

# BMW PGA Championship

Wednesday, 13 September, 2023

Virginia Water, Surrey, England

Wentworth Golf Club

## Jon Rahm

### Press Conference

MATTHEW JOULE: Delighted to be joined by reigning Masters Champion, Jon Rahm here in the media center here at the BMW PGA Championship.

Great season so far and you come to a venue where you've had some great performances in the past. How much are you looking forward to this week?

JON RAHM: This week is always one I look forward to. Yeah I've played good in the past, had two second places and had a chance to win in 2019 I believe and last year had a chance and almost made it a reality. Looking forward to it. Great golf course, great week, a lot of fun. It's definitely a week that deserves a lot more credit.

**Q. A lot of talk of Rome and The Ryder Cup. Is it nice to have this size of event to focus the mind?**

JON RAHM: Well, it's about as good of prep as you can get, right. It's a world-class stage. It's definitely a good week to perform well. Doesn't really mean anything towards The Ryder Cup. Playing good here doesn't mean you're going to perform well there.

But if you're working on some things, it's definitely the right type of pressure to put it to the test. Great golf course, especially with the size of the rough and how firm the greens are, it's going to be much tougher than in the past. So looking forward to it.

**Q. How much have you seen of Marco Simone before this week, if you can talk about that golf course, and Rory was in here suggesting that everybody is pretty much on an equal footing, all 12 of you guys with the hierarchy, if you can talk about that with regards to The Ryder Cup?**

JON RAHM: So when it comes to the golf course, I've only played once when we played 18 holes, that's it. I would say there's a couple of us that don't have nearly as much experience as most of the team, most of them that have competed there in a tournament. Very, very comfortable with the team.



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And I agree with what Rory said. You have players that have more experience, but there's no exactly, there's no hierarchy. On that team, we're all the same. It's all for one and one for all. That's kind of how it is. We are all there to accomplish the same goal. We are all part of the same team, and yeah, there's no -- what you've done before and what you might do after that week, doesn't matter at all.

**Q. Shane and Rory have commented about the rough being very penal. Can you talk a little about that? How did you encounter the rough?**

JON RAHM: I don't think I can add much more to what they have said. It's penal. It's difficult. You have to put the ball in the fairway. It's not the longest golf course, right, so it's going to make you think a little bit if they keep it that way, yeah.

**Q. Were balls lost on Monday?**

JON RAHM: You wouldn't lose it in the main rough. It's what you can call the native area. It's still pretty close to the fairway where there's more chance to find it and if you find it, I don't see any of us having a chance to get it out.

I mean, it's not that difficult to what France and Le Golf National could present. It's that narrow and it's that challenging.

**Q. How do you see your role in this Ryder Cup Team?**

JON RAHM: The same as every other Ryder Cup. Trying to get as many points as I can, and hopefully get the win. Like I said, we are all equal. I can just talk to the rookies if they need any advice and give them how I handled my first Ryder Cup and experiences, but we have so many people that can have -- when you have a captain like Luke who has been very successful in Ryder Cups, a vice captain like Chema who has more experiences and stories than most of us combined, I think there's very little I can say to make a big impact.

Just be a good teammate. That's all I can do. Try to make him be as comfortable as possible.

**Q. There's a general feeling that the balance in terms**

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**of winning this Ryder Cup has changed slightly in the last few months to favour Europe, and why has it happened, do you think?**

JON RAHM: I guess there's been quite a bit of success from members of Team Europe the last few months, so I think that's contributed to that. Who is favourite and who is not really doesn't matter. As players, we can't get caught up in that. I really can't tell you if it's right or wrong. As it comes to us, it's almost inconsequential, really. It only means that to the public's eye, European Team has been playing good golf, which obviously is a good thing.

**Q. Is there a feeling on one side --**

JON RAHM: It doesn't matter. I don't think you should be going to a match thinking you're a favourite and you get a little bit too confident, and you also don't want to be going in thinking you're a massive underdog, and you don't have a chance. We have an extremely talented team and all of us are plenty talented enough to win our matches.

Who is favourite or who is not really doesn't matter.

**Q. Why does your game suit this course so much and vice versa? And Rory leading Race to Dubai, how keen are you to catch up?**

JON RAHM: Oh, you're asking too far in advance already. Well, hopefully I can get a win here and get a little closer. Obviously I would like to win The Race to Dubai again.

When it comes to the golf course, we always hear that, like how does my game or your game or one's game suit a golf course. I think that's the wrong way of looking at it. As a player, it's my job to adjust to the golf course.

