

**ROUND 3 INTERVIEW**  
**January 25, 2020**



**JON RAHM (-12)**

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**DOUG MILNE:** We'll get started with Jon Rahm.

Thanks for joining us after a very impressive bogey-free 7-under 65. Once we did start playing today you certainly got off quick with a birdie-eagle start. Obviously a place very special to you with your win in 2017, first win on Tour. Just a few comments on today's round.

**JON RAHM:** Hard to know where to begin. I mean, the chip-in on one and hole-out on two, 3 under through two holes, no putts. It's, yeah, a pretty good start, pretty good way to get things going, but I was still focused on hunting Ryan and hunting the lead, right? Ten under par, I was still a couple off. I knew Tiger was playing good, a couple good rounds out there. So definitely knew it was gettable, but at the same time you have three, four, seven and eight at Torrey Pines that are not easy holes, right, and the whole back nine. So focused on keep hitting good shots, put myself in great situations, but I would say the MVP of today would be my lob wedge. I mean, the up-and-downs on five, six, 12, 13, 14 and 15 saved the round. It changed a round that could have been 3, 4 under, which is still a great round, into a bogey-free 7 under. Especially those bunker shots, they weren't easy and I made it look pretty easy after seeing some of the highlights. Hopefully I don't need it tomorrow, hopefully I can hit a few more greens and give myself more birdie chances, but it all starts off the tee, so hopefully I can put the ball on the fairway like I have and play good from there.

**Q. Jon, since we didn't see the hole-out on, can you describe the chip-in on one and the hole-out on two? Clubs, length?**

**JON RAHM:** Yeah. So I hit an 8-iron on one at 147-meters. It was right at pin high just right of the green, good lie. Honestly, the most straightforward chip shot I could have, I just had to get on the green and release down and that's what I did.

On two I think it was 103 meters, so 113 yards and a little bit of wind off the right, a little bit down. Caught a bit of a gust so I hit a draw with a 56, landed about four feet short, skipped up and landed in the hole.

**Q. Did you come close on three for birdie?**

**JON RAHM:** It did come close, yes. I hit it about 20, 30 feet left and it did graze the hole. I thought I made it honestly, I thought it might be one of those days.

**Q. Jon, yesterday you seemed to have at points in the round there was some frustrating moments, particularly early in the round. I just wonder what you did to**

**kind of get out of that and what your mindset was last night and just how different you felt this morning.**

**JON RAHM:** Man, no matter what I do, I'm going to be frustrated, huh? Yesterday I just --

**Q. (No microphone.)**

**JON RAHM:** Oh, I was all over the place. I couldn't hit a fairway, that's what happened. I missed the fairway on one, on three, on five, on -- hit on nine, but then I missed basically every single fairway on the back nine except 13, so I hit maybe four fairways. It was a miracle I shot under par yesterday, that's why I was frustrated.

I sliced it on 14 to the right, sliced it on 15 again, and today might be the first time in years that I hit that fairway on 15. I can't remember the last time I hit it. That was the frustration. I missed it right on 17, right on 18 again, right? So it's just I wasn't feeling really confident with the driver.

But luckily, missing right is not a bad thing here at Torrey Pines South, right? You're still going to be in play. I was able to make pars and actually hit some greens from those spots. That was the only frustration off the tee. Afterward, I just kept going and tried to do the best I could.

**Q. Your back nine Sunday in 2017 took you way out of a pack that was really bunched. What will that do for you tomorrow when you come down to that last stretch tomorrow? That will give you confidence, obviously. You've done a lot since then as well.**

**JON RAHM:** The back nine three years ago? I mean, it was three years ago. It will do absolutely nothing really.

The only thing it's going to do is keep me focused, no matter how good I'm playing, knowing that somebody can come and do the same thing. That's the only thing it would do.

Hopefully, I don't need to shoot 6 under. Hopefully, I do shoot 6 under honestly and I don't have to stress down the stretch. But if I take anything from that week, I would say I would like to hit it tee to green like I did. I absolutely flushed it. I don't know I missed any green on the back nine and I was always in a good spot. So if I can copy that, I'll be really, really happy.

**Q. Kind of a similar question, are there any similarities maybe with the way you're playing or the way you feel right now to when you won here?**

**JON RAHM:** I mean, that win was sort of unique because I don't know where Ryan's at, but I'm most likely going to tee off with the lead or really close to the lead this time, you know, with the experience of having done it.

