

RBC Canadian Open

Thursday, May 30, 2024

Ancaster, Ontario, Canada

Hamilton Golf and Country Club

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

Q. Rory, great finish to your round. Can you talk about the course today and your round.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, so I played the back nine blind. Hadn't seen the back nine. Only played the front nine in the pro-am. So I was sort of happy enough to get out of there in even par and not make a bogey. So, but once I got that nine holes out of the way I knew there were some chances on that front side and played probably much better on that front side. Four birdies there, no bogeys was a good day's work.

Q. It's a start of a busy stretch of golf for you and you stepped a bit back from maybe some of the business, off-course side of golf. How exciting is it going forward to know that you're going to be playing a lot of golf and is it sort of a bit of a mindset change being able to focus not purely, but mainly on the golf course?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I think when all of us are able to focus purely on the golf again that would be welcomed by everyone. But, yeah, I've played a lot of golf this year. I was on a four-week stretch sort of through Augusta and then I had two weeks Quail Hollow and PGA and now I'm on another four-week stretch. So, yeah, I've played a lot, but it's been good. It's been, I've started to play my way into form and I've played well the last few weeks and hopefully I can just keep that going.

Q. The course has obviously changed a lot, but I'm wondering, this first hole here that you birdied today, in 2019 I think you hit it to like 30 yards or something. Is it just one of those holes that looked very inviting to you?

RORY McILROY: I think it's the fact that I can carry that second bunker on left so I can get it up there close to the green. If the pin's on that right side of the green I might lay back because I wouldn't have -- if the pin was on that right side today I wouldn't have had a shot to it. It's very hole location dependent, but today with the pin in the back left I knew even if the drive ran through in the rough I still had a



good angle to try to get it close.

Q. No birdies on the back nine, but when all is said and done how nice is it to look at a clean scorecard?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it's been nice. Thankfully, it's something that I'm starting to do again. The start of the year or at least through like February, March, April, I was making some big numbers and it was, there was a lot of volatility on the scorecard. But to play bogey-free rounds is really nice again.

Q. Getting the putter singing on the back nine there, how satisfying is that? You were kind of vocal at Quail Hollow with the putter.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I felt like I got some good practice on the front side there just trying to save par the whole time, getting a lot of practice on my 6-footers. It was good. I missed a couple, too, I had that 3-putt on the par-5, the 4th hole. Apart from that felt like I putted really, really nice. So, again, hopefully I can keep that going the next few days.

Q. You seem to have a really good interaction with the fans on the 17th there on the side. You had them rolling in the aisles. What was that about?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, yeah, I obviously hit it into the hospitality and some guy yelled out, You need a wrist band to get in here. So that was pretty funny.

Q. You're used to being kind of the center of attention at most of these events. What was it like sharing the stage a bit with Nick and Taylor?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it's great. The Canadian fans came out to support them. As I said, one of the main reasons I love coming back here is because of that atmosphere that's created when we're out there to play, and playing with two Canadians today was, it was exactly what I expected, but for a Thursday morning at 7:40 or whatever we teed off, there was a lot of people out there. It was great to see.

Q. Do you ever almost take for granted the advantage



**you create with your driver or your overall distance
sometimes?**

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I mean, I think when you're the one doing it you don't really take any notice of it. Yeah, I know that it's a weapon and I know that I -- but at the same time I have to use it intelligently. I can't just go and wing driver everywhere, especially on a golf course like this where there's quite a lot of trouble. So pick and choose my spots where I can, but then when I am able to hit good tee shots, yeah, I know that that gives me a big advantage.

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