Life

Rory McIlroy: The Masters Wait' is rather forgettable



Rory McIlroy at The Royal Melbourne Golf Club. He was golfing at the Crown Australian Open.
PHOTO COURTESY OF @RORYMCILROY ON INSTAGRAM

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Released on March 30, the Prime documentary "Rory McIlroy: The Masters Wait" details the titular McIlroy grappling with the most monumental Sunday of his golfing career: the final round of the 2025 Masters Tournament in Augusta, Ga.

A professional golfer out of Northern Ireland, McIlroy became the top-ranked amateur golfer in 2007 and started playing professionally the next year. He won his first major championship in 2011 at the U.S. Open and won more major titles at the PGA and Open Championship in the following years.

The documentary — produced in association with McIlroy's production studio, Firethorn Productions — covers McIlroy's historic win at the 2025 Masters, interspersed with previous moments of heartbreak, along with talking head segments from McIlroy, his family, coaches and more.

This title win also carried historic significance for McIlroy, as it didn't just break McIlroy's 10-year major drought but was also the final feather in McIlroy's cap for golf's modern career grand slam. By winning the final of the four major golf tournaments, a feat that only five other men have attained, McIlroy cemented his name in history.

While its focus is on the final round of the Masters, the documentary is more so a look back on McIlroy's whole career, focusing on his humble beginnings in the Holywood Golf Club, his success as an amateur in Northern Ireland and his time on top of the golfing world in the early 2010s.

The documentary crew managed to get interviews from McIlroy's parents, Rosie and Gerry. Their interviews were a bright spot among the people interviewed. It tore at the viewer's heartstrings when listening to the hard work his parents put in to support McIlroy's burgeoning golf career, and on how emotional both were when they watched their son finally conquer his "white whale," as McIlroy called it.

Unfortunately, the other interviews don't really match up and are rather forgettable. McIlroy's responses in his talking head segments seem rather sanitized and didn't really dig deep. He goes through the same platitudes professional athletes use when they are in a rough patch, and while they may be valid reasons for why McIlroy struggled to win a major title for 10 years, I feel like I've heard this spiel already.

For a viewer who may not be an avid sports psychology nut — or a big reader of sports biographies — the observations McIlroy or sports psychologist Bob Rotella make look groundbreaking, and they are unique to the sport of golf.

A "white whale" is a fitting metaphor to describe the relationship between McIlroy and the Masters. The documentary went through the many instances McIlroy fell short at the Masters, from his 2011 run where he squandered a four-stroke lead, to finishing runners up in the 2022 edition and the numerous counts of missed putts or shanked drives in the intervening years.

All this information adds to the mythos of the Augusta course; it also adds to the "arc" McIlroy goes through in this documentary, as each previous blunder can be seen as a steppingstone towards his ultimate triumph.

To add a bit of grandeur to the occasion, documentary director Drea Cooper, McIlroy and some cameras set out to Augusta, Ga., to recreate some of McIlroy's famous shots during the 2025 Masters. The added Dutch angles, blurry faces and cinematic composition of these shots make for a welcome addition and certainly gives this documentary a pull to hook audiences in.

I don't know if there was bad weather on the day of filming, or if it was a deliberate choice in editing, but any positives brought on by this added touch of gravitas is negated by the dark blue color grading on all these shots. This choice makes for an ugly shot reminiscent of the fluorescent lighting in a hospital. Thematically, it may resemble McIlroy's headspace during the final round and how much doubt and fear had crept into his mind; aesthetically, it's hard on the eyes.

A glaring problem with this documentary is the release date; it's barely been a year since McIlroy won the Masters back in April 2025, yet he and Prime rushed out a documentary to bask in its glory again. They bought out early instead of letting the distance between McIlroy and his Masters win marinate, in contrast to the story told in the documentary where 15 years of heartbreak culminated in the ultimate victory.

Some of the best sports documentaries have been told long after the fact, as they can factor in additional context in the aftermath and nostalgia for those who do or don't remember. Even in an age where stories live and die on the same day, McIlroy's Masters win is still fresh in people's minds. Why do we need to revisit it so soon?

Rating:
1.5/5

CLIPART COURTESY OF CREATIVE COMMONS

Combining creativity and science

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Science and creativity often seem like completely separate worlds, but it doesn't have to be that way.

On Wednesday, the Cognitive Science Colloquium hosted Matt Daniels. Daniels wears many hats: journalist, engineer, visual creator and anything in between. His award-winning work transforms datasets into visual media beyond the typical charts and tables.

"I'm turning [data] into a more creative cultural context that anyone can access," Daniels said.

His goal was to inspire others — especially scientists and other technically-minded people — to take on as many hats as possible, too. Daniels wanted to encourage everyone in the primarily-scientist audience to take on a creative practice. He believed those from technical backgrounds have some of the most interesting creative content to offer.

Daniels showed the audience many of his projects, both completed and in progress. The first project he introduced was centered around one question: "What if you could search every visible word on New York City's streets?"

His other projects, many of which were also centered around a question, covered a range of topics and formats, from maps of happy moments and record heat temperatures to a video on the loneliness epidemic.

Daniels spoke on how many technically trained people often feel as though there is no room for creativity in their lives.

"As students go through school, they think they've made this decision," Daniels said. "If you're going to school to be an engineer or an academic... you might box yourself in."

But being trained in a technical field doesn't actually stop you from pursuing creative expression and can actually add an unusual perspective to creative works.

He discussed the benefits of adding creativity into one's life, such as learning new skills and new topics outside of school or work.

Daniels also emphasized that creative pursuits did not have to amount to a wildly successful product. You could make something for yourself or for a friend.

Daniels then outlined a method for individuals looking to actually go through with finishing a project. There were three main stages: the ideas stage, the exploration stage and the production stage. Most of Daniels' ideas come from questions.

"Asking a good question is often a really good place to start with creative projects," Daniels said. He mentioned some questions that had turned into projects for him, like "Is the love song dying?"

He then moved onto the exploration stage, when he discussed scoping, or figuring out the depth of the project and what needs to happen for the project to come to life. He recommended creating a rough concept of the project during this stage.

In the production stage, Daniels emphasized the importance of maintaining stamina on a project. If a project is taking too long to complete, he advised, end the project or downgrade it to a less in-depth product.

Daniels also encouraged audience members to find a creative community to connect with.

"Your ideas need oxygen," he said. "Talking about ideas with others and getting feedback helps understand how other people may connect with your ideas and keep them alive."

Rue Amaya, a sixth-semester psychology major, said they appreciated Daniels providing a structured process for completing a creative project.

"A lot of the times [when] I do things creatively...I get overwhelmed," Amaya said. "I have to ask myself all these different questions about how this gift is going to come to life." They found Daniels' structure helpful and inspirational.

Alyssa Bahadur, an eighth-semester student majoring in molecular and cell biology, said she appreciated the lack of pressure and self-driven nature of the creativity Daniels had described.

"I liked how you can take this into your own hands and make it a hobby," she said. "It can be as simple as making a gift for someone."

You can find more of Daniels' work on his website, or on The Pudding.

If you are interested in attending Cognitive Science Colloquia, you can view other events on the UConn Department of Cognitive Science website.



Matt Daniels gives a talk in McHugh Hall on April 1, 2026. Daniels talked about combining art and sciences in his talk.
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