

# RORY

From Page B1

Augusta National clubhouse where he will find a size 38 green jacket waiting for him the rest of his life, a seat at the table Tuesday night at the Masters Club dinner. This was 11 years in the making. What a feeling.

The chest heaving as McIlroy dropped his head on the 18th green after winning was sheer relief. “The joy came pretty soon after that,” he said, and that much was evident by the look on his face when Scottie Scheffler helped him slip those arms into a green jacket.

“What are we all going to talk about next year?” McIlroy said, first in Butler Cabin and later to start his news conference. That’s the freedom he feels.

How about next month? The career Grand Slam is in the books. It’s not too soon to consider a calendar version of the Grand Slam. The

rest of the majors this year certainly line up in his favor.

The PGA Championship is next month at Quail Hollow, where McIlroy is a four-time winner.

He was among the players who went along with a fantasy question last summer. If the leading player in the FedEx Cup could choose where to hold the Tour Championship, where would it go? McIlroy picked Quail Hollow without hesitation.

The U.S. Open is at Oakmont, a big course for big hitters. That would suit him as well as anyone, though his last time there he shot 77 in an opening round held over two days because of rain and was gone by the weekend.

The British Open returns to Royal Portrush on his home soil of Northern Ireland, where McIlroy has a score to settle. The last time at Portrush, his own hopes and expectations were so high he hit his opening tee shot out-of-bounds, made an 8 and wound up missing the cut.

He returns with more freedom than pressure.

All that is a long way off, but it’s an example how the conversation about McIlroy has turned. It’s no longer what he was lacking but what else he can gain.

Scheffler, who was with him in Butler Cabin and during the trophy presentation, offered this observation Tuesday: “I don’t have the understanding of what it’s like to be asked about the career Grand Slam, but I have a small understanding of what it’s like to be asked, ‘Hey, you accomplished this, but you haven’t accomplished that.’ It can be very taxing on people sometimes.”

Brad Faxon, a close friend who works with McIlroy on his putting, said there was nothing stopping McIlroy now and that he could double his number of majors. “He can go on to win 10,” Faxon said.

Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus once said a young Tiger Woods had the fundamentals to win 10 green



AP PHOTO

Rory McIlroy reacts after winning in a playoff against Justin Rose to close the final round of the Masters on Sunday.

jackets, as many as both of them combined. Woods got halfway there.

McIlroy was still 18 holes away from winning his first major in the 2011 U.S. Open at Congressional when Padraig Harrington declared,

“If you’re going to talk about someone challenging Jack’s record, there’s your man.”

Nicklaus has the gold standard in golf with 18 majors. McIlroy now has five, the same as Brooks Koepka, 10 fewer than Woods.

# STONE

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Kadin Shore reached on an error to lead off the inning and moved up to second on the error. Eli Lynd dropped a bunt to move Shore to third but a bad throw squirted past the third baseman to allow Shore to score and grab a 3-2 lead for the Rams.

It came on the backside of a two-run fourth by the Rams after plating the tying run with two outs on a double steal that Russell was one step away from getting the runner at the plate.

“With their two runs in the fourth, if we just take the out, we leave the inning with a lead,” Russell coach Tim Rice said. “But we tried to make a play and were a little late. When you give good teams extra outs, they will make you pay and Raceland took advantage of our mistakes tonight.”

Russell took an early 1-0 lead in the first after Jared Whitt laced a two-out RBI double to right to give the Devils the early momentum. They added another in the fourth after a leadoff walk from Shore came around to score on a pair of two-out errors by the Rams to give Russell a 2-0 edge.

