

Travelers Championship

Wednesday, August 3, 2016

Jon Rahm

Press Conference



TRAVELERS
CHAMPIONSHIP



THE MODERATOR: We'd like to welcome Jon Rahm into the interview room here at the Travelers Championship. Jon, earlier this week you took a PGA Tour special temporary membership. You've had some nice finishes since turning professional, including most recently a T-2 at the RBC Canadian Open.

Talk about that decision and also being here at the Travelers Championship.

JON RAHM: That decision of?

THE MODERATOR: Special temporary membership.

JON RAHM: Oh, I mean, it's obviously great to be able to get unlimited invites. It's unfortunate that it's so late in the year and there are only three tournaments left.

But to get that status so late with such few events, it's obviously a great feeling.

THE MODERATOR: Few comments here about being at the Travelers championship; thoughts on the golf course and the tournament.

JON RAHM: Well, the tournament is great. I got to say, besides Phoenix Open it's probably one of the tournaments I've been treated the best. I loved it last year and for sure was glad they invited me to play again this year.

There have been some changes on the course, yeah, which I do really like. They've given it a different look. Taken a couple trees out, a couple bunkers changed, and I would say it makes it a little more challenging for long hitters because they put the bunkers a little farther away so we can't carry anymore.

But I do like the view of it, the renovation of bunkers. I do like the changes they've done on 15, for example. It looks a little bit tougher than last year.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. I saw you the week at Quicken, your first event as a pro, and you seemed really relaxed. Obviously you've really taken to becoming a professional now. How much did having success before you turned pro on tour help in that transition to having a little bit more success early on?

JON RAHM: It was key I would say. That Top 5 in Phoenix and Top 5 in Mayakoba gave me the confidence that I can do it. You know, being an amateur and not being prepared for those events fully as much as I could have been opened my eyes. So the quality of player that I was showed me how much I could do in sport.

Now that I've had a chance to practice and get dedicated for this tournament and have the experience especially after U.S. Open, it did help a lot for that tournament in Congressional.

Q. Anything you learned in your starts since you turned pro that maybe you didn't really think about at the time? Anything that's really helped you make that transition?

JON RAHM: I got to say something I learned in Congressional is that I was leading after two days, and on the weekend I did everything a little bit faster. I started walking fast, my routine was faster, my swing was faster. That's probably why I couldn't hit the driver the way I did the first two days at Congressional. So that's something I learned that day and I put in play in Canada.

Instead of coming from behind, I gave me a chance to win and almost had a chance to tie the lead on the last hole, instead of Congressional when I was leading and lost that lead and had to make it up on the last few holes.

I did learn that I have to be a little bit more relaxed on the weekend.

Q. I know turning pro is difficult, but you've made it look really easy over your first few starts. Have you been surprised by how quickly you've had success out here on tour?

JON RAHM: Yeah, yeah. I did not expect my first tournament to have a chance to win, like I said. I did not expect that on my first tournament on the 15th hole I would have the putt to tie the lead. I did not expect that.

I did have the confidence in myself that I would be able to play good in all the invites I had. It was six events. But I did not know I was going to get temporary status in basically three PGA tournaments and qualify for the

British Open.

It just happened really fast and I played a lot better than I thought I was going to play.

Q. I know Tim is now with you as representation. Was that always in the cards? How did that come about?

JON RAHM: Yeah, well, we had mentioned it a couple times when I was still in school. The biggest thing is that he had to make the decision if he was going to stay in college as a college coach or not. Once he made that decision -- we did talk about it, but, I mean, that's pretty much it.

He did have to make the decision of leaving.

Q. How great it is to have him in your corner now out here?

JON RAHM: It's great. I mean, I don't know if I told him personally before, but I always said that while I was in the States those four years he was pretty much my dad. He was the guy I went to when I needed help and the guy I went to when I needed guidance.

For years he's helped out a lot to become the player I am today.

Q. Last question: I know you stamp your wedges. You have Seve; I know you have an ASU logo on your wedges. Have you always stamped your wedges, or has that come about recently?

JON RAHM: No, I've always stamped my wedges but I had any nickname on it. I usually had Rambo on my 60-degree wedge. When I first got my 60-degree from TaylorMade they had the pitchfork and my name and I thought it looked pretty cool.

I just put Seve for Oakmont. I know he had a history on that course. He had a chance to win the U.S. Open.

When I was really close to missing the cut after the first day, I was like, Hey, let's see if I can get the help he didn't get that week, and I put his -- Seve and I think his nickname, el Matador, on the other one.

I would say I got pretty lucky that day and I ended making the cut. That is the only reason why I had it. I usually have something about my soccer team or nickname.

Q. What's your club?

JON RAHM: Athletic Club of Bilbao. They did try to put the logo in there, but there are just so many small details it just didn't fit. I have it in my bag though, and that's plenty.

Q. Are you superstitious about what you stamp on your wedges?

JON RAHM: I'm not superstitious at all. Whatever just comes to my head. I used to have Rambo, but now that I have the pitchfork I like it. I might change the other two wedges, but as I said I'm not superstitious at all.

Q. With the success that you've had so quickly, have you had to reassess your goals for the rest of the season?

JON RAHM: Not reassess, but it is a little bit of a relief not having to think on FedExCup points or money anymore. I don't have that in the back of my head, but I still compete to win every week.

I really think I haven't changed anything so far.

Q. (No microphone.)

JON RAHM: A little bit. I mean, it is, like I said, a relief when you get that temporary status. I still don't know the points or the money made. All I know is that I'm close enough.

So it is a relief. I will hopefully play better in the next three events.

THE MODERATOR: Good luck this week, Jon.

JON RAHM: Thank you.