

LIV Golf Press Conference

Tuesday, January 13, 2026

Lee Westwood

Majesticks GC

Ian Poulter

Majesticks GC

Talor Gooch

Smash GC

Louis Oosthuizen

Southern Guards GC

Joaquín Niemann

Torque GC

Cam Smith

Ripper GC

Bubba Watson

RangeGoats GC

Captains' Press Conference



2026

five wins, I only had six top 10s. I know the rest wasn't as consistent. So I feel like I can improve in that.

But yeah, now having Abe on the team, it's great. He's a great asset. He's a great player. So I'm pretty happy to have a 2026 season with Abraham now on the team.

THE MODERATOR: Lee and Ian, Majesticks have added a familiar face in Laurie Canter, who finished seventh in the DP World Tour standings in 2025. He's won two events on that tour in the past two seasons. He's also British, giving you an all-British lineup heading into the year. In the off-season, why Laurie? Why did you feel he was the right addition to the team?

IAN POULTER: Well, I think when you look at Laurie's performance over the last couple of seasons, he was obviously on the team with us '22, '23 when Sam was out injured. It was a perfect fit. The rebrand, red, white and blue, donning the Union Jack I think is pretty cool to wear the outfit this week. We're going to be pretty proud to wear it as a whole team of Brits.

He was a great fit. He fits in nicely with us as a team. We like him, he likes us, and he's a great player. We're really looking forward to what he brings, high energy, he's a good, fun guy, and with the new rebrand, I think it's a very strong fit.

THE MODERATOR: Lee, how are you feeling headed into the 2026 season, the rebrand? We've got the new gear, the new kits, the new logo, the all-British team headed back into one of our Signature Events at JCB.

LEE WESTWOOD: Yeah, it feels very fresh. There's been a few changes with personnel and equipment. I think we've all been working hard during the off-season, so we're all looking forward to getting going in Riyadh and getting off to a fast start for the year because the first seven weeks of the year there's five events there. You've got to get off to a quick start. It's over a third of the season, so there's no time to ease your way into it.

I think the four rounds instead of three may help us, as well. I always felt with three rounds it was very much a sprint, and if you didn't get into it on the first day, it was

THE MODERATOR: Here we are for part 2 of our 2026 LIV Golf media week captains' press conference. We just heard from six of our captains and seven more sit behind me. Let's introduce them and then we'll take some questions. First, one of the co-captains of Majesticks Golf Club, Lee Westwood. We've got the brand new captain of Smash GC, Talor Gooch; the captain of Southern Guards GC, Louis Oosthuizen; captain of Torque GC, Joaquín Niemann; captain of Ripper Golf Club, Cam Smith; co-captain of Majesticks Golf Club, Ian Poulter; and the captain of RangeGoats GC, Bubba Watson. It's great to be back with all of you again. Good to see you all. Let's dive into this.

Joaquín, let's start with you. You had a historic season last year, winning five events. It was a LIV Golf record in one season. Torque also finished in the top half of the standings last year. What went right for you individually and for Torque last season, and were you satisfied with the results?

JOAQUÍN NIEMANN: Yeah, I was pretty satisfied. Winning five times is something that I look back now and I'm pretty proud of. It was pretty cool.

But yeah, I feel that there's a lot to improve. Out of those



hard to catch up. An extra round might -- more golf for the fans.

THE MODERATOR: Talor, you've been with LIV Golf since the very beginning. You've been one of the most decorated players on LIV, the 2023 Player of the Year and returned to form last year winning in Andalucía, but now you're up here as a captain. There's new responsibilities that come with that. What are you most looking forward to as you wear the captain's hat, and also, what's your philosophy as Smash 2.0 begins to take shape?

TALOR GOOCH: First of all, it's an honor. From the get-go of LIV, the idea of being a captain is something that was intriguing. Sitting with all of these guys, like I said, it's just an honor and a privilege.

Just excited to kind of be on the forefront of leading our team. I've been able to form a good relationship with Kokrak and G-Mac over the last couple seasons, and then with our fourth guy coming along, I get along with him decently well, too, we're excited for a new chapter. We're excited to move forward.

I call it the rule of 67. I have for a while. I probably should have said something differently after "six seven" the last couple months and years. But the rule of 67 for me is simple: Go shoot 67 and everything takes care of itself. Winning solves all, and we go play good golf, and everything else will take care of itself.

THE MODERATOR: Bubba, you just got back to playing golf last month. I saw you in Las Vegas looking pretty sharp. How are you feeling physically individually headed into the year?

BUBBA WATSON: I feel good. When I cut out the cyst, it wasn't cancerous, so that was good, but it was attached to the bone, so the bone had a little indentation, so it was basically a bone bruise, so we had to just let it heal. So I sat out for, gosh, eight, seven or six weeks, eight or nine weeks. We just had to let it heal. Going out to Vegas and playing, it was painful just because of the little bruise, the bone trying to heal.

But yeah, it's good. I look forward to competing. Can't wait to get back out there. But yeah, so off-season was good. I got a lot of rest, so it was nice.

I'm looking forward to getting back out there and challenging these boys.

THE MODERATOR: The RangeGoats are bringing back the same team as last year. You really have adopted this team mentality. It means a lot to you. How are you feeling

from a team perspective leading them into the 2026 season?

BUBBA WATSON: It feels good. I want guys that are energized and have fun, and I want to help them off the golf course. I'm not really worried about their golf. They're going to take care of that. But I want to be a part of their lives and help them.

We had a blast last year. We sucked but we had a blast. So I figured, hey, we can't get any worse, so we need to try to do it better. Everybody is excited about that. Trying to move up the leaderboard a little bit.

THE MODERATOR: Louis, you've been the captain of Stinger GC since the very beginning, and now a new era begins as the team rebrands to Southern Guards GC and LIV Golf goes to South Africa this year, something that you've wanted from the very beginning, and it's going to come to fruition in just a few months. How excited are you for this new direction for the team, for the franchise, and to be putting South Africa on the map in the LIV Golf universe?

LOUIS OOSTHUIZEN: Yeah, look, it's a new chapter for us. Felt like we have our own identity now. We've built such a nice brand with Stinger GC, but this is the way forward for us, get the South African spirit in there, get the rhino in there, and we're very excited about what we can do going forward.

South Africa was obviously a massive thing for us to get the tournament. We had some great help from LIV and from other sportsmen to get it in the country, and I can tell you the fans are ready for it. Everyone is very excited.

THE MODERATOR: All the captains, players definitely have South Africa circled on the calendar and looking forward to that for sure.

Cam, you're the captain of Ripper GC who knows about that home crowd, the atmosphere, the energy that comes in Adelaide every single year. We head there in just a few weeks, which is pretty wild that that is on the horizon. Can you discuss the importance of having a home event, something like that where the whole country is really behind you and Ripper GC?

CAM SMITH: Yeah, I mean, it's unreal. It's such a cool week for us. The town of Adelaide as well really gets around the event. They come out and they root for us. You saw it in the playoff against Louis a couple of years ago. They were rooting for us to win.

It's cool to have a home crowd advantage like that. You

don't get that very often. I think for all of these guys, we have an event in the UK, an event in South Africa now. Hopefully in the years to come we can get more home events, even for the U.S. guys like Bubba, I'm sure you want one. I think that's the way forward. Yeah, I can't wait for it to happen.

THE MODERATOR: Bubba has become the unofficial mayor of New Orleans, Louisiana, so he's ready for Louisiana for sure.

Cam, last question before we open it up to the media that's gathered here. There was obviously some significant news in the golf world in the last 24 to 48 hours. Do you want to share any of your thoughts on the situation?

CAM SMITH: I mean, I really don't have any thoughts. I haven't had a lot of time to think about it. But I know I'm here to stay. I'm here to support LIV. I'm a captain of a great team and a great group of people. I'm happy where I am. I'm proud of where I am. I think we do many great things, particularly in Australia, and I can't wait for this league to keep growing.

Q. Ian, it was obviously a really close run thing with you and Henrik for survival last year. I wonder how difficult it was to say goodbye to him from the team. Is he going to have any involvement still as a former co-captain?

IAN POULTER: I mean, firstly, it was very difficult. The last five holes of that last event, looking at that leaderboard or not looking at that leaderboard and looking at your phone to see what you had to do to stay out of relegation was tough. Going into Sunday, it was potentially Lee and I were in a tricky spot, and obviously Henrik was up the leaderboard, so unfortunately for him it was difficult.

