

ROUND 3 INTERVIEW
January 26, 2019



JON RAHM (-14)

Q. You won two years ago and we were just talking about how this leaderboard is shaping up. You know how to play well here, but when you see those two guys ahead of you, what does that do for your mentality heading into tomorrow?

JON RAHM: I've just got to play good. It's sort of like a couple years ago when I'm a few shots back, I really need a special round. You definitely (inaudible) tomorrow to have a chance, so hopefully make some birdies early.

Q. We were talking about your ball-striking a little bit. The back nine hasn't gone particularly the way that you would want it to. How do you make those adjustments when you know it's really going to matter coming down the stretch on Sunday afternoon?

JON RAHM: You've got to understand, besides No. 10, 11 through 18 are really, really difficult holes. The back nine at Torrey Pines is no joke. The fact that I shot 6 under a couple years ago, it's a borderline miracle. It's very hard to do that again. I've just got to keep hitting good shots and put it in the fairway and be patient, and hopefully tomorrow my irons will be better than they've been the last few days. Again, I just need a chance going to the back nine.

Q. It has to help how special this place is for you. You proposed to your fiancée here at Torrey Pines Trails, your grandmother is here watching you for the very first time Stateside. How much does it help when these things are just so good off the course in this city in particular?

JON RAHM: It helps a lot before the rounds, right, whether it's good or bad. Yesterday I didn't play my best and my grandma's there. I never dreamed she would be able to be there. You know, when I play good, it's even better to be able to celebrate with them a little bit. It's definitely a special place. Like you mentioned, got engaged to Kelley here just down the street. It's definitely a lot of good vibes going on, so hopefully tomorrow I get another reason to have good vibes coming.

Q. Jon, good day, lots of fight, it's a hard golf course. That birdie on the last hole, that's a big birdie. What's it do to your psyche to put you in the final group and put that good taste in your mouth as you walk off tonight?

JON RAHM: You know, the most important thing about that birdie is that it was my first birdie on the back nine on the South course. And I was very aware of that actually before hitting the putt, I really wanted to make it. I felt like I played really good all week, especially

off the tee. My iron play besides the first day has been below average to what I'm used to. I think it's the one thing missing. If I'm able to hit my irons a little bit better tomorrow and get off to a similar fashion start, I might have a chance.

Q. I was just going to venture I've seen every single shot you've hit this week from Thursday to today and I thought just a few more looks with the putter, a few more greens would be a great recipe. Is that the recipe for tomorrow?

JON RAHM: Yeah, yeah, it's just, you know, playing a little bit smarter. There's a couple holes, like No. 3, you can't miss it left on No. 3, set myself up for a bogey. A couple others as well. If you're just smart and not too greedy and hit the center of the green and give yourself looks, you're going to make them eventually and close the gap. So, you know, just play smart golf tomorrow. Hopefully I can keep hitting as good as I have off the tee and keep giving myself chances.

Q. This is a very special part of the world for you for many reasons and we know grandma's in town, so go get one for grandma.

JON RAHM: We were in Spain for the Ryder Cup. So like she says, she's seen me play twice and I've won both of them, so hopefully I can keep going.

Q. What's the biggest difference from Friday to Saturday for you?

JON RAHM: You know, I hit the ball a little bit better off the tee. I only missed two fairways and the two that I missed were barely right off the fairway.

I think it was just, you know, a couple of short putts that I made early on. Yesterday I missed a couple of them, three-putted 9. Had a lot of good momentum going, just couldn't seem to get it going and today I did. Yesterday my iron play was really bad. Today it was bad, but still had a couple of good shots in there, though. I'm feeling good and my body's feeling really good. I just hope that the iron shots get a little bit better tomorrow.

Q. How much do you hope to draw upon 2017 and the memories of that back nine tomorrow?

JON RAHM: I'm not going to do what I did in 2017 again, the course is playing a lot harder. The greens are firmer and, you know, that makes it a lot more difficult to hit it close. That year the greens were really, really accessible and I was just firing at every pin and I was hitting it good, the ball would stop right away. The pins, like the one we're going to have tomorrow back right on 11, if you land it by the pin it probably won't stop, so it's going to be different.

I think a lot of the work maybe early on if I could shoot -- if I can go 4 under on the front nine and close the gap, it's going to be very important tomorrow. If it's a couple shots back going into that back nine with how difficult it is, you don't need anything special, I just need to be

around.

Q. Given how tough this course has been playing, how surprised are you to see Justin be able to distance himself from the pack like he does?

JON RAHM: Both ways, I'm extremely surprised and I'm not at all. Justin is a ball-striking machine, he's been playing so good the last year and a half and he rarely makes mistakes. It happens often. Colonial was another tournament where we never thought the score was going to be so low, especially with how windy it was, and Justin just kept on going.

I feel like I've been playing very good myself, the only difference has been a couple of birdies on the back line the last few days, that was the only thing. Like I said, if I could start early with a couple good birdies early on and put a little bit of pressure on him, there's definitely a chance.

Q. That tweak with your iron game, is that close or do you feel -- is it a big fix or small?

JON RAHM: It's golf. It's a small fix. Honestly, it's a tiny thing. It's one thing where tomorrow I might just wake up and hit it perfect. Today it just didn't seem to happen. A lot of times it's just a mental thing. You know, tee off tomorrow like it never happened and just have full confidence in what I can do.