

ROUND 4 QUICK QUOTES
February 22, 2026

RORY McILROY (-17)



Q. Rory, it was a valiant back nine battle for you with four birdies on the way in. How do you assess those last few hours and what you experienced today?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I just kept plugging away and trying to make something happen. I felt like I could have made something happen on the front nine if I holed a few putts but I didn't. It's hard, I think sometimes it's harder when like Jacob has a big lead and I'm not doing anything to put pressure on him so he sees that -- like I've had this before when I had a big lead and the guy that's playing with me isn't putting pressure on and then the guys in front are. Sort of he was making a lot of pars and then obviously at the end, you know, Kurt did what he did and Adam posted and I started to make a couple birdies. I thought Jacob did really well to hang on and play the way he did coming down the stretch.

Yeah, I tried to make some things happen. I holed some putts on the back nine, which is nice, but I'll rue basically all 18 holes yesterday and then the front nine today, like 27 holes where I failed to capitalize on the chances I give myself.

But overall a really positive week. I feel like I've got a lot out of this West Coast Swing, last week at Pebble and then here. Have a week off to work on some things even though I feel like my game's pretty much all there. Looking forward to Bay Hill and THE PLAYERS.

Q. Is there anything you learned about yourself this week, this weekend that you didn't know before about your game? What did Rory McIlroy show himself this week?

RORY McILROY: No, I just stayed as patient as I possibly could. I probably could have let the round get away from me today with -- it was a good up-and-down to save par on 10 to stay even par for the day. I think if I had went over par for the day I could have got frustrated and get it go on the back nine, so just proud of myself with the way I hung in there.

Q. Was it almost cruel to see the one on 18 go in after so many slipped by earlier?

RORY McILROY: No, not really. It probably earned me an extra 400, 500 grand so it's fine.

Q. Rory, do you find it odd at all that like five months ago, and I know it was on the other side of the country, basically all the fans kind of despised you at Bethpage Black and then you play a weekend like this and everyone's trying to drag you to victory almost and not rooting for the American, Jacob Bridgeman?

RORY McILROY: I think it's completely different, right, playing in a team setting and playing against the United States of America compared to -- I tried to take the treatment a little bit



like a compliment as if they saw me as a threat and they were trying to get to me.

No, look, the support that I usually get week in and week out on the PGA TOUR is absolutely amazing and I certainly don't take it for granted. Yeah, today was no different.

Q. What's up with this low bullet driver that you've been doing of late?

RORY McILROY: You know, there's just some tee shots around here where I feel like if I get it in the air, the only thing I can see is trouble. But like I launched it up 17 and then I'll hit it low on 18 because that's what I see and that's what I feel gives me the best chance to put it in the fairway.

Q. Is this something you've been working on?

RORY McILROY: I've worked on it for the last few years.

Q. A TGL hole or --

RORY McILROY: Absolutely not, stinger. No, I've used it for the last few years. I think I started to use it a lot more at Pinehurst in '24, I started to hit the low one there. I've always had it, but I started to hit it more. So when I start to hit it more, I start to become more confident with it and it's become more of a go-to shot rather than like a specialty shot. It's something I'll use a few times a round.

Q. You've been in Jacob's position plenty of times in your career. I'm curious, I imagine closing a tournament like this for the first time's not easy.

RORY McILROY: No, not at all.

Q. How did you see from how he kind of handled the last few holes?

RORY McILROY: I thought he handled everything really well. As I said at the start, because I wasn't putting pressure on him it probably felt to him like he didn't need to do that much, but he played very well. He was even par through -- I was surprised he was even par because I felt he was very much in control of his golf ball. He drove it great, he hit his irons well.

But it's hard, it's hard to close out big tournaments. Even though he was a little shaky coming down the stretch, he held it together when he needed to. He holed a clutch comeback putt on 13 for par, he played smart on 16 when he missed it in the bunker. That putt on the last isn't easy. Leaves it a little bit short and the crowd reacts and you've got to take your time a little bit. I give him all the props, he did what he needed to do and I'm happy for him.

Q. What did you think about your hole-out, your bunker shot on 12?



RORY McILROY: I said to Harry, it saves us from putting so that's one thing. I'm trying to get it within six feet and try to get away with a par. Yeah, it was nice to see it go in.

Q. How about the chance to hit wedge off the green again on 6, what were your options there?

RORY McILROY: It's the only option I had really. I just felt like if I hit a putter, I was sort of having to skirt too much towards the bunker. Yeah, yeah, I shouldn't have hit it there in the first place, which is the moral of the story.

But yeah, it would have been nice to get it up and down off the green twice in the week, but I missed the little putt. It's a fun hole, I think it's a cool design. Some places have tried to replicate it, but they don't come close to what that is. It's very cool.

Q. Some of the putts missed on the front, how much of that is the poa affecting some of them?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it's just more -- once I started to trust my reads a bit on the back nine and I went more with my first instinct, I putted a little bit better. I was reading too much into them, and then I'd see like Jacob's putt from the other side do something, I was like, oh, that looked like it went more left than he thought it would, so I'm sort of factoring that in. I was almost just, yeah, giving them too much thought and not going with my first instinct and that sort of cost me, I feel.

Q. Last year obviously you win Pebble, you win THE PLAYERS leading into the Masters. This year you had a good West Coast Swing, but how would you assess the state of your game right now versus last year and is that something that you even do at all, or how would you kind of look at that?

RORY McILROY: I think it's pretty similar. I mean, if you look at how I played last week, the birdies that I made, yeah, OK, I made a few big numbers but I was able to cut those big numbers out this week. I think I only had three bogeys for the week.

I feel like my game's in really good shape. I'm looking forward to getting on some Bermuda greens over the next couple weeks. But it's feeling good, it's feeling much better than it did in Dubai, which is a big step in the right direction. Just have to keep working.

