

# Honda Classic

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Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, USA  
PGA National Resort

## Joaquin Niemann

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We would like to welcome Joaquin Niemann to the interview room here at the Honda Classic. Joaquin, thanks for joining us. Joaquin's coming off a victory wire-to-wire at last week's Genesis Invitational. Up to number 7 in the FedExCup standings. How nice has it been reflecting on that win from two days ago.

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, it's been awesome. It's been my best last two days has been really excited, a lot of celebrations with my friends, with the family. Yeah, we got to get back to this week and get started again this week.

THE MODERATOR: Making your fourth start here, do you feel like this is a golf course that sets up for you to continue the strong run of success?

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, this is one of, it's a really tough course, I think it's we start the year in really difficult courses like Torrey Pines, Riviera, this one this week, Honda. I always enjoy playing here because I can stay in my own bed, I have a lot of friends out here, so they will be watching me, following me, so it's one of those weeks that I really enjoy playing and, yeah, it's fun also because I have all my friends here.

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please?

**Q. How did you celebrate, and your support group that was on the 18th there at Genesis, were they part of it?**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, some of them they were part of it. Everybody saw on the videos that Sergio, Johnny, Carlos, Sebastian, Mito, they were all there waiting for me on 18. And we were lucky enough to fly almost all together back here to Palm Beach and have a good celebration on the plane and, yeah, also we kept going a little bit when we arrived. But other than that, we recharge our batteries, try to sleep a little bit later today so I can get back to that rhythm and get back to workouts and practicing and get ready for this week.

**Q. I saw you said you had at one point this year earlier, end of last year, you had to reset, refresh. Why**

**did you need to do that and what did you do to reset and refresh?**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, I think for all the Latinos that obviously we don't, we are not from America, but we live here. I think it's different not being in your home country, not having all the, it's not the same culture, obviously, you don't have the same friends that you used to have in Chile. So it's nice to go back every once in a while and try to spend time with them, try to do different things that I used to do when I was living there when I was 16, 17, and try to have a little bit of more of those moments outside the golf course where I can recharge some batteries with my friends, going to the beach, being with my family, just do different stuff other than golf.

Because during the year we play so much that all I think about in my head is golf, golf, how I did get better, how when you're playing bad, how tough it is. And then going back there it doesn't matter how bad or good you're playing, you just don't care and you're having a great time.

**Q. Without giving up your address how far, how long does it take you to get here?**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Depends on the car. (Laughing) No, it took like probably like less than 10 minutes.

**Q. Have you given any thought -- if memory serves you missed the Masters last year because of COVID.**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah.

**Q. You're going back. Have you given any thought about going back to the Masters?**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, so I missed the Masters, the one that it was in November. So I was able to play the one last year in April. And, yeah, I mean I think that I didn't miss much of the Masters, like it's not the same Masters in November with no crowds and having it in April is totally different. So I think that it would have hurt a lot more if I missed the one in April.

**Q. While you were winning at Riviera there was**



**obviously a lot of drama in the golf world about everything that was happening with the Saudi Golf League. I know not every player is quite eager to comment on this, but I did want to get your perspective if you felt like sharing.**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, I mean, obviously me as a professional golfer I would like to be on top of the World Ranking and I'll be playing whatever the best players are. So I think that I don't know where they're going and I think there is nothing better than winning a PGA TOUR tournament, so I think, yeah, that's where I like it and where I would like to be.

**Q. Speaking of winning a PGA TOUR tournament, you win your first and then it's a two and a half year gap until your second and now you have two wins you're going to be on that short list, players 25 or younger with multiple wins on the PGA TOUR. We in the media start projecting what you can do over the course of a career. What do you think you're capable of? What's next?**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, after the first win it took awhile to get, I was really close in three second places, two playoffs, and to finally get it done after those three second places it feels amazing and obviously winning at Riviera of how big that tournament is, all the players that were playing that year, it made me prove a lot of things and knowing that I winning there I think you can win anywhere.

So I think that's going to be a good boost of more confidence for what is coming and, yeah, I mean, if I keep playing the way I played that week I know I could be on the top.

**Q. You moved here three or four years ago joined membership at Dye Preserve and I think you're also a member at Medalist. Just what brought you here and how much do you think it's helped your game improve being able to live down here and be a member at places like Dye and the Medalist?**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, I always like Florida. I always wanted to be here. And, yeah, it was an easy decision when I turned pro, I wanted to come here in Palm Beach because I know the best courses are around here. Especially where I practice, and knowing that I'm going to have the best facilities during the whole year as the same as we play on PGA TOUR tournaments, I know it will prepare me better.

Because where I grew up in Chile we don't have the same surface, the same grass, same maintenance, so it's not the same. And you get used to good grass, tight lies into the

grain, Bermuda, I think it help a lot my game in these last four years.

**Q. (No Microphone.)**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, I like going out here and play, there's a lot of members where I practice, a lot of professionals where I practice that we play some games together, I also like to bring my friends from Chile and bring them to play with me. So, yeah, I think we get also a big group of Chilean players here in Palm Beach where we play a lot together.

