

LIV Golf Virginia

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Potomac Falls, Virginia, USA

Trump National DC

Legion XIII

Jon Rahm

Tyrrell Hatton

Tom McKibbin

Caleb Surratt

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Let's welcome to the Media Center Legion XIII. I've got Captain Jon Rahm, Tyrrell Hatton, Caleb Surratt, and Tom McKibbin, coming off a team victory in Mexico City.

Jon, let's start with you. You've been incredibly consistent this season, finished top 5 in all six events to date, highlighted by two individual wins and three runner-up finishes. Obviously each tournament each season is a new start, a new opportunity. Is this about as good as you felt with your game since joining LIV a couple years ago?

JON RAHM: I would say so, yeah. Yeah, I think Mexico is one of the better weeks I've had. I felt really, really confident that week, and I think it showed.

Perhaps, honestly, the best I've felt tee to green, just swing-wise and movement-wise, might have been Riyadh, just the best I've hit the driver in a really long time. I wish I could hit it like that more often. It's just one of those weeks that was really unbelievable.

But, yeah, overall it's been a really, really solid year that I've been able to minimize the days where maybe I wasn't feeling my best, which is essentially what golf is all about. I think it's one of the few sports, I would say, where you're trying to -- your job is to just err less each day. The good days are good, but you still have to manage your mistakes.

THE MODERATOR: Tyrrell, you had a very strong April coming off a T-3 at the Masters and a T-5 in Mexico City. What's the key for you this week to keep that trend going here in Virginia?

TYRRELL HATTON: Obviously I'd like to continue to keep playing well. Next week's going to be a big week too. I

want to take some confidence and hopefully some momentum into the PGA. Yeah, we'll see how we go.

THE MODERATOR: Caleb and Tom, you both made the decision to join LIV early in your careers. Caleb, for you it was a decision to turn pro. Can you just share what your experience with LIV Golf has meant to each of you in your careers, whether it's been the team aspect, the global league, or the level of competition? Caleb, start with you.

CALEB SURRATT: Yeah, it's been nothing but a great thing for me in my career. I'm really pleased with the last three years of development and growth I've had, which I can definitely confidently say is far greater than I may have received in college. To be around Jon and Tyrrell and make some great friends out here and learn how to become a more complete player is nothing but a great thing. It's what I've been offered out here and what I'm trying to take advantage of, quite frankly.

Yeah, I'm very pleased. It's been one of the best decisions of my life. I can confidently say that. I look forward to the future for sure.

THE MODERATOR: Tom?

TOM MCKIBBIN: Yeah, very similar to Caleb. I played a little bit of pro golf before for a few years and had experienced that, and then coming over here, it's obviously a very different experience. Yeah, it's been really good. Getting to spend time with Jon and Tyrrell and a lot of other great players has definitely been a benefit to my game.

I definitely felt over the last year and a half that I became a better player because of it. Yeah, again, sort of excited to continue on and sort of learn from Jon and Tyrrell and the rest of the guys. It's definitely been a good experience.

Q. Tom, you're hovering right around 100 in the OWGR. Have you heard from the PGA Championship on whether you're going to be invited to play next week?

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TOM McKIBBIN: Yeah, I'm playing.

Q. And what does that mean to get into a major based off your play?

TOM McKIBBIN: Yeah, it's pretty cool. I played last year as well, and I think to sort of do it two years in a row sort of with not having the availability of many world ranking points and sort of to stay around that 100 number has been pretty good. I think the consistency of the golf that I've played has been nice, sort of being in a spot to be able to qualify for some of those events.

Yeah, it's always nice to get to play another major. They're definitely the events that you want to be playing, and every time you can tick one off, it's a great learning experience. I always sort of leave learning more and more about my game and what I need to get better for the future. So, yeah, looking forward to playing again next week.

Q. Jon, Sergio had said that you guys have been told that there would be PIF financing through 2030. I'm just wondering what your reaction was when you initially heard the news and what your concern level is going forward in terms of whether or not the league can survive without the PIF.

JON RAHM: Honestly I think the initial news and rumors over there in Mexico, since we're in a tournament week, I almost just tried to act as if it was just rumors, right? Because we're competing, I didn't want to waste any energy on an already demanding week thinking about it. So for me, the reality kind of came afterwards.

I would say, like everybody, surprised, obviously unexpected. We did hear the news that there would be funding through for many years, so unexpected.

Then as the future of the league goes, I think that's obviously a question for the business people. We want to be here. It's been a lot of fun. I want to keep competing. I want to keep sharing some time with them.

