

LIV Golf Press Conference

Tuesday, January 13, 2026

Martin Kaymer

Cleeks GC

Sergio Garcia

Fireballs GC

Jon Rahm

Legion XIII

Bryson DeChambeau

Crushers GC

Dustin Johnson

4Aces GC

Phil Mickelson

HyFlyers GC

Captains' Press Conference



2026

tomorrow.

Jon, let's start with you. Before we look forward to 2026, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on the 2025 season. To put it lightly, last season was a very successful one for you individually, the most consistent player on LIV Golf. You were able to take home the individual championship, and Legion XIII was crowned the team champion, as well.

From a captain's perspective, what was the key to your success?

JON RAHM: To mine individually or the team?

THE MODERATOR: Both, both.

JON RAHM: Well, the team, having a great addition in Tom McKibben. He's a fantastic golfer. Both him and Caleb played really well, especially at the end on the Team Championship, they won both their points and were the two better scorers within the team. So they did fantastic.

Individually -- I want to say about Tyrrell, as well, he's consistently a very, very good player who comes in the clutch, and especially in the Team Championship with winning in a playoff and then with his putt on 18 -- his two putts on 18 and the shot on the second playoff hole, as well.

Individually, yeah, I played fantastic. Obviously good enough to win the individual title. But still, somewhat bittersweet because I wasn't able to close it out individually, the event win individually. Finishing the year losing two playoffs in a row is not the easiest way to go. But still very, very consistent and very, very good golf.

THE MODERATOR: We're looking forward to 2026 and what you and legion are able to accomplish and continue that success on the course.

The LIV Golf off-season is unique in golf. Like other professional leagues, there's player movement. There's trades, relegation, qualification. I want to talk about how some of you approached this period.

Martin, Cleeks added Victor Perez, a three-time DP World

THE MODERATOR: Welcome. Good to see you. Welcome, everybody. Thank you so much for being here. My name is Jason Zone Fisher, host and emcee of LIV Golf. Very excited as we begin the 2026 LIV Golf league season. We've got some familiar faces here, some big announcements, and excited to hear from our captains.

We're going to do this: First we've got six captains assembled here, and immediately following hearing from them, we will then also bring out the next group of captains so we can ask some questions. We'll open to up to media for all of you, as well.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being here at LIV Golf teams week, media week, and we're really excited to get this going.

Without further ado, let's get right into this. First, let me start by introducing our captains here. We have the captain of Cleeks Golf Club, Martin Kaymer; the captain of Fireballs GC, Sergio Garcia; the captain of Legion XIII, Jon Rahm; the captain of Crushers GC, Bryson DeChambeau; the captain of 4Aces GC, Dustin Johnson; and the captain of HyFlyers GC, Phil Mickelson. Good to see all of you gentlemen. Looking great.

Let's dive in. Also, I do want to announce our captain of the Korean Golf Club wasn't able to be with us today, but stay tuned for news on their lineup that will be announced



Tour winner. He's a strong addition to the roster for 2026. Knowing you were going to bring in a new player in the off-season, what was your strategy like for building this team, completing it, finding that fourth member, and why did you settle on Victor?

MARTIN KAYMER: Well, first of all, we are very happy to have Victor. We approached it a little bit different. We worked with a stats team together, so we had a few players from different tours were interested in joining our team, so we worked together with a stats team in order to make a leaderboard, just to have some facts, and then once we figured out who was No. 1, 2 and 3, we went with personalities, characters, do they fit to our team, can they include themselves nicely, and then all of a sudden we got a call from Victor that he was interested in joining our team.

We just added him to our stats, and he came out really well, too, like a few of the other guys. He was definitely in the top 5. We had a few chats with him, and he was really fired up and he was very -- he really wanted this. He wanted a change in his career, and he was looking forward to a new challenge, so we thought it would be great to have another European on the team.

I think in terms of team spirit, he's been here only 48 hours, but it feels like he already is part of the team. He included himself really nicely. I'm really looking forward to 2026.

THE MODERATOR: A lot goes into this. Not only are you looking for incredible golfers on the course but who can really fit in with the team off the court, the chemistry that goes into it.

Sergio, you recently signed a contract extension and you brought back Luis Masaveu. How did you approach this off-season?

SERGIO GARCIA: Yeah, it was great. Nice to be back at home and spend time with the family. That's first and foremost. But then when it comes down to the Fireballs and the league, yeah, obviously a couple of moves there.

I always wanted to -- my dream was always to have the possibility of having an all-Spanish team, if the possibility came around, and to have three youngsters, three potential really good players that are also great kids in my team, and I was able to achieve that this post season, so I'm super, super happy about it.

Obviously Luis was with us last season, and he's got great potential. He's a great kid, and he brings a lot to the team. We had a great run with him, three wins in a row early in the season, so now with David, with Josele and with Luis, I feel like I have a really strong young team that I'm very

excited about. Hopefully we can move around showing and promoting the name of Spain all over the world to the best of our abilities.

THE MODERATOR: We're looking forward to that, and can't wait to be back in Andalucía this June, as well. One of the biggest newsworthy items this off-season was obviously the change to 72-hole events. I think the change is great, the more LIV Golf the better, but I want to know what some of you think about it.

Phil, as a legend of the game who always has interesting insights, from your perspective, how do these changes impact the way that you and the team, HyFlyers, are approaching league competitions, and how do you see it adding to LIV Golf's continued growth?

PHIL MICKELSON: So a lot of teams out here have a lot of firepower, and with 54 holes, steady play isn't rewarded as much. I think over the course of 72 holes with every score counting, steadiness is going to be a factor, and I think that'll help our team.

But the biggest thing is that the players out here, there are young players like David Puig and Josele Ballester and Tom McKibben and Caleb Surratt, these young players that have developed so fast just need a pathway into the majors to show how good they are. If it helps and makes a difference between getting world ranking points, then I'm all for it.

THE MODERATOR: DJ, you've been here from the very beginning of LIV Golf, and you've seen this league continue to grow and evolve. As you look ahead to 2026, what are you most excited about for the 4Aces and the LIV Golf league in itself?

DUSTIN JOHNSON: Yeah, I'm obviously very excited about this year. I just re-signed a few months ago an extension and then we got a new player. Thomas Detry is going to be on the team this year, another Belgian, so excited about that. I think he's a really good player.

I've played with him a few times before over the years, and then obviously got to spend a lot of time with him the last three or four days. Really like the kid. He's a good player, very talented. So looking forward to that.

Then this year, I think we're going to a couple new venues, and that's exciting. Obviously anytime we're going to a new place, especially all the things I'm hearing about South Africa, it's supposed to be amazing. We've got a ton of fans.

So I think that's really exciting, and I think it's great for LIV.

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

THE MODERATOR: We're excited for it, as well. Bryson, you had an incredible season, both as an individual and the Crushers as a team, as well. You finished third in the individual standings and Crushers obviously finishing in second overall, but coming so close as a team, how does that fuel you going into this 2026 season?

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: Yeah, I think it was a tough loss for us at the end there with Legion sneaking past us. We felt like we had a better team there, and ultimately they prevailed.

That's what team golf is all about. I think that's what's so special about LIV is that the team atmosphere, ultimately we go up against each other and kick the you-know-what out of them. But ultimately they got us last year and had a blast doing it.

I want my guys to compete individually a little bit more. I think they can do it. They're good enough. They're certainly wise enough, if that's the right word to use. Certainly wise enough to do so, and they've won on numerous tours.

Looking for them to compete a little bit more and get my game and wedges in shape, but really excited about -- like South Africa is going to be sweet, a new venue, and Korea is going to be sweet. Again, all the places we go back to is a lot of fun.

I certainly enjoy the time here, and very excited for the future this year.

THE MODERATOR: There was obviously some significant news in the golf world yesterday. Bryson, I'm curious if you want to share your thoughts on some of the recent developments.

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: Yeah, I mean, look, I'm contracted through 2026, so I'm excited about this year.

THE MODERATOR: Jon, I would ask the same thing to you, as well.

JON RAHM: Yeah, I'm not planning on going anywhere. Very similar answer to what Bryson gave. I wish Brooks the best. As far as I'm concerned, I'm focused on the league and my team this year, and hopefully we can repeat as champions again.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, gentlemen, for your answers, for being here. I'm going to hand it off now to Will to moderate some questions from the media who's gathered here.

Q. Phil, you responded to the news yesterday with some emojis on social media in response to something from Golf Digest. I wonder if you could respond with some words on your perspective on the PGA TOUR's statement and the criteria they've laid out.

PHIL MICKELSON: I think we're all friends. I consider Brooks a friend, and whatever he thinks is best for he and his family, I fully support.

Q. What were the emojis?

SERGIO GARCIA: Can you do the emojis that you sent, please?

PHIL MICKELSON: I don't remember.

Q. Phil, the Golf Digest story specifically referenced the criteria cutoff just after your most recent major championship win and it included the more recent major champions and maybe there was a sense that it might have been deliberate to cut it at that point. Is that something you felt from what you saw?

PHIL MICKELSON: I don't know. I'm having so much fun out here. I love playing out here on LIV. I love being with the guys. But like I say, Brooks is a friend of mine, and if it's the best thing for him and his family and he feels it's the best, I fully support it. But I could not be happier out here.

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: That was the best PR answer I've ever heard, by the way, Phil.

Q. I was going to ask to the group, just the change in format, especially 72 holes, how do you think that will play out in terms of do you think there will be a wider separation amongst the teams, or will it bring closer competition in? How do you see that process?

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: Real quickly, I think you'll see some of the best teams compete on another level, so it may separate the worst teams from the best teams. But those best teams will be incredibly competitive, and there will be a lot of shake-up and mix-up up there, so I think it's going to be a bit of both, to be honest with you. I think it'll be competitive at the top and then potentially could divide the worst out there over four rounds.

We'll see how it shakes out this year. I'm not fully sure. You never know.

JON RAHM: I was going to agree with that and say that for the week in itself, it's just going to be much better more



whoever is playing better, especially as a team, having four rounds, having 72 holes and that one day is going to make a big difference for the teams that are playing better. I don't know if it's going to be a separation or not, but it also allows you to have more time for a comeback, so we're going to have days like that, as well.

SERGIO GARCIA: It does give you one extra round of doing something special as a team and moving up on the leaderboard, I guess.

Q. Looking at the teams here, three of you guys have essentially the same returning lineup. Sergio, obviously you've got the three young guys. Then the other three teams have roster changes. Can you talk about the chemistry and how important your roster is in terms of how it impacts the bottom line winning and losing?

SERGIO GARCIA: Yeah, I think chemistry is huge when it comes down to team events or team sports. Obviously just with my team Real Madrid, the chemistry wasn't there with the coach and now he got fired.

Obviously the better the chemistry is, the better things work. Particularly for me with the roster that I have, I feel very comfortable because I know that it's going to be amazing in the good moments, and in the bad moments it's also going to be great because we're going to be supporting each other, putting our arms around each other and making sure that we're pushing each other forward.

It's going to be -- those type of moments are going to be a good learning experience for all of us, even myself at my age, and I'm really excited to go through those with my teammates.

Q. DJ, we talked a little bit about this. Your team will be a lot more quiet this year.

DUSTIN JOHNSON: It will be, yes, that's for sure. And I am very thankful for that.

Q. Jon, I wanted to follow up on the question about the pathway thing that came out yesterday. You, Cam and Bryson were actually named in it, and I'm wondering if you were surprised by that. Also, had you gotten any word ahead of time, or had any representatives reached out to you in any way to let you know that that was coming or even to tell you that that would be a possible opportunity, whether obviously it's happening or not?

JON RAHM: I had heard rumors for quite a few weeks, some of them going back to last year already. It wasn't a

surprise whatsoever.

I haven't seen much. Obviously I'm aware of what's going on. Did us three get named personally -- actually named personally?

Q. Yeah, in their actual release they named you guys as the ones who would qualify for this path.

JON RAHM: Well, I wasn't aware of that. But the criteria itself would obviously be enough for us to know who it is. But yeah, I wasn't surprised at all. There's been quite a few rumors I've heard about for a while. Not really surprised at all by the news yesterday.

Q. If I could follow up for you on a question about your game, you mentioned not winning last year being frustrating, but in some ways was the year more consistent than the prior year even though you won a few times the year before, and this past year obviously you had some good results in majors, too.

JON RAHM: Yeah, hard to say more consistent throughout because I played good in three of the majors. I didn't play great at The Open. It still feels in a small sense like I haven't achieved what I wanted to because I didn't win individually when I had the chances.

I know we're in a new venture here with the team wins and the individual overall wins matter, but it's hard to shake up everything that's hardwired in my brain from how I've played golf for a long time.

It's more also losing two playoffs in a row and the last one hitting a great shot and hitting the flagstick. It's a little hard to get over that, as well.

At the same time, achieving the title individually, the team title and the Ryder Cup, which also being a team event, I finished the year feeling like a lot was accomplished. I think I hyper-focused on what I didn't do, but a lot of things were accomplished this last year. So overall it's a very positive note.

Q. Bryson, speaking of social media, what was your Instagram story about this afternoon, if not the PGA TOUR?

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: There's this new viral trend around exit signs, so I just wanted to show that off in a new way.

