

Travelers Championship

Thursday, June 22, 2017

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

Q. Thoughts on TPC River Highlands?

RORY McILROY: It's nice. You can give yourself plenty of chances around here if you hit it well off the tee, and yeah, I mean, I alluded to it yesterday in the press conference, it's sort of stress-free golf. I shot 3-under today but it could have been a whole lot better. So I'm looking forward to getting after it again tomorrow and over the weekend.

Q. A couple near misses there, 6 and 7. I don't know how those -- particularly 6, how it didn't go down for you.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, there was a few. I hit some good putts. I think I hit the hole five or six times where the ball -- I hit good putts and it didn't go in. A few of those go in, it's a different story, and all of a sudden you're shooting something in the low 60s and you're feeling really good about yourself. Just have to stay patient and keep trying to hit good putts and hopefully they will drop.

Q. Yesterday you talked about wanting to grow confidence playing on this course. Seeing those putts drop, what did you gain after this first round?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I mean, I felt much better about my game out there than I did at Erin Hills. I feel a lot more comfortable in these surroundings. It's tree-lined and there's a bit of definition and you can sort of visualize what you want to do a little better out there.

I gave myself loads of chances. I could have made a lot more birdies than I did, but 67 is still a decent start and it was nice to just see a few red numbers there and get off to a solid start to the tournament.

Q. 3-under 67, what do you take from today and apply to tomorrow?

RORY McILROY: Just that I gave myself so many chances. I only put myself really out of position a couple of times and both those times I got up-and-down for par. Only bogey I made was a sloppy 3-putt on the 18th. So if I can go out and hit it like I did today, tomorrow, I can see a low one out there for me, which is nice.

Q. Your first competitive round on this course. Anything you take away from it?

RORY McILROY: Not particularly. It's still pretty soft. So you can be aggressive. You can hit a lot of drivers,



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take it at pins. Hopefully it firms up a little bit as the week goes on. It will get a little trickier, and you just have to really focus on some of the slopes on the greens, because they can catch you out at times.

Right now, it's just sort of hit it where you need to and go from there.

Q. How would you describe that round? Relatively easy morning's work?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I felt that way. I sort of come off the golf course a little disappointed with 67 because I gave myself so many chances. Yeah, I feel like I could have been at least three or four better. I think I hit five or six putts out there that hit the hole and didn't go in. Just about staying patient. But I know the game's there. Feeling good. My tee-to-green game is right where it needs to be. Just a matter of converting the chances I'm giving myself.

Q. On Friday, you said it wasn't the putter; it was the guy holding it. Is that still true?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I made a decision this week I would give it one more week and see how it performed. It's nothing to do with the putter. It's mostly what I'm doing with it. Worked a little bit on -- worked a little bit on Tuesday on my putting, and just tried to figure a few things out. Had a phone call with Phil Kenyon, on Monday, as well, just to figure out where we go from here.

I think if I keep working on stuff and working on the right things and believing in it, hopefully it will turn around sooner rather than later.

Q. What did you think about the course?

RORY McILROY: Course is good. Course is in great shape. Still a little soft from that storm on Monday night.

Q. What were you working on --

RORY McILROY: Working on green reading a little bit. My green reading was off as Erin Hills because the surfaces last week were perfect, so you had no excuse. So a little bit of that.

My right forearm gets a little high at address. So just trying to keep that sort of nice and tucked in. So trying to keep my right hand a little stronger on the club and

sort of have my palms facing each other a little bit. And just trying to be really strict with my posture and getting into good position before I stroke it.

Q. Putting the driver back in your hands at Erin Hills -- do you appreciate when you have to come back to a course like this that dials it back, do you appreciate that?

RORY McILROY: I do. I love traditional, old-style golf courses 6789 I feel like it's a mini-Akron or a Akron/Quail Hollow hybrid where it gives you different options. Obviously you can hit driver everywhere here if you want to but then the longer you hit it, the angles become so much more difficult and having to cut corners and stuff.

I love designs like this. If I had to play a golf course every day for the rest of my life, it would be something like this, tree-lined, traditional. That's my wheelhouse.

Q. How were the crowds?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, they were awesome. Fans out here are great. We're teeing off at 7:50 or whatever this morning and we had a great following. The local community really come out and support this tournament. It's great to see and it's a great atmosphere to play in.