

# LIV Golf United Kingdom

Wednesday, 24 July, 2024

Rocester, England, UK

JCB Golf and Country Club

## David Puig

Fireballs GC

## Mito Pereira

Torque GC

## Joaquin Niemann

Torque GC

## Abraham Ancer

Fireballs GC

## Carlos Ortiz

Torque GC

## Jon Rahm

Legion XIII

Quick Quotes

**Q. Maybe each of you could talk about what it means to be an Olympian. Obviously this is your first time to be an Olympian. What does it mean?**

DAVID PUIG: It means the world to me. I think I put a lot of hard work and a lot of miles, a lot of travel to different countries on LIV and Asian Tour, so traveling a lot, working a lot, but it paid off and I'm super proud, and I'm excited to represent Spain next week.

MITO PEREIRA: Yeah, it's an honor to represent your country every time you can. We've been doing it since we were kids, and as a professional sometimes we don't get to represent our countries much, so to do it in the Olympics, it's big for me. The second time that I'm going to play, so I just hope to get a medal for our country.

**Q. What does it mean to be an Olympian?**

ABRAHAM ANCER: It's an honor. We don't get to do this very often, and I feel like every time we have the opportunity, it feels different than any tournament. Trying to contribute with a medal for your country is really special. Carlos and myself got to do it in Tokyo and also in the Pan-American Games, and we take it very serious, and we're looking forward to Paris and hopefully coming back with a medal. That's the dream we have.



BY



JOAQUIN NIEMANN: Yeah, it's super special for me. Me and Mito, we've done it a few times before. We played in Japan and in Chile for the Pan-American Games. We've been close. Mito was pretty close in Japan to getting a medal. Yeah, I think it will be super special to have a chance to be there in Paris. I think it's going to be different than Japan, being more open for spectators.

I'm looking forward to that week and bring hopefully two medals.

CARLOS ORTIZ: Pretty much the same as these guys said. It's an honor representing your country. Honestly, doing it now this time in Paris is going to be great having people watching and everything. Every time you have a chance to represent your country, it's just an honor, and we're always trying to do it the best we can. It's just that extra motivation when you have a country behind you.

**Q. There's only six golfers right now that have Olympic medals. What would it mean to win an Olympic medal in the scheme of things, in a career?**

CARLOS ORTIZ: Yeah, that's the goal. Every time we go to a tournament, it's special to represent your country. You want to bring back a medal, especially for Mexico.

**Q. Jon, what does it mean to be an Olympian?**

JON RAHM: It's a different answer I'd say for a lot of golfers because it's not something we grew up knowing as a possibility. So to be a part of it, I think right now for a lot of people, it may not have the significance it will have in the future. But I think for all of us competing, it's arguably Walker Cup of the most impressive feats in sports, to own a gold medal and earn a gold medal is something that very few people in history can do. To be able to add to your country's medal count is something special.

Yeah, it's basically a dream come true. It's a dream that became a possibility only eight years ago for most of us, so it's quite special.

**Q. Jon, you say it's a new thing for you guys to play in the Olympics. Where would a gold medal rank for you**



**in terms of the success that you've already had?**

JON RAHM: I don't know. It's a hard question to answer because there's been things in my life that I thought were going to have a different impact personally that after accomplishing them luckily I felt more or less than I thought.

If I can end up with the win on Sunday next week, you can ask me the same question and I'll be able to tell you.

**Q. There's obviously some people who aren't at the Olympics. Joost Luiten isn't able to go because the Dutch said he wouldn't have a chance of winning a medal essentially. I wonder what your take was on some of these qualifiers not able to go.**

JON RAHM: Well, I don't really know the qualifying criteria. I know for other sports it's different. We do it based on World Rankings. I don't know. I really don't know. I couldn't tell you. It's unfortunate if he did qualify, for him not to be able to go, yeah, it's unfortunate.

**Q. Can I get your thoughts on Le Golf National and the special memories of beating Tiger Woods in singles? Where does that rank among your achievements in golf?**

JON RAHM: It ranks very high. It was my first ever Ryder Cup point, so it ranks very high. Didn't have my best week, and I got carried by Rosey on the first match and we lost on 18 and Poulter kind of carried me in the second one. We lost to a great Spieth/Justin Thomas duo, and to win my first Ryder Cup point on Sunday against Tiger, it's quite unique. So yeah, it's going to be very high up there.

I would always say it's the biggest overreaction to a four-footer I've ever seen, but it's still what I felt in that moment.

**Q. I remember in the buildup to Rio there was a bit of skepticism about golf being included in the Olympics, but speaking to Justin Rose he was awed and he brought home gold. How do you think golf now sits within the Olympic family?**

JON RAHM: Skepticism? It's one of the biggest sports in the world...

**Q. Well, I think it's because it was professional at the time -- a bit like tennis --**

ABRAHAM ANCER: Michael Phelps isn't a professional? LeBron James isn't a professional? Yeah, it's hard to say. Did Neymar win the gold medal for his country in Brazil?

So I don't really know where that argument comes from. I understand if the Olympics want to have an impactful sport and viewership, you're going to have to have the most impactful players. While I understand the argument for amateur golf, it's supposed to be for amateurs, most of the greats that you remember from the Olympics are not amateurs. They're professionals already. There's very little argument in that regard.

**Q. What does it mean to go out on the course representing Spain?**

ABRAHAM ANCER: I've been able to do it luckily in many stages throughout my career, as an amateur and as a pro. To once more in a different stage be able to do it is so special. I've been very fortunate as well to succeed representing Spain and carrying the Spanish flag, so if me and David can end up with a medal, that would be absolutely incredible.

It's something that very few athletes in the history of Spain can really say they've been able to accomplish. It would be something very special to be able to do it.

**Q. Have you ever spoken to Justin about that Olympic gold and what it means to him?**

ABRAHAM ANCER: I have not, no. Probably should have. I haven't. He won it right when I turned pro and I didn't know Justin yet, so it was two years afterwards in the Ryder Cup when I got to know him. At that point he had won the FedExCup and won majors, so I guess I probably should have asked, and I haven't. It would be the same question for Xander right now. He had a gold medal before he was a major champion. It would be interesting to hear the answer.

**Q. Is Xander the man to beat?**

ABRAHAM ANCER: It's a new week. It's hard to say no. Obviously he's playing great golf. But it's obviously hard to go against a player like Scottie and many other players performing that week. It's a beautiful thing about golf; it's really you against yourself. But yeah, obviously the golf he's playing, he's a strong contender.

**Q. Have you ever seen Henrik's medal?**

ABRAHAM ANCER: No, I've never seen an Olympic medal in person. I've tried because I'm close with Phelps and I've tried and haven't seen it yet.

**Q. David has actually worked really hard to climb the World Rankings. How happy and proud are you to see him in that spot next to you?**



ABRAHAM ANCER: Well, I saw the journey. When I signed up to play LIV Golf, and early on he was telling me how he wanted to earn these rankings points to be in the majors and play the Olympics, and people should track the miles he played and traveled to be able to be part of it and how well he did. Thinking that he was qualified in Houston and then goes to the U.S. Open, being .003 points behind and knowing he needed to make the cut after a tough Thursday, for somebody who really wanted to do it to come in clutch and do it was quite special. I'm really excited to be his partner. I hope he can still prove himself how good he really is and have a good week. It would kick start a good stretch of golf for him by doing great on a stage like that.

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