

Travelers Championship

Sunday, June 25, 2017

Rory McIlroy

Quick Quotes

Q. Rory, really good round today, didn't finish like you wanted to. What was the difference today from the previous three rounds?

RORY McILROY: I think scoring conditions were a little easier out there today. Not as much wind. You know, and I've been hitting the ball pretty well all four days. I actually, I held a couple putts today. I still don't feel like I held out many, but it added up to a good score at the end of the day.

But I struck the ball really well. I think the 18th green was the only green I missed out there, so I gave myself plenty of chances.

Q. This is your third putter change for the week. Is this the one that's going to stay in the bag maybe?

RORY McILROY: We'll see. I'm not so sure. Yeah, just, I couldn't have done any worse than what I've done in the first three days. So I just wanted to mix it up and go back to something that looked a little more familiar. That style of head or that head shape I've had the most success with. So I went back to that today to see if I could conjure up any good feelings and it felt pretty good.

Q. Friday afternoon you said you hoped you made the cut so you could get a couple more extra rounds in there to assess your game. So after these last two days, what is the status of the game?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I mean, from what I've seen the last couple days it's good. I mean, tee to green-wise, I'm right where I need to be. Driving the ball as well as I ever have, and hitting my irons pretty good. Yeah, just sharpen up the short game. When I miss greens, getting it up-and-down, and take advantage of the opportunities I'm giving myself. If I do that, I know I can shoot scores like I did today.

Q. Well, Rory, what a terrific round of golf today. Back with an old, very much familiar face, that putter style that you used this morning?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I went for the last two rounds I started to use a line on the ball, and with that putter and the little line on the top of it, it just felt like I could match it up a little bit better than what I had the previous few days. And it sort of worked. I mean, I felt like I putted pretty well. I took advantage of the opportunities I gave myself. I missed a couple coming



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in that I thought I should have made as well, but overall it was an improvement on the first three days.

Q. Absolutely, and really a clinic from tee to green. I mean, you only missed, I think, one fairway, just one green. It was really just tremendous. How do you feel that this is going to take you going forward really towards the tournaments in Europe, the British Open?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I mean, I feel I'm right there with my ball striking. As you see right there, I missed one fairway, missed one green, which was at the last hole. Yeah, I mean, everything's right there where it needs to be. I'm driving the ball as good as I ever have. My iron play is good. I feel like there's room for improvement there. My wedge play is pretty good. Everything's right where it needs to be.

If I could sharpen up the short game a little bit and just convert a few more chances I'm giving myself, I feel like I'll be right there for the next few weeks.

Q. Ball striking, putting or both today?

RORY McILROY: Mostly ball striking, a little putting. But I gave myself so many chances out there. I took a few of them today, which was nice. When I get in here, I'll check what the strokes game was, and I'm sure it still wasn't as good as I'd hope plus point 1, so I was average putting day to day, which is obviously an improvement on the last three days. But still room for improvement in that part of the game, but at least today headed in the right direction.

Q. Give you that confidence heading for the rest of the season, a strong finish like you had last year?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, for sure. I feel like the season's only started for me with all my injury. It's just been so stop/start. So to get into a good round of events, I've got a week coming up, and then three big ones for me back over in Europe, and then back over here for a lot of big ones. Obviously got a World Golf Championship, two majors and FedExCup Playoffs to think about. So a lot of important stuff still coming up. I feel my game's in good shape to try and contend again.

Q. Is it one of those chicken and the egg kind of things that once your ball striking is better your putting gets better because of it?

RORY McILROY: A little bit. I gave myself a lot of looks today. Yeah, I mean, even strokes gained out there on the putting green was plus point one. It was nothing. It was basically average for the field. So if I can strike the ball like this and putt average, this is sort of what I can do. I've done it in the past, but, yeah. There is room for improvement basically all across the board. I feel like I'm driving the ball as good as I ever have, but iron play can get a little better. Short game can definitely get a little better, and obviously, putting, which is a combination of taking my opportunities when I put myself in a good position for birdie, and then being able to get it up-and-down to keep the momentum of the rounds going, which hasn't really -- I haven't been able to do that over the past couple of weeks.

But it's getting there. It was nice to finish with a round like this. But I've got a little bit of work to do coming up, if I want to contend over the next few weeks.

