

# Arnold Palmer Invitational

Thursday, March 2, 2023

Bay Hill, Florida, USA

Bay Hill Club and Lodge

## Jon Rahm

### Quick Quotes

**Q. How important was that par save on 14 to keep the back nine clean?**

JON RAHM: 14 or 15?

**Q. 15.**

JON RAHM: Yeah, because I saved par on both of 'em. That one on 15 was huge. I made my worst swing of the day and ended up having 30 feet for par. So to make that having a birdie hole coming up is always a big deal. I accepted making a bogey. I put it in a bad position off the tee and I accepted that a 5 was not a bad score. So sometimes you make 'em like that.

**Q. You've had a super fast start, faster finish and then in between it was shaky at times and you held it together. With that -- and you get an up and down on 11 maybe that was real good. What's the key to doing that and how have you learned, evolved during the over time to be that patient?**

JON RAHM: I took advantage of the good swings. I put myself in a really good spot on 1 off the tee. Took advantage with a wedge in my hand.

I can say the two shots on 2 and 17, to have a combined six feet in those two holes, it just doesn't happen. I hit two really good shots and landed in a very precise spot. Collin landed his maybe 10 feet more on the green than mine on 2 and he was over the green. We're playing with some really small margins today and took advantage of those.

It's not like it was shaky in between. I felt like I played a pretty good round of golf, it's just not easy. Those fairways are getting firm and they're not easy to hit. When you miss the fairway you're going to be chopping it out of the rough and hoping for dear life.

But even in between I did have a lot of good looks for birdie. I played really good golf today and I took advantage of the three or four missed opportunities, missed fairways and greens really, really well. Except on 8, which, well, it is



what it is. But even if I didn't make many birdies in between it was a good round of golf.

**Q. I was complimenting your patience more than anything.**

JON RAHM: You just come out here and you know. You have to take it very much in stages. Obviously you have to put it in the fairway. Once you put it in the fairway, what hole are you on? Is it a number you can be aggressive with, a shot you can be aggressive with or not. That's what I think I did really well. Even when I was in the fairway I picked my battles. I didn't go for it on 6 and 2. I gave myself a wedge shot. It's just -- I'm trying to think of another one. I was maybe a little bit more passive than I could have been on 11. Just because of what could be if you get too aggressive on those holes. So it's just how it is out here. You pick your battles and hope you can birdie the ones that you pick.

**Q. You said it's not easy, but obviously you've been making it look easy here pretty much all year. Is it easier though than it was for you last year, say, maybe when you struggled a little bit more or is it still just as difficult?**

JON RAHM: I think the only difference between some of my rounds last year and this one was just putting. I don't think in four days I made a single putt out here. And I made my fair share today. I've been putting a lot better this year. But from good putting to bad putting is the smallest difference imaginable. Especially on these greens. These greens can get difficult very quick.

**Q. How comfortable are you at this golf course?**

JON RAHM: As comfortable as one can be at times. Some holes were very, very comfortable. Others are obviously very nerve wracking at times. As comfortable as one can be.

**Q. Which was better for you the first three holes or the last three holes?**

JON RAHM: I mean, I can't believe I'm saying this, but if



I'm going to be as picky as possible, I struck it and hit better quality shots on the first three, but that's just being nitpicky. I heeled my 3-wood on 18. I slightly over faded my 5-iron on 16. And then that's about it. That's all I can say. If we're being picky, they're both obviously extremely equal. If I go by difficulty of holes, I think obviously the last three holes you take it.

**Q. Five wins your last nine worldwide starts, all top-10 finishes. You were asked this week if you are clicking on all cylinders can anybody beat you. And you said no. So the question is, right now, do you feel like you're clicking on all cylinders?**

JON RAHM: No.

**Q. What needs to improve?**

JON RAHM: Gosh, go through the round and you'll see plenty of mistakes. I just took advantage of, let's say, of minimizing mistakes and converted a couple situations into really good scores. But it can always be better. But it's the first day. Ask me that on Sunday if I keep playing like this and I'll probably change my answer.

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