

# LIV Golf Mayakoba

Friday, 2 February, 2024

Mayakoba, Mexico

El Camaleón Golf Course

## Legion XIII

### Jon Rahm

#### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Let's welcome Jon Rahm, the captain of Legion XIII. Welcome, Jon. Let us about your very first round at a LIV Golf event. Was it different? Did you enjoy it?

JON RAHM: Yeah, it's definitely a little different vibe, but I quite enjoy the music. It's not too different to how we play at home. A lot of us have -- especially the people I play with, have golf carts with some pretty powerful speakers. If anything it was low compared to what I'm used to.

Yeah, it was great, plus I got paired with two of the nicest people you can get paired with. Talor and Cam are extremely nice. To then add it on and have a really good round -- too bad the last two holes. I feel like one of those bogeys, 17, was avoidable. 18 was just unfortunate. But it doesn't take away from how good I played those first 16 holes.

It was nice to get off the jump, just get going and play good golf. So far I would say it was a very successful start.

**Q. You've obviously played a thousand rounds of golf, but were you at all nervous today starting out, this new endeavor and obviously a lot of attention focused on you?**

JON RAHM: Yeah, I could feel the pressure, but it's a good thing, right? It's weird; you do get to pick a song for the first tee, and I thought maybe it was going to help. If anything, it gave it a little bit more -- the heartbeat went a little bit up just from hearing a song you like. I'm like, I feel confident, but the added pressure that it's one of my favorite songs, but it helped because I hit a great tee shot to start the day.

I felt it, but after the tee shot and the second shot and making that putt, it felt like I settled in pretty nicely.

**Q. What about how you felt about where your game was coming in. Were there any doubts at all?**



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JON RAHM: I think it's almost impossible to be 100 percent sure of how you're going to play. But I'm always confident that I can perform. I think the tale for me was how I stroked the tee shots on 1 and 2. Those two were picture-perfect drives. To start like that was something that obviously gave me a lot of confidence for the rest of the day.

**Q. You talked about the music; was there a moment out there where you kind of took a step back and felt like, all right, this is a new chapter in my life; it's actually real, it's starting?**

JON RAHM: No, I've been pretty aware of it over the last few months. I've been really eager to get the golf going, so it was nice to actually compete and do what I'm supposed to do, just be out there and playing golf.

No, it was maybe earlier in the week when I go, all right, things are starting, I've got teammates, they're asking me questions, we're playing practice rounds together. So it was a little bit maybe a Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday feeling. Today if anything it felt more like normal. Just it's time to work.

**Q. Was there a time where you knew what Niemann was doing? When did you realize that --**

JON RAHM: Well, I didn't look at a scoreboard. I didn't see him early on, and then when I was 5-under and I was tied for fourth, I was like somebody is -- I was 5-under through 7, and I was third, so I was like, okay, clearly everybody is going off.

I think it was on 12 when he was 9-under. It was, okay, it's impressive, clearly. Birdies are out there, but you have to play really good golf. That he did. It's impressive.

I could see 8-, 9-under, but I would confidently say that I would have bet a lot of money against a 59 here this week just because of how narrow the fairways are. You can make really good swings. I can see a couple of really good swings that just didn't end up on the fairway, and then it's a toss-up in the rough. I don't know what his stats were, but -- well, he must have hit fairways or made a lot of putts. Whatever it is, it's a heck of a round.



What is it now, 23 LIV Golf events, there's a 58 and a 59?  
It's pretty impressive.

**Q. Normally a 5-under would be a great start to a tournament, but when 12-under is up there and you only have two rounds left to go catch him, is that any extra pressure going into the next two rounds here knowing that you don't have the full three for the 72 to go catch him?**

JON RAHM: No. It's still a good round of golf. He played a historic round of golf. There's a difference. You still need two more rounds. Obviously we're going to have to approach 20-under par, and it's doable. I played a really good round today. If I cleaned up my finish a little bit, could have been a fantastic way to finish.

Obviously I didn't. If anything I'm thinking more about that, my finish, than what Joaco did. Again, I think if the wind doesn't pick up, we're going to have to approach a 20-under, which again is doable. The greens are in really good shape, and if you can put the ball in the fairway, you can give yourself chances.

**Q. I think you only missed three greens in regulation. What was working so well with your approach shots?**

JON RAHM: I don't feel like I missed the fairway by a lot, so I was always close enough to the edge to where the rough wasn't the thickest. From there on, you just need to manage, hopefully hit the right shot and keep it around the green. I feel like I hit a really fair share of fairways. It was towards the end where I didn't hit them on 16, 17, 18. But up until then off the tee I felt like it was really, really good.

**Q. Did you at any point today check the leaderboard to see how Legion XIII was doing during your round?**

JON RAHM: It's funny, the first few times I was more interested in how the team was doing than myself, which was definitely something new, and I think Cam caught me looking, he said that; it's crazy how you might care more about the team than your individual.

Yeah, I obviously kept up. There's three players that I want to see how they're doing. Not their best start, but still two more days for them to show what they're made of. Even though it's still early; we've got a barely, barely turned professional player and Kieran who's now full-time here. It could be expected to have a little bit of a difficult start.

But I feel like those two guys and Tyrrell at some point are going to surprise a lot of people. Maybe not Tyrrell because he's done it so many times, but those two guys

might play a level of golf that I know they can play but that a lot of people haven't seen.

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