I saw him a couple of nights ago at my birthday. He looked in good spirits. He looks to be doing well. I don't know what his plans are, obviously, moving forward, how much involvement he's going to have with the team, but obviously Lee and I are still firmly captain and very proud to push this team forward.

I haven't sat and spoke to him exactly what he wants to do. But he's in good health. He's in great spirits. We're pretty happy.

Q. There's been a little bit of talk that there might be some more jeopardy on the league next season in terms of more relegation spots. Is that something as someone who was obviously on the low end last season, is that something you'd support, as well?

IAN POULTER: Yeah, look, 20 percent of the league I think are going to get relegated this year. It's great for us. I think the league have done an amazing job to structure things in the right way to put pressure on OWGR points. We've ticked pretty much every single box. I don't know what else is going to be left.

I think we're all pretty happy with the way the league have structured it. Moving forward, there's going to be some pathways to come up. There's the extra pathway for the guys last week, obviously three cards to come into the league, which is fantastic, and the International Series is gaining strength every single year.

I don't want to be in that relegation position come the end of August, and obviously unfortunately there will be a few guys, and I don't want to be one of them.

Q. Talor, with all the changes to the team, do you have any plans or what are you doing or thinking about in terms of rebuilding unity and fresh energy and kind of getting the team really excited to move forward under the new leaderboard and the new additions, or is that more of a thing that takes time?

TALOR GOOCH: No, it's going to take time. Obviously I have some big ideas and thoughts and plans, but obviously I have little plans, as well. Like last night we had dinner, and we popped a bottle of champagne to turn the chapter and move forward.

You know, fortunately through my life I've played team sports. We're invested in a few different sports leagues. I've been around a locker room in a lot of capacities.

Like I said, fortunately I've had a good relationship with everyone that's on the team for a long time now. It's pretty simple. We're going to have a good time together. We all want to compete. We all want to win. We're going to do a few things to push this brand and this team and this franchise forward in a positive way, and I'm excited to be a part of that.

Like I said, I've watched from afar. All the captains kind of put their fingerprint on the culture of their team and their franchise, and I'm excited to just be in a position to do that.

Q. When the RangeGoats switched, Bubba started bringing goats out to the tournaments. I'm curious, Louis, are we going to see any rhinos out on the course?

LOUIS OOSTHUIZEN: Sure, you can go and catch them and we'll get them out there. I don't think we're going to see any rhinos out there.

for being here.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

Q. Talor, if you count all your individual titles, team wins, championships, you've raised 13 trophies on LIV Golf, and that ties for the most in the league. Joaco, you've raised 12. I'm curious from the two of you, is there an art to celebrate with the champagne popping on top of the podium?

TALOR GOOCH: I feel like Joaco still wasn't old enough when he first popped champagne to even know what that was like.

JOAQUÍN NIEMANN: I figured it out pretty quick, though.

TALOR GOOCH: Especially when you're there as much as you've been.

No, like last night, like I say, we had a bottle of champagne. It's a bit of a symbolism for the rest of the year hopefully.

Listen, all of us up here, we want to be on the podium. We want to spray each other with champagne. When you go an extended period of time with not doing that, it's not fun. That's why we work so hard in the off-season. It sounds crazy, but it's like, might be watching it on F1 and seeing it, but I look forward to spraying my teammates with champagne more than I look forward to raising the trophy. The celebration of it, it's tough to beat. I'm hoping to be spraying my dudes a lot this year.

JOAQUÍN NIEMANN: I think it's more of a moment. I'm not a big drinker. I don't drink much. But it's pretty exciting to know that you're going to be able to spray champagne in front of their face.

We've had a few experiences where Sebastian a few years ago, he fell down out of the stadium two times, so it was quite fun. He was fine, but yeah, I think it's more of a cool moment to be able to share how much we work and how much we try to be in that position.

It goes quick. Just like one minute of celebrating, and then we go back again and try to do the same thing and be in that moment again. We try to enjoy that minute as much as we can.

Q. Cam, do you ever do any shoeys at home? Do you practice?

CAM SMITH: Absolutely not. That's a winning thing, and it's been a while. We can't wait to do that more this year.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, gentlemen. Good luck in the 2026 LIV Golf season. Looking forward to. Thank you