So it's how good a job can I do myself to play my best golf here. I've done a good job in the past. It obviously favours ball-striking, especially we play this where it's a little bit firmer, right. You have to attack the greens from the fairway, and obviously the farther you hit it, the better chance you're going to have as well. I've done a good job of adapting myself. Maybe last year I did a good job on last ten holes and hopefully I can start playing good golf on the first hole this week.

It's just an enjoyable course. I think it's a good design, it's a tough test and you have to go out there and play good golf.

**Q. How high does that round of 62 rank, considering there was a bogey?**

JON RAHM: Yeah, it was unfortunate, that second putt, I

hit it where I wanted -- I misread it. It's about as good a stretch of ten holes I've ever had in my life.

The final round in Maui this past year because I won, also having a bogey, because I ended up with the win, might have a bit more importance to me because I won the event.

But the way I finished when I needed to birdieing 16, 17 and eagling 18 was something I was really proud of and something that started the good run I went on afterwards. It's really high up there. It's always difficult to rank them but I would say it has to be in the top five.

**Q. Ludvig has got a lot of attention, a lot of praise over the last week. I just wonder, do you think there's any risk in him being built up too much and people expecting too much from him so soon?**

JON RAHM: When you're creating that kind of reaction, it's a good thing, because clearly people see the potential you have. He just turned professional and he's played good enough to capture the attention of the best players in the world and the media and played good when he had to to win.

Coming from behind and making four birdies in a row and taking the lead to win the tournament is not easy. So clearly he's showing it. He's got great potential. The only thing that matters is what's going on in his head, really, right, and a lot of times as players, I feel like we put a lot more pressure on ourselves than the media can put on us.

I wouldn't quite know how to answer the question but he definitely has the talent to back it up.

**Q. The vice captains -- with the division we've just seen in golf, seems that we are past the worst of it. Going forward, would you like to see some of those old guys, the great players, representing Europe, Sergio I'm thinking of, back in the fold as a vice captain? Would that be something that you would welcome? Is Sergio someone that you would lean on ordinarily as a Spaniard with the cultural connection?**

JON RAHM: I think it would be really stupid of anybody not to lean on Sergio García's experience in The Ryder Cup. I mean, he is the best player Europe has ever had, won the most points and has shown it time and time again.

If he were able to be a vice captain, I absolutely would lean on him. Same as we are going to lean on Ollie this coming Ryder Cup, right.

When it comes to the game and all those players being



able to be back, it's been a difficult time. Obviously things have changed a little bit. I wouldn't know how to answer because we are going to have to see if it's possible or not, right.

I would like to see it but unfortunately we've seen some of those players give up their European Tour status where that's no longer a possibility. So I would like to see it but we don't know what the future holds, right. I think with this agreement or this possible union between the PGA TOUR, DP World and PIP might change things a little bit.

So until then, it's hard to really give you an answer.

**Q. Wondered your thoughts on the European side -- how you compare that to past generations compared to the Americans?**

JON RAHM: I think we can always match up. How many times have we heard the American Team on paper is a lot better and Europe has been able to win, right.

It's match play. Again, it's beating the person you have in front of you that day. So again, what you've done or you might do in the future matters very little. It's nice that Viktor is playing really good golf a little. I've played with him this year and so has Rory. It's great that we have higher ranking on average but not that that should make -- it shouldn't be affecting the way we think about it.

**Q. You're playing with Nicolai --**

JON RAHM: Well, you know more than I do. Oh, this week? Oh, sorry, I thought you meant next week. (Laughter) I thought, you know more than I do. This week, yeah, yeah.

I haven't seen a lot of Nicolai. The little bit I've seen, he's quite an impressive ball-striker. I was very impressed for a 21-year-old how talented he is to play this game. He's been on tour a few years and he has a lot of potential.

Tyrrell, what to say about him; he's accomplished a lot already. He's somebody that can perform in any kind of golf course and any kind of condition and perform at the biggest stages, right.

Every time he's near the lead, he always tends to perform well under pressure, right. Those little moments that he's shown, that chip-in in Turkey in the playoff to keep it going; the final round of the Players, was it this year, that shot he hit on 18 to make birdie and post, I don't know if it was 64, 63, 65 in the hurricane was absolutely impressive, and many more of the amazing wins he's accomplished.

So he's somebody that has the character to make the putt when he needs to putt, right. He did it last time at Whistling Straits, making birdie on 18 when he needed to make it. Yeah, he's obviously somebody with a ton of potential.

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