

# LIV Golf South Africa

Tuesday, 17 March, 2026

Midrand, Gauteng, South Africa

The Club at Steyn City

**Jon Rahm**

**Tyrrell Hatton**

**Tom McKibbin**

**Caleb Surratt**

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, let's welcome to the media center Legion XIII, led by captain Jon Rahm, along with Tyrrell Hatton, Tom McKibbin and Caleb Surratt.

Jon, through four events in this season with LIV Golf, the league has had four different individual champions. You've been in contention in all four, obviously the win in Hong Kong. But just looking at the diversity of winners from Elvis in Riyadh to AK in Adelaide to how things wrapped up last week in Singapore with Bryson, what does that tell you about the competition and the level of play in this league?

JON RAHM: I don't know quite how to give you a non-obvious answer. There's high level of golf in the league, and there's always going to be certain people that can consistently play at a certain level. But anybody can win any given week, and I think last week is a perfect example of that.

With Elvis, we've had a bit of a history as a league, in the short history, of a new player coming in and winning right away. I don't know why that's happened. We've had a few players. I can think of Henrik and Cam and Elvis alone, or if not winning, doing a good job as well.

I think it's fantastic. The more diversity we get, the better. It's never easy to win, and I think hopefully some of us up here can get more wins if not all four of us.

I think it speaks to the difficulty, as well, of getting things done.

**Q. Tom, you've played in South Africa a number of times before, including here at Steyn City. How have you enjoyed playing in this country and this course, and does that experience help at all heading into this week?**

TOM MCKIBBIN: Yeah, I think this is my 11th trip here to South Africa. I've been here a lot over the last three or four years. Sort of started my journey as a pro off down here playing Challenge Tour, and then on the DP events, and now here.

Yeah, I've played this course three years ago sort of around this same time. I think it's a very different style of golf here. Obviously a very different type of grass to hit off.

I think hopefully knowing that I've played on it so many times and I know what I like and dislike about it, sort of hitting off some of these lies, hopefully I can use that to my advantage a little bit and hopefully have a good week.

I know the last time I was here, I really enjoyed the course. I know the holes are in a little bit of a different order, but looking forward to going out there this afternoon and getting a look at it.

**Q. Tyrrell, you're currently set to play in three of the four majors this year, including the Masters next month, and you've had a couple of top-10 finishes, including a T3 in Adelaide. How are you feeling about the state of your game heading into major season approaching?**

TYRRELL HATTON: Yeah, it's been somewhat of an inconsistent start for me. Obviously not a great week in Riyadh, where we -- I think I was 47th maybe, and then the following week finished tied third, and Hong Kong was 45th and last week was 10th. Maybe I'll play terrible this week and then play good at the Masters if I'm sort of on the odds-and-evens theme.

Either way, I'll try my best, and hopefully we can have a good week.

**Q. Caleb, on the team side, Legion XIII currently sits in third place in the team standings. This is our debut, as you know, in South Africa. For fans that are still learning about LIV Golf, learning about the league and the different format, what has being part of a team**

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**meant for your career thus far, and how does that dynamic come into play?**

CALEB SURRATT: Yeah, it means everything. I think I'd speak for Tom, as well, when I say that getting to spend time learning under Jon and Tyrrell is nearly priceless, especially for guys at our age right now.

I think we're both great players. I think I'm definitely on the right track and showing a lot of really good signs of trending in the right direction.

I know when I begin to hit my stride and play really consistent golf, everything I've learned from Jon and Tyrrell and competing around these guys is going to be huge for the betterment and future of my career out here and in majors eventually.

Yeah, I'm very pleased and couldn't be happier where I am and how things are going.

