

ROUND 3 QUICK QUOTES
February 17, 2024

RORY McILROY (-4)



Q. Rory, how would you assess how it's gone the first three rounds?

RORY McILROY: I feel like it's been a pretty good tournament apart from two holes on Thursday, going double-triple on 15, 16 on Thursday wasn't ideal.

Honestly, apart from that, it's been pretty good. Sort of liked how I've played, liked how I've hit the ball. A couple loose shots here and there, but overall I've been pretty encouraged with how I played.

Q. Were you surprised by anything at Pebble Beach or just how -- I guess Pebble, it's --

RORY McILROY: Pebble was a bit of a writeoff. Again, like it was a very strange round on that first day going from 6 under to 1 under really quickly. And then yeah, it was just sort of, I don't know, I wouldn't say -- not that I wasn't giving it my all, but it was just sort of one of those weeks where, yeah, it just didn't feel -- I don't know, I probably didn't -- I wasn't fully in it, I guess.

I did some good work last week, my coach Michael Bannon came over and I felt pretty good about everything this week even though obviously not quite in contention. Game's feeling pretty good.

Q. The big number thing, you mentioned it in Dubai, you had a big number (inaudible,) if I could just get that out of there I'd be in good shape and you crept back up in the third round here.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, I guess those big numbers were with like bad tee shots or bad -- you know, I felt that the two numbers I made on Thursday were more around the greens sort of getting caught out with lies in the rough or in the bunker on 16 getting like a really awkward stance. I missed approach shots to get to that point, but still felt like I was sort of caught out by some awkward lies around the green more than anything else.

Q. Have you ever had happen to you what happened to Jordan yesterday?

RORY McILROY: No, no, I haven't.

Q. Never signed an incorrect scorecard? Have you ever been late for a tee time or anything like that?



RORY McILROY: No. I've been close, I've been close, but never been late for a tee time, never been -- taken the wrong drop two weeks ago.

I think as professional golfers, I mean, it's sort of, you know, it's the one -- it's the one thing, and I understand with Jordan, he was hot coming off the golf course, it's easily done. But yeah, just unfortunate for him and unfortunate for the tournament that he's not around.

Q. There's obviously a healthy debate on social media whether the punishment fits the crime of signing an incorrect scorecard. Where do you fall on that?

RORY McILROY: I can see both sides of it. You know, if we're really trying to keep this game like unbifurcated and trying to -- you know, the pros play by the same rules as the amateurs, then we all need to keep our playing partners' scorecards and we're responsible for that.

But I also see the other side of the coin where there's thousands of people watching us, every shot's tracked on Shot Tracker and on the PGA TOUR app, so if it -- is it really needed at this point.

So I can see both sides of it, both sides of the argument. I probably am more of a traditionalist than anything else so I fall into the camp of it's worked for so long, I don't think you really need to change it.

Q. As someone who was very involved in kind of building out these Signature Events for the Tour, I was wondering, you got a glimpse of kind of the smaller field. Obviously there's still a cut, but wondering if you felt like if we kind of got a look of what the future of the Tour might look like this week.

RORY McILROY: Yeah, maybe. I mean, this is -- I don't know how long these Signature Events are going to run for, if it's going to be a year and then they're going to look at them again and see what worked and what didn't work.

Yeah, I think for these really big events and the ones that carry a lot of meaning and history -- Riviera, Memorial, Bay Hill, those sort of events -- yeah, I think this week's worked pretty well. It would be great to have a couple extra guys still playing over the weekend, but overall I think it's worked pretty well so far.

Q. You've talked about golf needing to be a global game. Some other guys have brought it up. Have you given much thought to what that might look like?

RORY McILROY: Yes and no. I think it's all pie in the sky stuff, it's all very -- you know, I think there has to be a component of the southern hemisphere, Australia, South Africa. There obviously has to be a component of the far east, whether that be Korea, Japan, China. Obviously the Middle East as well. We've been going to the Middle East for a long time, but obviously Dubai, Saudi, and then sort of working our way from east to west and



back into the United States for the sort of spring, summertime.

I don't think it will look too dissimilar to what it is right now, but maybe the front end of the year and the back end of the year might look a little different. I still think there's -- I don't think we need to blow everything up, but there definitely needs to be some tweaks, I think.

Q. They couldn't be full field events?

RORY McILROY: No, I think if you're looking for a global, I think you would have tournaments that look a little bit more like this.

Q. Rory, would those events in theory possibly fit -- count on the PGA TOUR and the DP World Tour as well?

RORY McILROY: I would think it would be one tour. I think you would just create a tour for the top 80 players in the world.

Q. So does that mean that then you would not play the other tours?

RORY McILROY: Yeah, then I think everything sort of feeds up into that one. You know, the way I look at it, it would be like Champions League in European football. It sort of sits above the rest of the leagues and then all those leagues sort of feed up into that and the best of the best play against each other in the Champions League is the way I would think about it.

Q. You've been doing it your whole career, but do you think there's an appetite among youngish Americans to do that as well?

RORY McILROY: I think there's more of an appetite than there used to be. I think about Max and J.T. going down to South Africa at the end of last year and playing and Max winning down there. I think there's more of an appetite for the young Americans to travel nowadays maybe compared to the sort of '90s and 2000s.

You have to make it work for everyone, but I think for the most part it has to work for fans and sponsors and media. Then, if you can have it work for them and you create a product that's really good for the fan, then honestly I think you just have to convince the players to buy into it because that's what's going to be best for them, especially if you're going to be an owner of that tour.

Q. Rory, in two minutes you just laid out a pretty simplistic idea. Has it gone farther than that do you think within the important sectors of the game?

RORY McILROY: I think so, but again, I said this at the back end of last year, everyone's got their own interests in this game and that's what happens when you've got quite a fractured landscape at this point. So trying to align everyone's interests and trying to



convince everyone that this is the right thing to do for the game of golf as a whole, and if you can convince everyone of that, then it would be pretty simple. But right now it's just trying to get everyone singing off the same hymn sheet.

Q. If that tour existed, for you personally, how many tournaments in the U.S. could you see yourself playing?

RORY McILROY: I think -- say if you do -- say you do a 24-event schedule, four of those being the major championships, so there's 20. I'd say at least half of those, if not more. I mean, 10 or 12.

You still have to -- this is the biggest market in golf in the world, so you have to take that into account. But there's no reason why for other parts of the year that we can't go further afield and play in some of those big markets. I think it would be beneficial not just for those markets and those fans, but also for the tour as a whole and media partners and sponsors and everyone else.

