

LIV Golf Greenbrier

Saturday, 17 August, 2024

White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, USA

The Old White

Legion XIII

Jon Rahm

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Let's welcome Jon Rahm, the captain of Legion XIII, and our solo clubhouse leader. You're currently sitting at 14-under. You shot an incredible 8-under 62 today. Tell us a little bit about your round.

JON RAHM: Great round of golf. Maybe not the fastest start you can get out on this track, but just good swings, good golf in general, and from the 10th hole on, those next 11 holes were pretty special. To play those holes 8-under was some good golf. I didn't really make many mistakes, and it showed.

I feel like one bogey through 36 holes is very organized so far, and just really enjoying myself out there. It's been a lot of fun.

Q. Obviously the individual season championship is heating up. You have an option to really stay in the race and possibly clinch it in Chicago if you win this week. How much is that on your mind as you're playing?

JON RAHM: It wasn't on my mind at all today because for the most part, I was playing catch-up until the last few holes. Just trying to put myself in the best position come tomorrow.

It's something you think about maybe between rounds, right. Now that you mention it, I might think about it a little bit. But I've got to keep in mind that it's a golf course that's very scorable, and somebody will come out and shoot a low one tomorrow. So I need to basically do the exact same thing I've done the last two rounds, play good golf and shoot a low score to give myself a chance of winning. I can't think too much about the future in that sense.

Q. How special would it be your first year out here, the season Legion XIII has had, and if you were able to walk home with that individual championship trophy your first year out here?

JON RAHM: It would be pretty special. It would be pretty



special. I've been playing good all year, and Joaquin has been playing fantastic golf all year. To give him a run for his money is good, but hopefully I can get the job done tomorrow and we have a nice little tight race going into Chicago.

I always say it's a question to ask me after, if I were to accomplish it and win the individual title. It's obviously a goal. I think for every player out here. It was a goal of mine when I came out here. The goal when we tee it up is to win. If you do it well enough times, you'll end up with that.

Q. You're kind of like a racehorse. You're coming up around the bend to finish and you've been playing awesome these last couple events, and you've really settled into your game this season. Do you think that's just getting comfortable with life on LIV, or is it something special about your game that's really clicked for you? What do you think?

JON RAHM: It's a bit of both. There is a before and after Houston when I changed the shaft in my driver. The driver shaft that had been so good to me for 10 plus years was no longer properly fitted for me. I think I'd outgrown it. It was making me manipulate my swing a little bit too much, whereas some good swings I wasn't getting the result I wanted, and it affected throughout the whole bag.

Automatically when I changed to this Ventus Black, it was an automatic change where my game started to feel a lot better and slowly get more and more comfortable swings, and that's why I think you've seen me play a little bit better golf and get it done.

But then when it comes to the mental aspect of things, I think a large part of it was also getting used to LIV Golf and a different schedule. I played a very similar schedule when I started at Sony, so first week of January and played a lot of golf early and almost peaked the first two, three months of the year and then never really played my best golf after that.

The few times that I've won later, being this year and then the COVID year, I was able to win later on in the year because we started later.



I think it's a combination of those things. Different schedule and then a little bit of change in -- well, one shaft change really, which is nothing massive.

Q. Knowing what Bryson did last year with the 58 out here, you shot a 62 today, could have gone a lot lower, do you think a 58 is in the cards? And kind of reflecting on that now playing this course, what do you think?

JON RAHM: Is it possible? Yes, it's possible. But that's some serious golf. That is some serious golf around here. You need the start he had. 7-under through seven, then you can almost let yourself think a little bit.

I wouldn't be expecting somebody to shoot in the 50s every single competitive year we have. It's almost happened the last three, four years, but I wouldn't be expecting it as often as we've had it the last few years. I think we've been very spoiled in that sense.

With that said, I hope that someone is me. If I were to do it tomorrow, it would be very nice, do it in Bryson fashion and get a W with a round in the 50s.

Q. Anything surprise you out here on LIV, anything from a competitive standpoint? You talked about having to adjust a little bit. Anything that you can pinpoint?

JON RAHM: Nothing surprising because having committed to LIV early December, I had two months to ask questions and get ready for it. So I wouldn't say anything was shocking. I think the biggest challenge for me was going to be the schedule change. But that's something you can get used to; it's not a big deal.

I kind of actually enjoy being given the schedule. This is the tournaments, this is where you play and that's it, instead of having to figure out a schedule throughout the year based on tournaments and what I want to play and what courses I know and do not know. So there's an element of freedom when it comes to that that I don't mind.

But I wouldn't say there was anything that was surprising. I think I got my expectations pretty on point with what I needed to -- what I would hope or I thought LIV Golf would be like.

Q. You talked about the shaft change, but it also seemed like after your foot infection, since you've gotten back, you've taken it to another level almost.

JON RAHM: I think I was close to that level right before. Like I say, it was Houston, so the week before, and then

the Tuesday of Houston I think it was, before it really started hurting, was where I could feel the change, and I'm like, wow, it's really going that way, and then I was forced to basically take almost three weeks off out of four to make sure I was healing properly.

I could see the change on my -- it was mainly the shaft, but I could see a lot of the old habits going away and just more the ball flights and the trajectories that I was used to. I was going a little bit more to a more comfortable state on the golf course.

But yeah, it was right around that time.

Q. How much experience have you had here? Did you play here before?

JON RAHM: No, no. Tuesday was the first time I ever stepped foot on the golf course.

Q. What did you think?

JON RAHM: Fantastic golf course. I know we're shooting low scores, but man, if they wanted to, they could make this place very tricky. It's a very fun resort. It's a very fun, beautiful part of the country that I'm not surprised why a lot of people talk so highly of it in the past. It was on the schedule in past years, it just didn't really fit where it was in the schedule. But I'm really glad I'm getting to experience it this year.

Q. You said you hadn't played here before Tuesday. Now that you have a couple competitive rounds, is there a certain characteristic or two that you have to have working to really go low here?

JON RAHM: I think obviously you need to be doing everything well everywhere. I think as far as my game goes, if I can keep hitting it as well as I have off the tee, I'm going to give myself plenty of short irons into those greens to where you can have a little bit more spin control into some of those slopes. The greens are quite soft, so if you're not careful you can hit a shot that lands close to the pin that ends up maybe not in such an ideal spot.

For the longer holes like the par-5s, maybe 13, 8, that distance always helps. I was able to reach both the par-5s today and play them in 3-under. That's always going to help. If I can hit good tee shots and set myself up for aggressive second shots, I think it's a nice key around here.

But again, you need to do everything well. Every part of your game needs to be good anywhere to be able to win a tournament.



Q. You had a great round, but you did have a little mishap on 8. Was that just an unfortunate bounce? Did that come off the way you wanted to? Talk about that for me.

JON RAHM: I mean, it was more a surprise that ball got to pin high. I never thought a mis-hit with a 4-iron would go as far as it did. In this low valley with the mountains, the wind can get a little swirly, so I think I might have gotten a little bit of a wind direction change, but I never thought over-fading a 4-iron like that would ever get to pin high. I almost got away with it because if that ball rolls half an inch more, I would have gone all the way down. Not my intention. Then after that I'm playing defense. Tried to hit as soft a shot as I could from that fringe, did a good job, and just couldn't really stop didn't make the putt.

I think it was just surprising. I was kind of playing on purpose to play to that right side and use the slope, use the Redan. I just didn't think I would ever go long in that scenario.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports