

LIV Golf Singapore

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Republic of Singapore

Sentosa Golf Club

Legion XIII

Jon Rahm

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Let's welcome to the media center Jon Rahm, captain of Legion XIII. Welcome back to Singapore. Coming into this week straight off your win in Hong Kong. You said on Sunday that there was a bit of a feeling of relief. Have you had any time to reflect on that win, and can momentum be a real thing when you immediately jump right into another tournament?

JON RAHM: Not a little bit of relief, a lot of relief. I don't know if I've had too much time since, obviously, the next day at 10:00 a.m. we're boarding a plane to come here, so the mindset almost immediately switches to this week, which I think it can be both a blessing and a curse. Maybe you can celebrate the accomplishments afterwards, but it's also a blessing that you have the opportunity to compete right away while you know you're playing good.

I think momentum is a thing, but you also have to prove it, right? So you've got to keep working at it.

I think it's very easy to get a little complacent, be like, I played good last week, I'll be fine this week. No, you still have to do all the good work that goes into it.

Q. You've had a couple strong finishes here at Sentosa, T5 last year. What are the main challenges with this course, and does it require a different approach compared to where we were last week at Hong Kong Golf Club?

JON RAHM: Well, each golf course requires a different approach. You've got to find a way to play it the way you think you can score the best. Obviously depending on how you're hitting the ball, you can probably choose to be more aggressive or less in certain spots, but you've got to find out what the formula is for you.

This golf course can be quite intimidating. If you choose to be aggressive off the tee and hit drivers, you have the opportunity. Holes like 1 give you the opportunity. You can hit a driver out there. You can go out with maybe a

5-wood, 2-iron to the left side of the fairway; it kind of snakes. It's a very narrow spot. You can go a little bit further back with maybe a 4-iron or 3-iron - those are clubs for me, obviously, some people hit less or more - to short of the bunker so now you're choosing how far you're going to have into the greens. It's very, very big greens, so there's a big difference between a front pin and a back pin.

So on the same hole if you choose to lay up off the tee, you might end up with a 6-iron, and if the next day you're aggressive and it's a front pin, you have a wedge shot.

So there's a lot of variability on the course and how it plays and what you decide to do. Like that, that applies to quite a few holes out here. You can have that same thought in a lot of them. I think that's why you're going to have very different champions, but at the end of the day, because it's narrow fairways and greens, I know that matters everywhere, but with the rough here, you've got to be in play.

Q. When you won in Hong Kong last week, that was the eighth different country that you've won on in your career. Sergio has won 18, Seve was 20 plus. I'm curious, how important is it from your perspective in terms of your career to have success across the globe instead of maybe just limited to a couple of countries?

JON RAHM: I'm trying to think right now what eight countries.

Q. I can tell you if you want.

JON RAHM: I probably remember. I certainly never thought about it that way. I think the only thought I've ever had is how many continents are you able to win, and I've never played in Africa, so that's always been a limit. Or actually, as a matter of fact, never played in South America, either. So I've been able to play in three and win in three. I guess four; I haven't won in Australia yet.

I guess it can put things in perspective, as well. I think, at least in my case, up until LIV, I didn't play as much

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worldwide as so many of the players had to play in the '70s, '80s, '90, maybe early 2000s, especially if they were European, having the opportunity to go play and win events elsewhere. I would be very curious to know where Greg Norman is at because I think having over 100 wins in his career, it's probably quite diverse, as well.

I think it's really unique, the opportunity to go play and take your golf to different corners of the world and be able to win in them is quite special.

I thought eight was a lot up until you mentioned Sergio having 18 and knowing Seve had 20 some. It's impressive. So knowing that we're playing in 10 different countries in LIV, hopefully I can keep adding to that tally and hopefully get to 10 someday and maybe 20 someday.

Q. Is there a certain challenge to dealing with a bunch of different courses that are not kind of all similar? For instance, last week was 6,700 yards. This one is a lot longer. Is that something that appeals to you, being able to win on a bunch of various courses like that?