**Q. I know you talked a little bit about it on Sunday, but how did it feel getting that hardware from Tiger and do you talk to Tiger much or run into him much out here?**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, it was so loud when we were walking down the stairs that I asked him a few things, but, yeah, there was too much going on with all the crowd going crazy with Tiger, it was the first time to see Tiger since his accident.

And, yeah, it was something amazing to be there at that same time with Tiger receiving the trophy. Tiger's been my idol since I start playing golf. So, yeah, it was an honor to be there with him and we hopefully have him on the golf course soon.

**Q. What's your earliest memory of Tiger?**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: What I always remember is with my coach when I was probably 13, 14, we always go practice and then we would go back to his house and he would show us videos of Tiger at the Masters of 2000 and he would show us the whole round of him how he hit the shots, how he was playing and, yeah, we always, I probably watched that video like 20 times (laughing).

**Q. You've got some experience around here, the Bear Trap is always getting the attention, but on the front side holes 5 through 7 are pretty difficult too. What makes them just as difficult if not more than the Bear Trap?**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: No. 5 and 6 I think is one of the hardest holes around. We got the Bear Trap, there is a lot of water, it's scary, but I think the whole round is just hard when it blows winds here you can get in really tricky places around the green, all the greens are very high.

So it's like No. 4, you go over the green you are dead.

Same on number 11.



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So then you got to be really good on around the green, try to practice a lot of those shots into the grain, maybe hit something -- I like hitting my 7-wood around the greens also a lot so I might use it this week, so we got to go and check it out now.

**Q. Is there something specific about 5 through 7?**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, 5, obviously, that par-3, when they, yeah, you're hitting 5-iron with a small green, we got a lot of water, you don't want to hit it left, obviously.

Then number of is I think the hardest par-4 we play. Normally it blows into the wind I think off the left and, yeah, you want to hit a good driver there because you're hitting 5-iron to the green and you're on the bunker it's hard to get it to the green, it's hard to hit the fairway. So I think that's, you play good that stretch you can have a good round.

**Q. This is obviously one of the tougher courses on TOUR, a lot of guys even that live here don't like playing it. What do you, why do you like playing it and what do you like about the challenge that you get on this course?**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: I always like playing challenging courses. I like tournaments when you won with not good scores. We used to play a lot of courses that they win with 20, 20 something under par and I really like those type of courses, kind of like majors tournament, that they sometimes win with one digit under par.

So I like playing those type of courses. I think it reflects and it pays a lot to guys that hit it good off the tee and good irons. So I think it could fit good my game, hopefully have a good week and why not go back-to-back? (Laughing).

**Q. Understanding and respecting your decision not to want to talk about the Saudi situation, but I'm just curious from an overall standpoint how much is everybody talking about it, is that something you're hearing on the range, the putting green, just how prevalent is that conversation going on last week and this week?**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, I mean, every professional golfer that is out here is thinking about his future and nobody really knows or knew much about it, so everybody was considering what was going to happen, were the best players going to leave, were they going to stay. So there was a lot of things going on.

But I think that, yeah, I mean it was, it was a lot of talks

going on, so, I mean, my head was all over the place also, knowing that if they were going to leave or they were going to stay. So, yeah, it was.

**Q. One little off the beaten path, but two-part question. First part is, growing up in Chile did you know about the Presidents Cup and was it something that you thought about or looked forward to and now that you've played in one do you ever catch yourself looking forward to the one happening at the end of this year, is that something that's ever in your mind?**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, after almost winning the year before it was the best experience of my life being with the best players from International Team, having Ernie as a captain was something amazing. Yeah, I always, when I was a kid, I would watch it, obviously I saw Camilo there, because he was Columbian, he was a Latin player, and I was looking forward to seeing Camilo on TV playing good.

And, yeah, I always watched the International Team, I always, obviously they never did as well as everybody wanted to be and I know I think having the last Presidents Cup being that close of winning it gives us a lot of momentum to the team, we all get really united together, especially with Ernie and having Trevor this year, that he was also in Australia.

So I think Trevor is doing a great job and we were talking after I won he sent me a nice text, so I think that we're going to have a great team for this year.

**Q. Your first win was by six at Greenbrier. You had a six-shot lead in the final round, wire-to-wire at Riviera, end up winning by two. Do you think you're developing a reputation as a guy who once he has the lead that you have the firepower to extend it and run away from fields?**

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, I remember, I mean it was a little bit more tough this week, I felt that there were so many holes that they were hard on the back nine.

And that chip in on number 11, that gave me a bigger gap between the second place.

And, but, yeah, it always, I mean, everybody wants to have a big lead, try to don't feel that much stress of being one in front or maybe two. When I was, yeah, when I was up there on I was two in front, three in front and all I was thinking about it was not trying to hold that lead, just try to get more advantage and try to still be aggressive when I can and, yeah, I mean, I was always trying to think about getting more advantage, but it was hard at the time and having 13, 14, 15, that is a hard stretch on at Riviera and I

didn't play as well as I wanted to play those holes, but it was nice to have that big advantage there.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you. We appreciate the time. Best of luck this week.

JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Thank you, guys.

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