At that time I didn't know any better and I was three shots back when I started the day and bogeyed the hole, so I just went flag hunting on every single shot after that. And it paid off, right? I was able to hit a lot of good shots going at flags that maybe I shouldn't go for.

So, you know, I didn't know any better and that's what I was going for and it worked out. But I can't pretend to play that good every single time, right? I'm not hitting it nearly as good as I did that week even though I put myself in good position.

There's not that many similarities. The golf course is playing different, just a couple of changes on the course, it's playing a bit longer. Again, the only thing I could say, if anything, if I can hit it as good as I did off the tee as I did three years ago, it will be a good day.

**Q. And you're married now, Jon. That's the difference too, right?**

**JON RAHM:** Well, I was talking about golf, but yeah, yeah.

**Q. It seemed like a pretty important stretch from, say, 12 through about 15 or 16 getting up and down sometimes for birdie. What was the most important one for you and why of those saves you had?**

**JON RAHM:** I think they're all really important. I would even go as far as saying the par at 11. I hit a good shot into the green, had a terrible read and made a good four-footer for par. I would say all of them are equally as important. No matter when, a shot is a shot.

But I would say if I had to pick one, I would say 14 just because of how good of a tee shot I hit and I was so close to the green that making a bogey from there would have felt a little bit worse than maybe missing one of the up-and-downs on the other holes.

**Q. I guess what I meant (no microphone.)**

**JON RAHM:** Oh, difficulty? I would say 15 just because it's such a downhill so it's easy to get through the hole. I would have said 14 had I not had such a good lie in the rough. I mean, it was really, really good. Had I been deep in the rough, it would have been terrible, but I would say the up-and-down -- and if I have to pick the up-and-down of the day, I would say five, that's the hardest one I had today, for sure.

**Q. Why?**

**JON RAHM:** Well, because they're all equally as important, it's a simple as that. If I hit one to maybe six feet and made it, I may have said that, but just because of how good the shot was at 15 and almost making it, I'll say 15.

**Q. Jon, sort of a bigger picture question. Given how well you've been playing recently, is this the most confident you've ever felt on the golf course and do you feel**

**like the best player in the world right now?**

**JON RAHM:** If this is the most confident I've been on a golf course? No. I think I'm playing a little bit smarter maybe, just learning as a pro.

What was the other part of the question?

**Q. Do you feel like the best player in the world right now?**

**JON RAHM:** I think we all try to show up to a golf tournament thinking we're the better player that week and we can do it and it's just a matter of showing it. So hopefully I can keep playing good, do it tomorrow and I can be back here and tell you I was the better player that week.

**Q. As much as you've talked about how much you love everything about San Diego and the things off the course, do they contribute to a mindset on the course when you're out there?**

**JON RAHM:** I think so. It's just a really good atmosphere. And we come here so often that it almost feels like, with Phoenix and Spain, a home event honestly. We spend a lot of time here. We stay at the same hotel every time we come and it's just comfortable. That's the best word, comfortable and familiar, and once you're comfortable and you just keep on going in that routine, it's easier to play good golf.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

**JON RAHM:** Honestly, I just had a second cup of coffee, that's as simple as I can say it. You keep getting the texts, you know 10-minute delay, 30-minute delay, and you hear people making plans. All I said is it's going to be at least two hours. I grew up in similar weather to here, I've been here enough to know it doesn't clear up until 9:30 or so. I just took it easy, just talked about whatever we had to do, and once we got the text of it's go time, it's go time.

**Q. What's your outlook for tomorrow on a course where someone could get a hot hand and come from behind as you yourself have done?**

**JON RAHM:** Sorry, I couldn't understand. What did you say?

**Q. What's your outlook or approach for tomorrow on a golf course where someone could get a hot hand, because we've seen it before, including from you?**

**JON RAHM:** My approach? Just play the best round that I can, honestly. I wasn't really paying attention to the pins, I'm assuming they're going to be difficult. I know the first few, and if you play good golf and you have nothing to lose and you go aggressive, you can definitely shoot low. You have to play really good. Again, like I said, it all starts off the tee.

So putting the ball in the fairway, I'm feeling comfortable enough to fire at some of those pins and hopefully get it going early on and play a good round.

**DOUG MILNE:** All right. Jon, thanks for your time. Best of luck tomorrow.

**JON RAHM:** Thank you.