

**ROUND 3 INTERVIEW**  
**February 27, 2021**



**RORY McILROY (-11)**

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**RORY McILROY:** I made a couple birdies in a row like I did on 7 and 8. Like I missed the green on 9. Getting that ball up and down was huge because it just keeps that little bit of momentum that you have going. And then you go to 10, you roll a good putt for birdie. I gave one back at 11, but then I was able to bounce back with a birdie and an eagle.

So I've just been sort of shooting myself in the foot a little bit with some of the mistakes I've been making, but then sort of over the last 12 holes there I started to -- if I made a couple of birdies, I make a good par and then I make another birdie. So just keeping the momentum in the right way.

**Q. Do you feel like momentum can carry over to tomorrow?**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, I think so. I'm playing a little better. Still doesn't feel great, but it's okay. I'm hitting the ball in the fairway. You can make this golf course as easy or as hard on yourself as you want to be. If you want to take something on and put it into sort of smaller spots to give yourself better looks, you can, or you can lay back if you're more comfortable doing that.

And that's sort of a couple of tee shots on the back nine that's what I did, I just laid back. I knew I was going to have over 200 into 18, but I was happy hitting 3-wood off the tee instead of hitting driver. Just keeping it in play, keeping it in front of you and going from there.

**Q. Final thing, Collin has a pretty sizeable lead right now, looks like he's going to be leading heading into tomorrow. If you want to win this championship, does it alter your strategy at all or do you stick to the same game plan?**

**RORY McILROY:** No, I just have to think about myself and try to just string together another good round of golf. He's five ahead of me. I wouldn't really -- I need to go out and just play another good round of golf and see where that leaves me at the end of the day.

**Q. Rory, you bounced back quite nicely after the double at 2. The last 12 holes you were spectacular. You've got to be really happy.**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, I'm really happy with how I played coming in. Yeah, it was sort of, you know, the first couple of days around here I made plenty of birdies, I just was making too many mistakes. And it seemed like that was going to be the story of the day again after the first few holes, but once I got into the round and got some momentum going, picked up a couple, made a couple good up-and-downs, picked up another couple, sometimes these rounds have a bit of a rhythm to them and I feel like I got into the rhythm of the round those

last few holes, which was nice to feel because I really felt that over the last couple of weeks. Yeah, it was good to see that. The golf shots were better -- well, I hit some good ones and some poor ones today, but overall it was a little better.

**Q. Some people are grumbling about the hole location at 13. You eagled 13. Obviously it didn't bother you.**

**RORY McILROY:** Oh, no, I got lucky. I was aiming at the TV tower and hit a professional pull. I don't know how my ball stayed where it did, but yeah, I took advantage of a bit of good fortune there, my ball staying where it did. Yeah, was able to make 3 there, which was big.

**Q. That was big. And when you look at the scoreboard, it's really not a matter of how many strokes you're back, it's how many people you have to pass.**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah.

**Q. And you don't have to pass too many.**

**RORY McILROY:** Not many at the minute. It's going to be -- I can't really think about winning or trying to, I just have to go out and shoot another good score. Got to keep the big numbers off my card. I've made a couple of doubles over the last couple days, so if I can keep those to a minimum and make as many birdies as I've been making, then I'll hopefully shoot another good one and see where that leaves me.

**Q. Lastly, is the course easier now now that you've played it a bunch?**

**RORY McILROY:** Yeah, you can be a little more aggressive off some tees, a little more sure of your lines. Like I played with Max Homa yesterday and he hit one which I thought was so far right on 9 and it was still in the fairway. Just stuff like that where you sort of see some things, like you can actually take it a bit further right or left here. Yeah, I think the more you play somewhere, it just gets a touch easier.