



Winning figure: Model Nadia Forde

# As Nadia goofs about, Caroline winds up Rory

## Golfer's ex tweets HER win as he claims Open

By Eamon Donoghue

RORY McIlroy claimed his first Open title yesterday, but he did it without benefit of any Forde focus, as his rumoured love interest Nadia was off living her own fairytale in Disney World.

The Co. Down golfing star secured his third Major championship at Hoylake, outside Liverpool with a commanding pillar-to-post victory – on the same day his former fiancée Caroline Wozniacki also won a title in Turkey.

However she waited until over two hours to tell her good news to her Twitter followers – delivering a celebratory tweet as McIlroy teed off on the 18th, with him almost certain to claim a title of his own.

If McIlroy was missing her, or Ms Forde, he didn't show it, but he did acknowledge the tough time he had endured since his public break-up from Wozniacki in May.

Speaking afterwards, he said: 'It's a big moment. I feel like I've come a long way in the past 18 months, a lot's happened to me, on and off the golf course. Just my determination and hard work has now really paid off.'

He added: 'It feels incredible. It wasn't easy – there were a few guys making runs at me and I just needed to stay focused. To win three legs of the Grand Slam at 25 is a pretty big achievement.'

As the goodwill messages came flooding in both during and after yesterday's final round, Wozniacki was a notable absentee, preferring to dwell on her own victory in the final of the Istanbul Cup her first title of the year. She tweeted: Woohoo!! Title number 22!! So excited! #istanbul.

Ms Forde – understood to be holidaying in Florida after a near-death car crash last week – was also keeping quiet on Twitter.

McIlroy did, however, have one happy woman cheering him on though as his mother greeted him off the back of the 18th hole.

'It means an awful lot,' he explained.

'This is the first major championship my mum's been at when I've won and to be able to see her



Win: McIlroy yesterday

on the back of the 18th was - it was really nice to be able to share a moment like this with them.'

Meanwhile President Higgins gave his personal congratulations to McIlroy who only last month declared his intentions to compete for Ireland at the 2016 Olympics.

President Higgins said that he 'would like to congratulate Rory

McIlroy on his outstanding success in the Open today. All of us on this island have enjoyed watching this remarkable young sportsman perform to the highest level at this premier event.'

'His success today will encourage young men and women all around the island to participate in sport and realize that success at the highest level is possible in virtually every sport.'

McIlroy led second-placed Rickie Fowler by six shots going into yesterday's final round, one of only nine players in the past 50 years to have led by six or more going into the final day of a Major championship, and he didn't disappoint the bookmakers.

Another Irishman to have

enjoyed a successful Open was Shane Lowry who finished ninth overall. Graeme McDowell joined him in ninth, with Darren Clarke back in 26th.

Outside of love troubles, McIlroy has also been involved in a bitter dispute with his former management company, Horizon Sports, who he is suing in the Commercial Court in Dublin. He claims the company gave preferential treatment to his friend McDowell.

Speaking in the run-up to the Open, McDowell admitted the court battle had hurt their friendship. 'It's been a strain on our relationship, no doubt about it. We're not the same as we used to be,' McDowell said.

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### MINE IS BETTER THAN YOURS



Caroline Wozniacki @CaroWozniacki · 2h  
Woohoo!! Title number 22!! So excited! #istanbul pic.twitter.com/mrP05Ly4AU

**@StormUechtriz (TV producer)**

And he does it!!!!!! Woohooooo Well done @McIlroyRory HUGE congratulations #Legend #TheOpen2014

**@David\_Cameron (British PM)**

Huge congratulations to Rory McIlroy on winning the Open.

**@ShaneFilan (Singer)**

That was great to watch !!! Congrats to @McIlroyRory . #RoryMcIlroyOpenChampion #3majors

**@GemmaMGHussey (ex-minister)**

Thank goodness for light relief and young Rory winning the British Open – wonderful drama of a benevolent kind for a change.

**@BrianMcFadden (singer)**

Congrats @McIlroyRory delighted for you!!!!

**@Graeme\_McDowell (golfer)**

Happy with my week. Round one was a killer but it was tough to argue with @mcilroyrory. 3/4 of the Grand Slam complete. #congrats #special

## €63k for his father thanks to 1994 bet

RORY McIlroy's father Gerry won €50,000 (€63,000) from a bookmaker last night – ten years after he and a friend placed a bet on his son winning The Open.

When Rory was 15, Mr McIlroy and his pal placed a €200 bet that Rory would win the tournament before he was 26. Bookmaker Ladbrokes will now have to pay them €50,000 each after offering odds of 500-1 a decade ago. It

was their last chance to win the bet because Rory's 26th birthday is on May 5 next year – before the 2015 Open. He was coached by his father at their local club in Hollywood, near Belfast. By the age of two the sporting prodigy was already said to be able to hit the ball 40 yards.

His father worked 100 hours a week and his mother Rosie did night shifts at a factory so they could save

enough money to send Rory to US competitions as a junior.

But their hard work paid off when he won his first major championship, the US Open, by a record margin in 2011.

When Rory had chalked up that title, his father spoke about the bet.

He said: 'That was all the bookies would let us put on, €100 apiece. But that bet is looking better and better.'



Prodigy: Young Rory on the course with his father Gerry