**Q. Jon, your home course back home, Silverleaf in Arizona, it's an estate course. Obviously playing estate golf is very different to parkland courses and other tracks. Seeing Steyn City is an estate course, does that change how you're coming into the week? Is that something you're going to share with the other guys? And how does that affect your approach overall?**

JON RAHM: Well, both courses play very different. Silverleaf overall is overseed, extremely wide fairways, tricky greens. Just with the fact that we have kikuyu here, it plays quite different. Off the tee, you're not going to expect a lot of roll; you can probably be aggressive.

There's quite a bit of a margin of error off the tee, so hitting it long is going to be an advantage. Greens seem to be soft. It's going to be tricky to get them as firm as they probably want to. But that combination essentially gives the people that hit it the furthest an advantage. And I would say the same thing in desert golf; usually it's not as firm as it needs to be. Power and birdies is what you need. Not that people that hit it a little bit shorter can't do it, but when you give some of the best players in the world that have distance free range off the tee, you're going to see a lot of birdies, and I think that's what's going to happen.

Again, with the fantastic facilities they have here and the crew working on the course, if they can get it up to speed and firm, it could change a little bit, but I think as of now you're going to have to expect some low scores unless we get some really heavy wind just because at altitude it also plays a little bit shorter than the distance will say on the scorecard.

**Q. Tyrrell, as an ardent golf fan watching week in and week out, I'm always in awe how golfers conduct themselves in high-pressure situations.**

**Self-deprecation seems to be your go-to, which introduces you to a whole different fan set. Do you have a mental coach or do you feel like the way you deal with things on the fly helps you out and gets you through?**

TYRRELL HATTON: I don't think it would surprise you to hear that I don't have a mental coach. (Laughter.)

Yeah, that just doesn't work for me. I just kind of react to the situation that I've put myself in and then try and get on with it.

**Q. Tom and Caleb, do you guys learn from this or take more a leaf out of Jon's book in that way?**

TYRRELL HATTON: Jon's calm as well, isn't he, to be fair.

JON RAHM: If there is something they don't need to learn from us, that's the one thing they could just avoid and pick something else.

**Q. Jon, you mentioned the kikuyu grass and it's been brought up in the other press conferences before this. What kind of impact did that have on your club selection on what's in your bag this week?**

JON RAHM: I travel with the absolute minimum clubs I need. Honestly, my whole career there's been very little change. Unless we have obviously the new clubs, new irons or new driver or whatever it may be, the only change I have in the bag is either playing 5-wood or 2-iron. That's it. I don't change my wedges. I don't change anything.

I feel like thinking about having to change clubs is more complicated for me than having to adjust whatever I'm going to do myself technique-wise on the golf course. With these fairways, I think the main thing is that the ball sits up so high, you do get a bit more of a solid strike, so irons can go a little bit further. As long as you're aware of it, it's not -- there's nothing else that needs to be changed.

So yeah, in my case, I don't change -- I don't like to change, especially tournament week. Yeah, it seems like a bit of an overcomplication for me, at least for my type of game.

**Q. For Tyrrell and Tom, do you guys have any plans the next couple weeks to get to Augusta National for a look at the property ahead of the Masters?**

TYRRELL HATTON: Yeah, so me and Tom, we're going to fly up on the Sunday in the middle of the two weekends off. So we'll play Sunday afternoon and then Monday morning and then go back to Orlando. It's going to be my tenth Masters, which seems somewhat crazy to say because I still feel and act like a kid, I guess.

Yeah, my experience there and going with Tom and it'll be his first time, I'm excited to share that with him. I'm sure it will be a good couple of days.

TOM McKIBBIN: Yeah, as Tyrrell said, going to go and join him for a little practice trip. Yeah, something I'm really excited to do, go for the first time and sort of get to enjoy that experience playing with Tyrrell, who's obviously -- as I said, that's his tenth trip. Yeah, I'm really looking forward to it and excited.

**Q. Tom, if you've only seen the Masters and that course two dimensionally through a television screen, what are you most looking forward to seeing in 3D?**

TOM McKIBBIN: I don't know. I mean, all I've heard from the two guys here is how hilly it is and some of the lies on the fairway, some of the slopes. I don't think I'll be able to quite wrap my head around some of the stances and things like that.