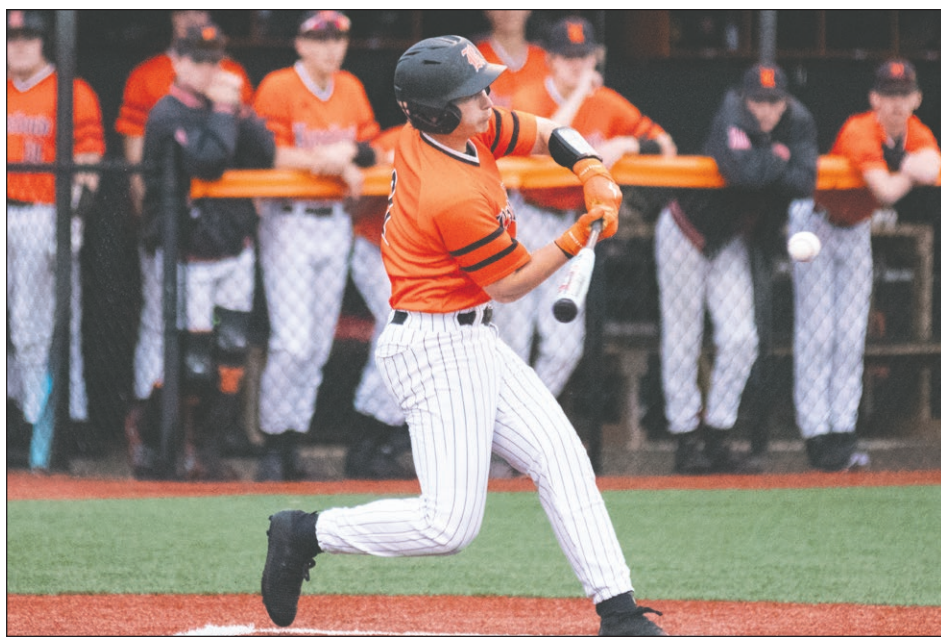
“The start was big,” Rice said. “Scratching another to go up two with (Kyle) Moka on the mound felt like momentum was on our side.”

Shore exited the game after four innings, allowing only one hit and one earned run, but he walked four, which resulted in both runners scoring during his time on the bump.

“Kadin only had his changeup going tonight and he couldn’t get the other two things going,” Mill said. “That’s pitching.”

Raceland turned to Bryer Parsons in relief and the senior stymied Russell at the plate before turning the ball over to Parker Ison with two outs in the seventh. Parsons worked 2 2-3 innings while giving up only one hit.

“Bryer came in and he’s been solid and is solid,” Mills said. “Bryer had a really good last year and he’s having a great year this year. He came in and was exactly what we needed. He pounded the zone and kept them off balance. It was exactly what we needed and our defense really got behind him.”



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Raceland’s Parker Ison swings at a pitch against Russell on Monday.

Raceland (10-4, 1-0) missed golden opportunities in each of the

first two innings. The Rams stranded runners at second and third in

the first and had a flare toward the six-hole end in an inning-ending

double play after short-stop Elijah Hankins made a diving catch.

“We had some early opportunities that we didn’t cash in on,” Mills said. “They made some really nice plays early on. Hankins makes a diving catch—we are off and running—it’s just one of those things, it’s a baseball thing. We had opportunities really there in the first to scratch a couple, but it just didn’t go our way in the first three innings. After that, I felt like we squared up a few more balls, hit them a little hard on the ground instead of popping them up in the air. Then we split the infield a few times.”

Russell (10-5, 0-1)

## FROM MONDAY

grinded in the seventh to get one back but left the tying runs aboard. However, Rice liked the way his team battled to the end.

“The battle in the seventh is the MO of this team,” Rice said. “We are never out of any game. We battled with two outs and just came up short. We know we didn’t play our best game and had a chance to beat a really good team. That gives us confidence going into Tuesday night’s game.”

RUSSELL 100 100 1 — 3 3 4  
RACELAND 000 212 X — 5 5 4  
Moka, Lother (6) and Whitt; Shore, Parsons (5), Ison (7) and Lynd. W—Parsons. L—Moka. SV—Ison. 2B—Whitt (Ru).

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