JON RAHM: I think it's shows the true greatness of a player if you can win in any type of environment, any type of golf course, country, setup. It's a bit like in tennis; if you're somebody that can win across all surfaces, you're obviously going to be considered a better player, and I think this can be kind of the same. You obviously think about it in terms of mainly majors and golf tournaments, but when you're someone that can do it across the board and consistently, yeah, I think it shows your ability to adapt and your ability to play golf.

Q. Speaking of majors, you must like the form you're in with the Masters a few weeks away.

JON RAHM: Yeah, but we're here this week. We're in South Africa next week, and then we still have two weeks off. Still a lot of time until the Masters. I'm going to worry about what I have to do today here in Singapore and think about Augusta when the time comes to it.

With that said, there's little things -- there's things we can do while prepping for tournaments that also help for Augusta, so it's a balancing act.

Q. Where do you feel your game is at the strongest right now?

JON RAHM: I'm sure somebody can find the stats of where I'm doing good. I'll say each week has been different. I'll say I think I've been putting really well. That's been a huge help, making more putts from mid-range. It's

something that's always going to help a lot. But I've been playing really, really good golf in general, so I'm really confident in every part of my game.

Q. What would it mean to have a back-to-back win?

JON RAHM: It would be first time since 2023. I think I've only done it very few times in my career that I've been able to go back-to-back, and usually they're spaced out with weeks in between, not back-to-back weeks. It would be a huge accomplishment. I hope I can give myself the chance on Sunday.

Q. Have you ever changed equipment this year, like a driver, fairway wood?

JON RAHM: Only driver. The only change from last year is the new Quantum driver.

Q. Could you tell me your impression of the new driver?

JON RAHM: As a matter of fact, only the driver head. I usually don't even change the shaft. I take the old head and put the new one in and we go on. I don't like to change much.

I've gone down that path, and it hasn't worked out for me very well, and I've sacrificed three, four months of the season before realizing that what I had was good enough, and I've also had things where I should have changed earlier. So it's a bit of a tricky situation.

I wasn't swinging my best off the tee last year, so I think some of the negative feelings I had off the tee kind of leaked into the club per se, but what I see with the Quantum, at least for me, I don't see the left miss as much. I think it's a little bit better tailored for my swing, and I have a better understanding, better ball flight of the fade. But it's also tied to working on my swing, so I can't say it's both.

The one thing I will say is the mis-hits with this driver, especially the heel strikes, actually still maintain very good spin and ball speed, which consistency is key in this game, and that's always going to help.

Q. Did you get more distance with this?

JON RAHM: I have gained distance, but I've also gotten stronger over three months of working at it. I'm sure part of it is me and part of it is the driver.

Q. In terms of the win last week, how significant was it, especially leading up to the Masters?

JON RAHM: You all must think the Masters is tomorrow because I feel like it's quite -- we still have two more events. It's very significant in the sense that I don't have to hear again that I've played 20 some events and haven't won yet, I haven't won in two years and all those things. I don't have to hear that for hopefully a long time. I'm just relieved to have that win, to have the satisfaction that all the work has been working, and I've had that feedback. I've been putting myself in position to get it done.

Very happy with how I've reacted to Thomas Pieters tying me and me making those four birdies on the back nine and doing what I needed to do when I needed to do it. Those 13, 14, 15 was about as flawless as I can play and I can strike the ball. Very happy about that. Which is always going to be a huge confidence booster going into Augusta.

But like I said earlier, while it's in our mind and in the back or the front of our mind, we still have this week to take care of before we can think about the Masters, so trying to focus on that.

Q. You mentioned what you were doing in the off-season. Can you share a bit more about that, and did that directly impact the win last week?

JON RAHM: I will not be sharing too much of what I did.