I think seeing that in person will be probably the biggest surprise. Yeah, I've watched it on TV now probably for 14 or 15 years. Yeah, just sort of excited to sort of see all those places where some of those famous shots were hit from and things like that. It will be pretty cool.

**Q. Jon, what are your thoughts heading into Augusta?**

JON RAHM: Into Augusta? My thoughts? I hope I win. I'm going to try my best and hope I can get a second green jacket. That's the goal.

**Q. Jon, you mentioned this is your first trip to South Africa. Caleb, I'm assuming this is your first trip. Tyrrell, I'm not sure. I'm curious, when you come to a new place for the first time, how much importance do you place on trying to enjoy the local culture while also prepping for a tournament?**

JON RAHM: I try to as much as possible enjoy it. It all depends on the venue and where we're at. There's some places it's a lot easier and more accessible than others.

With the journey distance Monday, it's a bit of a wash of a day because of jet lag and you also want to prepare for the tournament, so we don't have an abundance of time to work with to be able to do more local things.

Unfortunately, this is one of those weeks where we haven't had the time, but maybe at a different time in the schedule in the future, we might be able to stay before or after to enjoy South Africa a little bit. I've heard great things about it, it's just unfortunately this year isn't the best time and having the Masters so close afterwards and having played the last two weeks.

Maybe the cuisine in the hotel, ask the South African boys what we can do. I'm sure they can give us ideas close by. But nothing too adventurous this week.

**Q. Caleb, what did the family back home say about you being in Africa?**

CALEB SURRATT: I haven't really spoken to them too much. They're all excited to follow my journey. I'm going on the longest I've been away from home ever. This is my seventh week out. I think they're all excited to see what we can do this week.

I think, at least myself, it's very easy to not picture South Africa like this. Like this is one of the most beautiful places I've ever been and I love the setup here in Steyn City. I look forward to coming back. It's pretty incredible.

**Q. Jon, a couple of weeks ago, fairly outspoken Irish golfer went rogue and alluded to the fact that you're not even that keen to come to South Africa. I'd love to ease my own pain and probably the pain of a lot of people. Now that you're here, are you stoked to be with us?**

JON RAHM: I think you could see as a response to that, there was a video that I made with a South African journalist of my expressing my enthusiasm to be here. Hasn't changed. I'm very happy to be here and very convinced it's going to be a really fun tournament. My only regret is what I said. I wish I had time to stay afterwards and enjoy South Africa a little bit more, but I'm sure I'll have time in the future. We're looking forward to this for a while.

Been speaking quite a bit to the Southern Guard boys and their GM, and anytime I speak to them, my expectations get higher, and it's been met every single step of the way. I wouldn't want to be anywhere else. Really looking forward to what the South African crowd is going to be like on the weekend.

**Q. As long as you know that you're officially our second favorite but still right up at the top, so thanks for being here with us.**

JON RAHM: I will take that. That's a big compliment.



**Q. Jon, you guys will most likely have three of your players in all the majors, which is more than any other team on LIV. Is that something that you guys take pride in, in representing LIV Golf and Legion XIII on the big stage?**

JON RAHM: I hadn't thought about it until now. Yeah. Yeah. I think it speaks to the level of golf that we've all had before and after joining LIV. Yeah. The goal now would be to hopefully have all four of us in majors and say all of us are good enough to qualify and be there. I wouldn't be surprised if it happens in the near future.

**Q. Tom, you've had the most experience in South Africa. Is it a different vibe this week where the guys are relying on you to give some advice and ask some questions about the way it's going to play and the altitude and the kikuyu grass?**

JON RAHM: Yeah, can you tell us how to play? We need all the advice possible here, Tom. We haven't won yet this year.