Q. Can you expand a little bit on kind of your love for YouTube golf and how you're balancing that with LIV Golf league play, major championships all of that?

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: It's funny, YouTube has been awesome to do Course Record series, Break 50s with great guests and athletes, and it's kept my mind focused on playing good golf. No matter what challenge I'm doing -- even in the Caddie Talks, I'm still trying to play my best golf. So when I go into these, I still have to play really good without much practice or preparation.

So it almost kind of prepares me for tournament golf in my own way. Some people gamble, some people do other certain things to prep for tournament golf, but I feel like going out and trying to break a course record right off the rip and not having really much practice or knowledge about the golf course gets my mind super focused into being competitive and making sure my game is in the right place.

It's a unique way to do it, and we've found a great solution with my team to practice while I'm not playing tournament golf this past four or five months. I feel like my game is in a really solid spot to start the year.

That's one side of the coin, and the most important piece of it for me is something that I've always been passionate about, which is inspiring a younger generation. When I was 11 years old -- I'll tell the story again real quickly. A bunch of professionals came up to me after a clinic and stripping three drives and said, we'll see you out on Tour one day. They signed my hat, and it was a really cool experience that I got that I always felt like I had a responsibility to give back, just like what Arnold Palmer did. I was fortunate enough to meet him during that clinic. It was the Save Mart Shootout back in Medeira, California. I was fortunate enough to meet him and got a signature, and it just really inspired me to give back and wanting to give back, so YouTube has been a great outlet to do that and showcase what this great game can do globally, not just in professional golf but in entertainment golf, as well.

There's a lot to be thankful for, and YouTube is one of them, and very excited to see where the future of that goes. Not fully sure where it's going to go, but excited to keep growing.

Q. Phil, you're the only captain without a full roster. Are you allowed to break any news? How is the recruitment going?

PHIL MICKELSON: No, we have a player that we'll announce here shortly. I'm very excited. We needed this energy. We needed this youthfulness. I'm 55; I needed to get a younger team. Steeley is 42, Camo is late 30s. We're going to start evolving younger and getting a fresh energy. I'm very excited.

Q. To follow up on what you said there, is that possibly looking ahead to the fact that you might move into more of like a coaching role or managerial role within the team?

PHIL MICKELSON: I think if you look at how quickly young players have developed, if you look at Caleb Surratt, who came right out of college after a couple years, or you look at David Puig or Josele Ballester, comes right out of college, and Tom McKibben, and you look at these guys, Caleb flat-out said, I am exponentially further along after a year of being with Jon Rahm and Tyrrell Hatton than I would be if I was still in school. The development of these young guys that are being spoon-fed information by Sergio, by Jon Rahm, like some of the greats of the game, they're picking up that we had to learn on our own.

I didn't win a major until I was 33. I started working with Dave Pelz, and three months later he showed me how to practice, what to practice, how I needed to work, and all of a sudden I got better exponentially, and now that information is being spoon-fed by a lot of captains.

The reason I'm saying this is it doesn't matter my age. It doesn't matter Jon Rahm's age. He's 20 something years younger than me but he has so much knowledge that he's acquired that he's openly sharing with his teammates because we're all invested in that.

I'm going to try to help the guys on our team and younger players become their best selves and share the knowledge that I learned over the years from others and try to help to develop them faster, to achieve their goals quicker. It doesn't matter if I'm playing as their teammate or if I'm taking on just a captain's role.

But right now, I'm starting to play -- I'm playing pretty good golf. I had a good year last year, the first half especially, and had opportunities to win, and it really gets me motivated to keep going to work harder.

Now, it is harder for me. I've got to work a lot harder on my body to be able to swing the club the way I want to, but I enjoy the challenge and I will continue to work with young players just like Jon Rahm has helped those two players, Caleb and Tom, and just like Sergio has helped Josele, Luis and David develop quicker, I'll do the same in any way that I can.

Q. Bryson, similar to what Bob asked Jon, did you have any idea you would be named in that release yesterday and have any idea of those penalties and what it would take if you opted to do that?

BRYSON DeCHAMBEAU: I had no idea, no idea that that

would happen. No idea what the penalties would even be. Right now I've got a contract. I'm looking forward to seeing what we can do at LIV Golf this year.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, gentlemen. Appreciate it. Martin, Sergio, Jon, Bryson, DJ, Phil, appreciate you, and looking forward to a great 2026. Thank you again for being here.

Now we're going to do a quick little change over and we'll keep it going in about two minutes as we bring in our next group of captains, as well.

Thank you, gentlemen. Good luck this season.

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