

DP World Tour Championship

Wednesday, 15 November, 2023

Dubai, UAE

Jumeirah Golf Estates, Earth Course



Jon Rahm

Press Conference

BRIONY CARLYON: I'm delighted to welcome our defending champion, Jon Rahm, back to the media centre here at the DP World Tour Championship.

Jon, you're no stranger to creating some history but a three-time winner here in Dubai, just how nice is it to come back to a golf course that you definitely enjoy playing?

JON RAHM: It's been a date that I always look forward to. I've always had a lot of fun in the city. I've been treated really well, and the golf has always luckily been very great, as well.

So, like I said, it's something I look forward to, and to me it's a great way to end the year. One last competition before we get to the holiday season. Kind of get our mind off golf for a little bit, and it's a favourite way to end, and hopefully I can win it one more time.

Q. Is it disappointing for you this week that the Race to Dubai title is finish? How nice would it be tomorrow knowing that you could still catch someone else?

JON RAHM: I think it's more disappointing for the fans. If I was just within one point, probably it would be a very unlikely scenario -- on the leaderboard, which I don't think has ever happened here.

At the same time, though, it's really my fault. He played great golf. I could have tried to get more points to myself a chance this week. He did what he needed to do. I didn't.

Q. You've done well here. Why have you done so well on this golf course? What suits you about this place?

JON RAHM: I get that question every year. I don't know. I really can't tell you. I really, really don't know.

It's obviously a ball-striker's golf course. You have certain shots off the tee that you can take advantage of and you can be way more aggressive into some of those greens, which some of those pins are not the easiest to attack.

But that's true to pretty much any golf course. The guy

who hits it straight all week has a really good chance. I couldn't really pinpoint one thing why I've had success here. I'm sure the number people can tell you why statistically I'm better, but I think I just happened to play really good on the weeks that I'm here.

Q. You are at the receiving end this year of not winning the championship or the Race to Dubai in the last tournament of the season, but let me ask you, would you rather prefer something like what's given out at the FedExCup, where it is won through the year?

JON RAHM: I'm not a big fan of the FedExCup finals. I've said that many times. It's the only sport when you get to the finals, you give somebody an advantage; I'm not a fan of it, obviously. You don't see -- whoever had a better record in the championship finals are the ones -- inaudible.

I would be a bigger fan of somehow structuring to where if you win the tournament, certain people have a chance like it used to be in the FedExCup, or the top five going to East Lake, if they won. At the same time, if you play as good as Rory has and you've built up a lead, like I said, you've earned it.

Like I said, I had the option to play more tournaments and trying to earn more points. I just didn't.

I think this format is more fair to the better player whoever played better throughout the year. I think the one that they have in the FedExCup right now would be more exciting for the viewers. It all depends what you prefer.

Q. How important with everything that is going on with the world of golf at the moment, how big a statement is it that all of the Top-50 players on The Race to Dubai are here this week? That's a big statement.

JON RAHM: Says a lot about the tournament. Again, it's a fantastic week to come to. It's something that I think we all absolutely enjoy. It's a great city to be at. You know, it's easy to get to Dubai. It's just not quick to get to Dubai. That tells you how much we all enjoy that. It's a great statement. It's great for the DP World Tour to see all of us showing our support in that sense.

Q. If I could follow up, because obviously we've woken

... when all is said, we're done.®



up to the news this morning that Rory McIlroy has resigned from the policy board on the PGA TOUR. Just quite simply, what's your reaction to that? There's obviously a vacancy there now as well.

JON RAHM: Oh, you won't see me there. Absolutely no chance. I've been asked a couple times if I have any interest, and I'm not going to spend, I don't know how many meetings they have, but they are six, seven, hour plus long. I'm not -- I'm not here for that.

As regards to Rory, he's obviously been put in a situation where a lot has been expected of him, and I don't know the exact reason why he left the board. But I certainly wouldn't blame somebody like him to just want to focus a bit more on his game and his family and enjoy the bit of time he's truly earned.

Again, it's a big commitment for somebody to be part of it.

Q. Were you surprised by the news?

JON RAHM: I'm not sure that really matters if I was surprised or not. Did I expect it? Not really. But again, I can understand why somebody would do, especially with everything that's involved.

Q. If you can expand on your reasons for not participating in the TGL?

JON RAHM: I don't know if I can be more clear than the statement I put out. It's just a time commitment I'm not -- I can't really commit to right now, right. It's quite a bit of extra hours of flight, quite a bit of extra time of being away from home. And at the same time of having just redone a lot of my deals, got to think of my sponsors, as well. So it would have been a bit more of a commitment than I expected at first.

Q. Just too much?

JON RAHM: That's basically it. It's just too much for what I think I should be doing.

Q. It's far ahead but next season is going to come soon, and the Olympics in France, I wanted to know how high are the Olympics in your goals are there, and what is the memories that you have?

JON RAHM: Well, golf course-wise, I think it's one of the better golf courses I've played in my career.

The French Open is certainly an extremely difficult tournament to win, and to become a champion there is something special. I was close to being able to do it. I

didn't play my best down the stretch. I'm always going to regret that. The Ryder Cup was absolutely fantastic and I was able to play in the European Masters when I was 14, 15 years old. So I've had quite a bit of experience and always enjoyed it thoroughly, both as an amateur and as a professional. It's a very enjoyable golf course, very, very difficult.

Now, the Olympics, I believe right now that they don't have the magnitude they will have maybe in the future, right. But at the same time, in the world of sports, maybe in golf and tennis becoming a Major Champion might mean more than having a Gold Medal. But maybe because we didn't grow up with that being a possibility. But in the world of sports, very few things can compare to that.

So I think it's something in my career, it would be an honour to maybe contribute to the medal count for my country. I think it's quite special.

Q. Would there be some degree of competitive advantage in Rory committing so much time over to the policy board?

JON RAHM: Hard to say. Hard to say. Being part of the PAC and the chairman, it does require some time -- I don't know. I think it is a significant commitment, so it could have an effect. It's not only the meetings. It's the phone calls and the players wanting to talk to you. So those hours you spent on the golf course are a little bit busier.

So I think it could hinder a little bit, and there's a reason probably why I can't recall any great player being a full-time board member and winning tournaments and majors at the same time, at least in recent history. Maybe there was, maybe back one day on the PGA TOUR.

But I can see how the lack of sleep definitely will limit your ability to compete.

BRIONY CARLYON: Thank you for your time and all the best this week.

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