Q. How do you adapt your game to change in the weather, conditions from Hong Kong to Singapore?

JON RAHM: I like that question because I think nowadays we get the question of how does this golf course fit your game. It's my opinion, kind of developing from the question that Mike asked earlier about playing in different countries and different courses, it's our job as golfers to adapt to the golf course, and the one that can do that the better, I think the more complete and better golfer we'll be.

It all depends on how you're hitting it, and the conditions -- usually we don't have too much wind here, even though today is very windy. It's not overly windy, so you're kind of free to be able to choose what you do off the tee. But like I said earlier, it's not a golf course in which you're going to be hitting an overwhelming amount of drivers. It's a lot of positioning off the tee, so you're going to have to figure out what club you want to hit, you put it in the fairway, and then most likely a mid-iron. It's a lot of 9- to 7-irons into the greens, possibly more depending on wind, possibly less depending on what you hit off the tee.

I think that's one of those situations where you kind of need to ball strike the rest of the field to death, if you can, because the greens are so good, anybody that's putting well is going to be able to make putts. Those are arguably

the best greens we see all year, and good putters are always going to have a good day.

You need to make sure your ball-striking is up to par so you can give yourself a lot of good chances.

Q. I know it's been an eventful week for you with all the issues at the DP World Tour and also getting some of your fellow players in from the Middle East. With all those distractions you still managed to win in Hong Kong. What does that say about your mentality to go ahead and win even with all the distractions?

JON RAHM: I think, like anybody else in their job, you just need to learn how to compartmentalize. Kind of put things in the back of your mind and take care of what you can take care of. There's some things that I can't control. If I can't control them, I really shouldn't be worrying about it. What I can control is what I do on the golf course, my routines, how I prep, how committed I am to every step of the way.

In essence, it's kind of like a freeing feeling that I get when there's a lot going on off the course that you get on the course and the only thing that matters is that so you can let things go.

With that said, it was a massive, massive relief to have those guys land on Wednesday. Up until they landed and I saw them in person, there was still some nerves that night from Tuesday to Wednesday, being up virtually all night looking at the flight tracker, making sure they were taking off, making sure they were okay, making sure they were out of the path of any possible bombing and they were in safe space was a lot. But I could feel a lot of relaxation after they landed.

All the other stuff, it's what it is. I don't know how to say this except truly, without sounding rude, it's first-world problems. It's what it is. There's real problems in the world, and whether I have an agreement or disagreement with the DP World Tour, it shouldn't be one of them.

While we continue to discuss what the future might be, it's not something to overly worry about when there's real tragedy happening worldwide. When you put it in perspective like that -- I was constantly reminded by my friends and my fellow players being in Dubai in a war zone nearby. It just puts things in perspective what really matters. That's why I think when they landed, it was just let go of everything else and just play.

Q. I'm curious how the thing with you and LeBron came together.

JON RAHM: We have a friend in common. He lives in Scottsdale. I've known him forever. He's a naturopath. His name is Sunil Jain, and obviously he's close with both of us, and I think he may do some work with LeBron. But they were flying in to play the Suns Thursday night but they were there on Wednesday, so he asked if there was a possibility and if we had the chance to play together. So I arranged my schedule to be able to be there on Wednesday afternoon, and that was it.

It was really fun. We got to play 13 holes because we teed off at 3:30, so there wasn't a lot of daylight. But it was quite unique to see somebody of his caliber as an athlete, with his weight in the world and physical stature and everything be as giggly as he was, just being able to play golf and watch him because it was me, the owner of the golf course, and Pat Perez was there, as well.

Watching players play a really high level of golf when he had never seen it, when usually 99 percent of the time it's all of us watching us play basketball, watching him do what he's done for 20 years, it was quite unique for me to see. I'm so happy. He was just over the moon, smiling the whole time. He just started playing golf, so he hasn't had the time to develop yet, and quite frankly this game is not made for somebody who's 6'9". I don't think anybody makes clubs for a 6'9" beginner that's that strong. He's going to have to go through a bit of a painful process of learning all of the basics before he can truly enjoy playing good golf.

But it was a really fun afternoon.

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