

ROUND 4 INTERVIEW
October 17, 2021



RORY McILROY (-25)

Q. So few people have gotten to 20 wins on the PGA TOUR. You have done that today. What does it mean to you to have gotten to this achievement?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it's quite an achievement. I still need a couple more years on Tour to get that lifetime exemption, but at least I've got the wins. I was asked that question at the start of the week and it is a pretty big carrot. I think to get to 20 wins out here is a big achievement. Yeah, I mean, I didn't know if it was going to be this week, but I knew if I just kept my head down and kept playing well and doing the right things, eventually I'd get there. Yeah, I've been close to starting my season with a win before, I think I finished second or third like eight times, so to get a win, yeah, it's great. It feels really good, some validation of what I've done the last few weeks and just keep moving forward.

Q. A few weeks ago we saw a very emotional Rory McIlroy. How much did the events of that Ryder Cup light the fire and allow what happened today to happen?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, it was huge, it really was. I was really disappointed with how I played. I get more emotional thinking about that than even thinking about this. Yeah, there was a lot of reflection the last couple weeks and this is what I need to do. I just need to play golf, I need to simplify it, I need to just be me. I think for the last few months I was maybe trying to be someone else to try to get better and I sort of realized that being me is enough and being me, I can do things like this.

Q. Twenty PGA TOUR career wins, can you believe it?

RORY McILROY: I can, I guess I can believe it. I mean, if you would have asked me 10 years ago when I was starting my journey on Tour, or 12 years ago, I guess, 20 wins seems like a long way away.

Yeah, you know, I feel like a couple weeks ago at the Ryder Cup it was a big week for me in a lot of ways and I feel like I learnt a bit about myself, and there was a bit of reflection done over the last couple weeks. I felt like I started to work on the right things on my game. I didn't think that it would translate into a win this quickly, but I'm thankful that it did.

Q. I remember seeing you for the first time at Dove Mountain in Tucson at the did Dell Technologies, a little bit heavier, bushy hair and Geoff Ogilvy told me, "Watch this guy, he's going to be very special."

Let's talk about today's round. Best I've seen you putt since 2018 in the Arnold Palmer Invitational presented by Mastercard. You led the tournament then as you did today in

Strokes Gained: Putting.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I've putted great all week. I've loved these greens. Once I get on bent greens and you don't have to read much more into it just than the slope, there's no grain or anything, it sort of simplifies it for you. Yeah, putted great this week, that was sort of the bedrock of the game. I did other things well, but I really putted great, exemplified by the putt on 14 for eagle that sort of separated me from the pack today. I was able to just sort of cruise in from there.

Q. Let's talk about that technically a chip with your putter from off the green on the par-5 14th hole. You dominated par 5 scoring, you finished 15 under par on 16 par 5s and I think if you needed to birdie that last hole, you would have done it. But talk me through, you chose to use putter from just off the green for your third shot at the par-5 14th hole.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I never really saw it as a chip, I saw it as a putt. There wasn't much break in it actually. The only thing I needed to do was get the speed right and just try and judge what it was going to do coming through that first little bit of fairway. And it came out really nice. It grabbed the hole, or the hole grabbed the ball maybe is a better way of putting it. It might have rolled three or four feet past, but it was a good, positive putt. I had left a couple short before that, so it was a nice one to give a good roll. That was the big point in the tournament.

Q. And this will get lost, but you were 16 of 18 scrambling this week.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, again, I talked about just with Kira down there with the Golf Channel, just trying to simplify everything. That's what I've tried to do. I've tried to simplify, yeah, just about everything in my game; short game, everything. I made a huge up-and-down on 10 today, that was big. A little bit fortunate where the ball landed, but saves like that, it's just a par but it's more than that because it keeps your momentum going. I get on the 11th tee, hit a great shot in there, then I birdie 12 and probably both of those holes were because of that par save on 10.

Q. And it's hard for me to quantify this, but it seemed to me your focus was really good, you're able to slip in and out of that concentration bubble, able to talk with your caddie, Harry, as you walked up to the ball. Then you were able to refocus, hit the shot and then relax again. I thought that was really key. Was that accurate?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, pretty much. I feel like I made one mental error today, which was on the fifth hole. I tried to hit driver off that tee after making a bogey on the fourth hole beforehand. Then I just said to myself going up that fairway I need to be more disciplined. So the word of the day after that was "discipline" and I got myself in the right frame of mind after that.