

April 17, 2026

*"Golf is a game that is played on a five-and-a-half-inch course — the distance between your ears." — Bobby Jones*

Most sporting events are entertainment. A handful are something more.

The Super Bowl. The World Series. The Stanley Cup Finals. These are the ones that stop the world for a few hours.

But there is a smaller, more exclusive list — places you put on a bucket list not just to watch a sport, but to be inside a moment. Wimbledon. The Kentucky Derby. The Monaco Grand Prix. And perhaps most revered of all, the Masters Tournament in Augusta, Georgia.

This year — the 90th playing — the Masters did not disappoint. But it did not start out that way.

By Friday afternoon, it felt all but decided. Rory McIlroy had opened with rounds of 67 and 65. He stood at -12 — six shots clear of the field. The largest 36-hole lead in Masters history.

Hard to imagine him walking into that clubhouse on Friday evening without at least a slight confident smirk.

But... Saturday had other plans. McIlroy was the only player in the top 10 to go over par — shooting a 73 — and by sundown that lead had evaporated entirely. He and Cameron Young stood tied for first. Two-time Masters champion Scottie Scheffler posted a brilliant 65 and was four back, playing the best golf of anyone in the field.

The stage was set for the final round.

McIlroy and Young teed off Sunday tied at 11 under. Burns one back. Scheffler lurking.

McIlroy started off shaky. A double bogey on four. He fell behind. Three different players held the lead — Young, then Rose, then McIlroy — within the same hour.

Three shots behind. On Sunday. On the back nine. At Augusta.

And then — Amen Corner. The stretch of three holes, eleven, twelve, and thirteen, so treacherous they were named for the prayers you'll need just to survive them. By the time you walk off thirteen, you've either kept your round alive or you haven't.

Eleven — par. Steady. Then twelve, Golden Bell. The most terrifying shot in major championship golf. A thin strip of green. Rae's Creek in front. A wind that swirls and deceives and has swallowed more Masters dreams than any other hole on the course.

McIlroy nailed it. His ball came to rest seven feet from the cup, which he drained for birdie. Another birdie on thirteen.

Then came 18. Leading by two. One hole to make history.

He drove it so far right he was closer to the 10th fairway than the 18th. For a moment, no one knew where the ball was — including Rory. He punched one through the trees, found the bunker, splashed out, and two-putted for bogey.

It was just enough — by one stroke. Second green jacket. Only the fourth player in history to win back-to-back at Augusta, and the first since Tiger Woods did it in 2001 and 2002.

I've never met Rory McIlroy. We didn't speak after the round. I have no idea what was going through his head standing on that fifth tee Sunday — two shots behind, the largest lead in Masters history gone in less than 24 hours.

As I a golfer, I know what these moments feel like.

Every instinct tells you to press. To force something. To abandon the process and try to get it all back at once. That urge is not weakness — it is human wiring. The same fight-or-flight response that kept our ancestors alive floods our system with adrenaline and cortisol the moment we sense things slipping away.

The instinct is to do something — anything — different. Get conservative. Get aggressive. Just move.

McIlroy did not press. He played the same game, the same way, with the same swing he has trusted for twenty years.

Consistency is not exciting. But it is what walks off eighteen with the green jacket.

As always, let me know if you would like to discuss the Masters, market cycles, or anything else on your mind.

My Very Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'JG', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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