TOM McKIBBIN: Yeah, I've had very good weeks playing golf here. I've also had very bad weeks playing golf here. I think when I started out playing here, had a lot of very good weeks and good finishes, and I think as I played more, I almost overcomplicated it a little bit with the altitude and things like that.

The last couple of times I've been here I sort of went back to making it a little bit simpler, so when I first came here, I just used a meters book instead of a yards book, then I started going and trying to work it out with yards, and I just tried to simplify it again and just go off meters and try and make it a little bit easier.

I think with all the different variables, with the grass and the altitude, it can become quite confusing and you can make it quite sort of a math equation, if you wish. That's where it didn't go too well for me, so I'm trying to make it as simple as possible and trying to make as normal golf as I can.

**Q. Tom, if I could pull on that Masters thread a little bit more, where did you watch last year's Masters?**

TOM McKIBBIN: I was in Dubai watching -- I think I was up until like 3:00, 4:00 in the morning every night watching, trying to stay awake. Yeah, it was a very long week for me, just not much sleep, and yeah, watching it from home. To sort of see the whole week as it went and then obviously that very dramatic Sunday and back nine was very interesting to watch.

Obviously the outcome was amazing, and obviously something he had been trying to do for a very long time, and to see him achieve that was really cool. But to sort of watch some of those moments that he put himself in was kind of difficult.

But yeah, that's my memories of it. A lot of late nights watching.

**Q. Do you anticipate maybe practicing with Rory or some of the Irish lads or just kind of hanging out with Jon and Tyrrell and trying to learn from them when you get over to Augusta?**

TOM McKIBBIN: I haven't really thought about it, to be totally honest. I'm sure I'll play with these guys. Yeah, if those guys want to play, as well, I'll gladly play with them, too. Yeah, trying to get as much sort of experience and learn from a lot of the guys that did well there. So yeah, try and plan to play with as many people as I can.

**Q. Jon, in January you very graciously declined a Turkish hair transplant. You did say you had other friends that were decent candidates. Has that conversation gone on any further seeing as one of those friends is on the stage with you?**

JON RAHM: It was nothing more than a joke. After obviously talking about it on the podcast I'm surprised Ozempic didn't reach out as well because that's what we heard the most all week. Never did I think that a Turkish hair transplant clinic would be reaching out for anything like that. But it's good to know we have the option if and when it's needed.

I don't think Tyrrell or Shane have made an appointment yet, but if we need a three for one discount I'm sure we can get it.

**Q. Tyrrell, you want to be in contention for a green jacket. Green jacket, full head of hair, that's the real story, right?**

TYRRELL HATTON: I didn't realize you needed hair to play good golf. Yeah, I don't really care about that, if I'm honest. I would rather just -- I'd love to give myself a chance to win a green jacket, but so far that's proved pretty difficult to do. Probably one of the biggest regrets of my career so far is not taking a picture of Jon and Brooks on the Sunday in '23 because we had a two-tee shotgun start, and I think it was me and Max Homa went off the first. We were the first group out off 10, so when we looped back around we were obviously playing behind Jon, and I kind of felt that was the closest I'll ever get to a final group on Sunday at the Masters. (Laughter.)

**Q. What are some of the expectations that you guys had coming to South Africa, and what has been some of the surprises that you've experienced since you've got here?**

JON RAHM: I'm a little stumped there. There's certain expectations, obviously, from talking to the South African boys but not hard to really create a picture in your mind of what the week is going to be like, having never been here, at least in my case. Tom is different, he's experienced it, but heard great things about the hotel, great things about the course, great things about the food, and so far everything has been met. It's been wonderful. Very few places we have a better setup when it comes to facilities and the golf course or gym or recovery area, our hotel. The staff has been great to work with. It's unbelievable, as well.

As far as tournament goes, it's been incredible. I wish, again, like I said, we had a few more days to enjoy what's outside Steyn City.

**Q. Tyrrell, you had a pretty big smile there; I feel like there's a story?**

TYRRELL HATTON: No, not one to share anyway.

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