

Senior PGA Championship

The Concession Golf Club

Bradenton, Florida, USA

Thursday, April 16, 2026

Jose Maria Olazabal

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Jose Maria Olazabal is with us now at the 2026 Senior PGA Championship. A nice 68 for you today in round one. What went well for you?

JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL: Well, the game was not all that sharp, I have to say, from tee to green. Especially the irons were not all that good.

I putted extremely well today. I made a lot of putts. On the first 12 holes I think I made all the putts that I had a chance. Then, you know, I made a couple of good saves, like the one on eight.

I would put it more down to good putting today than anything else. My game, you know, it's not sharp, it's not good, but I managed my way around the golf course today. Yeah, I emphasize maybe that the putter was the key today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. You were kind of explaining, but 5-under after ten holes. So what were you feeling at that point, and what was the challenge after that?

JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL: Obviously I was extremely happy. I wasn't expecting that. I started playing, you know, okay, nothing great. I kept on hitting greens. I didn't put the ball close to the hole maybe except a couple of holes, but what I did was just -- as I said before, I mean, I putted really well. I was 5-under par after ten holes.

Then I missed a few shots. I missed the green on two. I missed the green on three. I missed the green on four, on five, on six. You know, it's what I said. I just hung on on the back nine the best I could. I managed to shoot level par round on that back nine, but as I said, I missed, like, five greens on that back nine for me.

You know, I'm missing the irons left, and I cannot figure it out. I've been working hard at it. Well, I guess I'm going to have to spend a little bit more time on the driving range this afternoon (smiling).

Q. When you walk away today, and of course, every golfer wants to improve whatever is not there today, but do you walk away feeling like you missed an opportunity because of your irons, or do you think you saved an opportunity because of the putting?

JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL: No, I mean, I save it. The way I hit the ball, I mean, you know, to shoot 4-under par, it was extraordinary, to be honest. Obviously I take a lot of positives, but I look at it as a fantastic round for the way I hit the ball.

Obviously I know that I need to improve my ball striking to stay what I am at the moment. I know I do have a lot of work ahead, but as I said, I mean, I'm extremely happy with a 68 today.

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