOTES**  
**May 9, 2024**

**RORY McILROY (-4)**



**Q. So getting your first win here and then obviously, you don't have to explain your success here at all, but what does it mean to you to come back to Quail Hollow every single year?**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, it means a lot. I got to know the Harris family very well from even before I played this golf tournament. Johnny Harris was the first person to host me at Augusta before my first Masters in 2009. I've always had a great affinity for this place, and then obviously coming here, winning my first PGA TOUR event.

Yeah, playing in front of these fans, I feel like Charlotte has sort of taken me in as one of their own. It's been a great journey. I've celebrated I think 13 of my last 15 birthdays here as well because obviously when the tournament falls. Yeah, it's been a great place for me. Some awesome memories, and obviously trying to keep making more of those.

**Q. Rory, you've been wanting to play weeks before majors many times and it seems to fit, work for you.**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, it does.

**Q. What do you think about having the Signature Events the week before? This is a change for this tournament and --**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, I mean, I would say my favorite two weeks of the year previously was Akron and the PGA. You had a World Golf Championship leading right into a major championship. I loved those two weeks. They were two big events. You could go to Akron, see where your game is but still get some competitive reps, and if you get yourself in the mix, that's an awesome way to prepare for next week to see where your game stacks up under pressure and against the guys you're possibly going to be playing against the next week as well.

I've always liked these sort of two big events back to back, a World Golf Championship or a Signature Event going into a major. For me any way, it's a nice cadence.

**Q. Do you think that the Memorial will work OK? That's forever been two weeks before the U.S. Open, now the week before.**

**RORY McILROY:** Personally, I love it. Personally, I played the Canadian Open the week before the U.S. Open and my U.S. Open record since doing that has been way better, much improved since sort of 2016 through 2018. Yeah, I like playing the weeks before majors. I



feel like my game is just a little bit sharper going into those biggest weeks and it works for me.

**Q. Is that more of a competitive thing or a form thing for you then?**

**RORY McILROY:** Both, both. I think sharpness, feel like you knock all the rust off if there is any. It's great playing golf at home, but there's no consequence to it. Where you get out here, it's a little bit different. Yeah, I've sort of learnt that I definitely like playing the week before.

**Q. Rory, after we talked to you yesterday there was obviously a lot of chatter about the board and what's happening, the committee that's been set up. Tough to ask, but is your relationship with Tiger strained at all through all of this?**

**RORY McILROY:** I would say, I mean, I think friends can have disagreements or not see things -- I guess not -- not see eye to eye on things but have disagreements on things. I think that's fine.

But no, I wouldn't say -- we had a really good talk last Friday for 45 minutes just about a lot of different things.

No, there's no strain there. I think we might see the future of golf a little bit differently, but I don't think that should place any strain on a relationship or on a friendship.

**Q. Are you good with the idea of him being on this committee, the only player on this committee --**

**RORY McILROY:** I'm on that transaction committee, too.

**Q. You are?**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, yeah.

**Q. So he's not --**

**RORY McILROY:** I've already had calls with that group, I had a really good hour and a half Zoom with those guys on Sunday, we went through a 150 page doc about the future product model and everything.

Yeah, I'm not on the board, but I'm in some way involved in that transaction committee. I don't have a vote so I don't -- you know, I don't have I guess a meaningful say in what happens in the future, but at least I can -- I feel like I can be helpful on that committee, and that was sort of a compromise for I guess not getting a board seat.

**Q. Are other players involved in that committee as well, Rory?**



**RORY McILROY:** I think -- I mean, yeah, Tiger and Adam as well. There's the three of us, which is --

**Q. (No microphone.)**

**RORY McILROY:** Joe's on that, too.

**Q. I know you said you're not going to be taking Webb's spot on the board, but would you want to go back and rejoin the board down the line? Have you let yourself think that far in the future at all?**

**RORY McILROY:** I'm really comfortable that Webb is staying in that seat. Webb is a very level headed, balanced, big picture guy. If it wasn't me taking his seat, the next best thing was Webb staying on. Yeah, I'm happy about that.

**Q. He was very supportive -- we talked to him yesterday after you, he was very supportive of you having a role, a say. That's why he kind of put you forward. I'm just curious maybe what your conversations with him have been like. Like he's sort of suggested he's more on the outside of this whole thing (inaudible.)**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah. Look, the thing is, it wasn't -- I don't necessarily think or believe that people didn't want me involved, it was more just the process of how I could get involved again, right? Like the board has went through this massive eight-month governance review, and what happened with Webb and I and that whole thing, that was outside of the scope of the governance, right? So then what's the process look like to try to bring me back in? That was really the sticking point with it all.

So yeah, look, we tried to get to a compromise where, you know, I stuck my hand up and said, look, I can be helpful if this is what Webb wants to do. It was really tricky to do that, so I'm involved in the transaction committee and that's basically to try to get this deal done with PIF. I feel like I've got good relationships on both sides there and hopefully I can bring something to the table and try to, yeah, provide some insight and value and see if we can get this thing done.

**Q. Back to the golf course, Rory, obviously in contention here again. What is there to build on for the rest of the weekend and continue to improve on not only for this tournament but also for your Valhalla trip next week?**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, I'm hitting the ball really well again, with some of the shots that I hit out there today with the driver, some of the iron shots were much better, I feel like putting's good. And I felt like things were starting to turn around for me in New Orleans, played a good weekend there. Sort of just -- I got a really nice couple feelings in my swing that week and I've just sort of tried to ingrain those over the last, whatever that is, 10 days. Yeah, it feels good.



It was good to play a solid round of golf today. Left a couple out there, I feel, but at the same time I've got three more days to try to build on what I've done today.

**Q. Have you been to Valhalla?**

**RORY McILROY:** Not since 2014.

**Q. Not even recently?**

**RORY McILROY:** No, no.