But only time will tell. Scott and his team have a lot of hard work to do, but obviously they're experienced in the area, and that's why they've been chosen to take this role.

Q. Can I just follow up on that, Jon? Can you get out of your contract if you want, or do you have to stay here until 2028 or 29?

JON RAHM: I'll say I'm also not a lawyer. I have no idea. I couldn't tell you. I have very few talents in my life, and reading a contract or business are not two of them.

Again, like you just said, as of right now, I have several years on my contract left, and I'm pretty sure they did a pretty good job when they drafted that. So I don't see many ways out, and as of right now, I'm not really thinking about it since we still have a season to play and majors to compete for. So it's not something I want to think about just yet.

Q. Have you made any more -- you talked about the DP World Tour and the standoff you have with them. Has there been any advance on that, and would it be wise now to maybe have an advance on that?

JON RAHM: There's no longer a standoff. We were able to reach an agreement. There was some concessions on both sides. I offered some; they extended an olive branch. Obviously we've reached an agreement. That will not be a stress anymore.

Q. How relieved are you with the Ryder Cup, with the Spanish Open, and all of that?

JON RAHM: I was never worried about that. There was some things I believed in that I wanted them to agree with me, and I knew it was a matter of time. I also understand they have their bylaws and their way to go about things and they have to follow certainly procedures, and things are never as easy or as fast as you would think they would be, or at least I would have liked, but I was never worried.

The Ryder Cup is still really, really far away, but I'm happy that hopefully I won't have to think about any worries or any predicaments come to Adare Manor then or hopefully ever. I want to support the DP World Tour. There's a lot of events I want to play.

My only concern right now, when it comes to those events in October, is the due date that we have. That's the only issue I have that would make me not be at the Spanish Open. Besides that, I think they can count on my participation.

Q. I was asking Scott O'Neil about how important the majors are for LIV Golf players in this new reality, and I want to know how important it is for you to perform well in the majors, both individually and as a team? Any of the three of you who are playing in majors this year can answer this.

JON RAHM: Either one of us three could have answered.

TYRRELL HATTON: You can take it.

JON RAHM: Obviously no matter where you're playing, majors are always going to be the pinnacle in golf. So for

personal satisfaction, they're always going to be impressive. I think I've never gone to a major thinking about anybody but myself, let's just say that.

I think for a team like ours, it's really nice to have 3 out of the 4 players there. It would be really incredible to have 4 out of 4 soon, but I don't think either one of us are teeing it up on a Thursday at Augusta or the PGA or U.S. Open or The Open thinking about anything but a win for ourselves.

Obviously there are ramifications and the impact would be there of what it may say for the league and for us, but it's not really, I would say, in the forefront of our minds.

Q. Tyrrell and Jon, Scott was in here before talking about his to do list and the order of operations, and he said business plan, get player buy-in, take it to market. I'm curious, is it going to be hard for you to buy in without knowing what the structure looks like, what the purses look like, if it's a scaled down product next year? How concerned are you that this season is going to look drastically different from this one?

JON RAHM: Well, I think you said it first, business plan. I don't think he would ask anybody to buy into anything without giving us a business plan first. Until we have that, I don't think we can really answer the rest, right? It would just be speculation at that point.

Q. Jon, how willing are you to make concessions to keep this Tour alive or this League alive? Are you willing to play for \$15 million a week versus \$30 million a week? Are you willing to do other things to cut costs that make this Tour still viable as an organization? Are you willing to do those things?

JON RAHM: It's not just about me, it's a team effort. It's not about one person agreeing or not. I think we all, as captains and team owners and players that are involved in the league, need to in essence have a large majority to agree on for it to work.

I do believe that for the business plan to change, whatever they're coming up with, there will need to be some concessions on our part, yeah.

Q. So the guy sitting next to you, Caleb, who said that you look forward to the future, which may or may not be pretty uncertain at this point, are you willing to make concessions, considerable Concessions to keep this thing going?

CALEB SURRATT: Yeah, I mean, kind of like Jon has said, I don't think any of us know what those concessions may be or if there is going to be any at all, right? I think

there's multiple ways it can go.

For me, when I say I'm looking forward to the future, I'm just thinking about myself. I'm thinking about the betterment of my career and the path that I'm on. Regardless of what tournaments that entails, my goal is to be in majors and win majors one day, and I know that when I get there, I'll be more prepared for that moment because I've spent multiple years out here regardless of whatever happens or whatever concessions I have to make.

I'm certainly -- I can speak for myself when I say that I'm bought in. I've been extended an arm from Jon to have an incredible opportunity out here, I feel in my heart that I've earned that, but I'll do -- I'll never not appreciate that, and I think I'll support whatever it is that I think is right, and I'll back Jon as well.