Q. Third putter in three days, obviously you putted better today. So is this something you can stick with now or are you still experimenting?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, we'll see. It was a familiar head shape. It's a head shape I've done well with in the past, and I started using the line on the ball over the past couple days to try to just help with my alignment and be a little bit more committed to the lines that I'm choosing. So with this putter today, I had a line right on the top which matched up very well with the line on the ball.

It felt pretty good today. I must say I felt a little more comfortable today on the greens than I did the previous three days. So might be one that stays in for a few weeks.

Q. Can you talk about the whole experience for you here this week? Was it one where you think, yeah, I could see myself coming back here?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I'd definitely come back again. This is one of the best courses on TOUR. It's a par 70. It's fun. You can make a lot of birdies. But if you put yourself in the wrong spot you can make bogeys pretty quickly as well. The crowd out there today, I teed off before 9:00 a.m. on a Sunday morning, and they were really good. It was a pleasure to be here this week. It was great to play in front of such great crowd. I'll definitely be back.

Q. To follow that, a lot of people watched you live for the first time this week. What is the impression you try to leave with them, not only with your golf game, but what was your approach and your demeanor?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I mean, at least I showed up for

one day this week and showed them what I'm capable of. But, yeah, I mean, like any week I've tried to engage with them somewhat. I've tried to be good to the kids. I think that's a good thing.

There are a lot of kids that came out here to watch and tried to not just set a good example for them, but make them enjoy it and give them memories that they're going to have. I remember going to the world Match Play I went with every year and getting balls from Padraig Harrington, Sam Torrance, Darren Clarke, Mark O'Meara, Colin Montgomerie, and that left a mark with me too.

So every time I'd use ten balls a round and every time I needed to change one up I'd give it to a kid. Just stuff like that leaves good memories with them.

Q. Thanks for joining us. Closing round of 64, your best of the week despite the bogey at the last. Get straight to one or two of the highlights. Ask you about the putter first of all. You've got a new one on display for the second time this week?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I have. Yeah, so that looks pretty good there. I'm using the line on the ball, so you can see the line tracking pretty well there. So, yeah, it's sort of a familiar, familiar head shape to me. Yeah, I mean, I've just tried to change it up. The Spider didn't work too well. I felt like it was really good in practice, and the numbers were good with it when I got to the SAM Putt Lab, but when I got on the course it didn't feel quite as comfortable as it did in practice.

So started using the line yesterday on the ball to at least commit to the lines I'm choosing, and it felt like I putted a little better yesterday without anything going in, and then today I made a few more birdies, held some more putts like that which was nice to see.

Q. All the greens in regulation until the 18th hole, and the tee shot at 15 and the short par-4 which you drove it on. How well do you feel you're swinging?

RORY McILROY: I'm swinging really good. It's in balance. I'm getting no a good position at the top, and then from there I can just rotate as hard as I want. I always feel like I'm swinging it well when I can hit it as hard as I want and I know the ball's not going to go left, and that's what it feels like right now. Keep the feelings up with the long game and just try to get a little bit better with the short game and I should be right there.

Q. Course playing conditions today and the way it's been set up, can we expect low scores like this from the leaders?

RORY McILROY: I think so. There are a few tricky pin positions out there, but with no breeze. If you put your

ball on the fairway here, there are plenty of opportunities. I mean, I totally expect Jordan to go out there and at least get to 15- or 16-under par. It's sort of out there. It is out there. You've got the two par-5s, you've got the two short par-4s. I'd say I wouldn't be surprised if someone went a little lower than that today.

Q. You're off to Europe, a week off and then three weeks of mixed golf with the Irish Open, Scottish Open, and the Open Championship. How excited are you with the way you're swinging the club. When you get back can you make a putt adjustment?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, sure, I'm excited. I'm excited to just play golf and get on a run of events. It's nice to be injury-free and I don't feel like I have niggles or aches and pains. I can play a very full schedule going forward from here till the rest of the year. So I'm excited for that.

Obviously next event, the Irish Open is a big one for me. Obviously defending champion and all that we are involved with with the tournament. I'm excited for that. My game feels in good shape, and like I said, if I can hole a few more putts, I should be right there.