

# Amgen Irish Open

Thursday, 12 September, 2024

Newcastle, County Down, Northern Ireland

Royal County Down GC

## Luke Donald

### Quick Quotes

#### **Q. You've probably heard by now the news already about Jon Rahm.**

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, I just heard 30 seconds ago. Yeah obviously from my standpoint very happy to hear he made that decision. I know he was sitting on the fence a little bit, and glad that he's done that and being allowing to play and create some time for things in the world of golf to hopefully figure themselves out.

I think we are all being very patient right now. It's 15 months since Yassir and Jay Monahan got together. It's been frustrating I think for a lot of the players to see how slow everything has been going, and I'm sure it's been frustrating for Jon as well.

But I think this hopefully gives some time for hopefully things to happen. I've heard in the last couple weeks there's been a little bit more progress. It's not fun for me to deal with, and it's not fun for anyone to deal with; and I'm glad Jon decided to appeal and he can play his events in which he wants to play and be eligible. I know the Ryder Cup means so much to him, and I'm sure that was a massive factor in his decision.

#### **Q. Where are you surprised he left it to the last minute?**

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, I've been talking to him, and he has his thoughts and he doesn't agree with the fines and paying fines, especially for events that he would never have played on the DP World Tour. But those rules are the rules, and they were certainly in place when he signed with LIV. It wasn't like they changed the fact. You could argue that they softened them a little bit with being able to appeal the process, and that's, from what I understand, gives the players more time for things to work out in the world of golf.

#### **Q. What's more important, the very natural coming together of the European players in the team room possibly being affected by issues of Tyrrell Hatton and Jon Rahm's stance?**

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LUKE DONALD: We create a very good bond in Rome and that's still there. You know, I think -- I don't have any worries. The first issue was to try to get Jon eligible, Tyrrell and some of those guys eligible so I had the chance to pick them on my team. The whole camaraderie and culture, that can be worked on next year.

I'm still talking to the guys within the group individually and I think our culture, we always figure a way to come together and play for more than ourselves. We play for each other.

#### **Q. Can it be kicked so far down the road that nothing may be achieved before the Ryder Cup? Is that a concern?**

LUKE DONALD: I'll take today as a nice little victory for me personally to know that Jon is eligible and can play his three events now.

What happens in the future, I can't tell. What happens in 15 months, I think all of us thought something more would happen.

#### **Q. Have you spoken to Seamus Power much? He's coming back from injury, and he's got a little skin cancer thing and he can't play Wentworth next week but he still has time to be eligible.**

LUKE DONALD: I'm keeping an eye on everyone. I haven't talked to Seamus that much personally but again it's early days. We only just started the qualification process. Spent some time with him before Rome. It was unfortunate with his injury to kick him out he had such a good start to the season from the year before. Hope he can come back and put his name in the hat.

#### **Q. Tom McKibbin, have you paid him much attention?**

LUKE DONALD: Yeah, I played with Tom at The Scottish Open. Heard a lot about him. Obviously won a couple times out here at such an early age and seems like a very good talent and someone to keep my eye on.

#### **Q. How were conditions?**

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LUKE DONALD: It's very fair. It's not easy. Every hole is a crosswind. The greens have a little firmness to them. It's just holding it into winds and then judging the distance and then turning it back into left-to-right winds. You just have to have a lot of control of your golf ball, which I didn't have quite enough of today for 3-over.

But yeah, it's a beautiful golf course and it was playing, if you hit good shots, you could make some birdies. If not, you're going to struggle.

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