Q. Jon, in years past or last year, I believe you had said that you liked the idea of going to 72 holes, you suggested it. Just wondering if going forward you'd like to have some voice in maybe some of these changes that you think could help the league to prosper beyond this year to be able to live on? Do you have any ideas that you think could help and that you'd like to be heard on?

JON RAHM: They've actually been really good at asking all the captains and listening to all of us and adjusting if needed. Now, I'll say it again, I am not a business person. I have not a clue what it takes to make a business succeed. All I can understand is tournament and the player experience side of things.

So I give them my opinion, but it's impossible to make everybody happy. What I think is right may not be the same for everybody else. I will share my ideas if I think I have a good one, but it's not always easily implemented. Hopefully I can take credit for some of the good ones, but I don't know if that's going to happen.

Q. I just wanted to ask another question to Tom. You got asked earlier about next week, the PGA, but you're also, this tournament will decide, I believe, the U.S. Open, the top three, top player not otherwise exempt. Obviously, Jon, Bryson are already in, having won the U.S. Open. How much is that on your mind playing this week? Is it kind of a nice thing to have an outside goal to play for?

TOM McKIBBIN: I mean, I'd probably have to win to get into that spot. So not really been thinking about that.

Q. I don't think so. I think, as long as you're in the top

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three, it's the top player who's in the top three, and Jon and Bryson are already in the U.S. Open.

TOM McKIBBIN: Yeah, but probably to move up that far, I'd have to play pretty good. No, I haven't really thought about that plan, just to go and play the qualifier, 36 holes, and give that a shot.

Q. Tyrrell, what is your contract status beyond this year? Where do you envision playing golf next year?

TYRRELL HATTON: I've still got multiple years left, but it's not really a focus for me at the moment. Obviously focused on playing well this week, playing well the rest of the year, and seeing what happens.

Q. When Brooks Koepka and Patrick Reed left LIV, did that give you pause or open your eyes and make you think maybe there is a future beyond this tour?

TYRRELL HATTON: I didn't think a huge amount about it, to be honest. It makes really not much difference to what I'm doing with my life at the moment. Yeah, I didn't really give it any other thought.

Q. For Jon and Tyrrell, looking back over the last couple years, has LIV Golf delivered everything Greg Norman and others might have sold you on when you made the jump?

JON RAHM: I'm trying to remember. That was two years ago. I would say I think so, yeah. Obviously with Greg not being involved and having other leadership, the vision changes a little bit, but I would say so far, yeah. As far as player experience goes and team experience goes, it's been spot on with what they told me and what other players told me LIV Golf was like.

Q. Jon, obviously the line of questioning, the focus clearly is on the future of LIV Golf. So I'm curious from your perspective, golfer's perspective, is this a distraction in any way for you on the course knowing what the future may look like and this line of questioning is not going to stop any time soon?

JON RAHM: It's definitely extra noise, there's no denying it, right? But I think we deal with it as athletes honestly. I think it's part of the job a lot of times, and sometimes that extra noise is internal for something that may be happening family-wise that's not public, which is much worse than, I would say, this.

At the end of the day, we practice enough so once you get in competition mode, it doesn't matter. It might be a worry before or after, but it shouldn't be once you get to that first

tee. We've said a few times, when it's so uncertain and so out of our control, there's really nothing to think about.

Q. Tyrrell, Jon, you guys saw Aronimink several years ago, and that was a long time ago. What do you remember about that course? Also, do you think there are any similarities between Trump National this week and what you can take into next week?

TYRRELL HATTON: The only hole I remember at Aronimink is the 18th, and I haven't seen this golf course. So I can't answer your question.

JON RAHM: I haven't seen this golf course either. What I remember of that event at Aronimink was it was extremely wet. We had a lot of rain. From what I hear, it hasn't rained here in quite a while, and the golf course is already firm. Based on that, no.

I don't think they play similar. I think they're both fantastic golf courses, but they will not be playing close in that sense.

Q. Jon, I did want to ask you one other question. You've played 100 rounds in a regular season in LIV Golf now. Is there one particular round that you think you kind of have the most fond memory of? Obviously you shot 60 last year in Indy, or is there another round?

JON RAHM: I'd probably say Sunday at Valderrama last year, shooting 6- or 7-under to give Talor Gooch a run at home at a golf course that is very difficult, with a great par at the end to give the Spanish crowd a bit of hope. That was a really fun round to play.

Obviously the 60 in Indianapolis was big, but just for the significance of being at home, I would say that Sunday in Valderrama.

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