

# Desert Classic

Friday, January 18, 2019

## Jon Rahm

### Quick Quotes



**Q. Let's talk about your finish. I'm guessing that you're disappointed with the pars at 7 and 9 but really happy with the par that you made at 8.**

JON RAHM: Yeah, I mean there's not much else to say. The putt on 9 that I missed, you can miss a 12-footer, it was just -- I didn't really realize the ball was in a hole on the fringe over there, had a really -- it didn't look like it, that's why the chip just didn't come out. Had I noticed I would have putted the ball and probably hit it within five feet. But it is what it is. I think the one thing that bothers me the most on the back nine is that on 4 and 7 I hit a great drive and a great second shot and they both ended up off the green and I didn't get up-and-down on any of them. But still if you go back on the round I made two great putts on 1 and 2 for birdie, so at the end it all balances out.

**Q. It turned into a great par for you on 8 as well.**

JON RAHM: Yeah, I mean that's a really interesting pin they put this year -- Chez made it look easy -- but there's not much room. I tried to go five yards short and a little left and pulled it and ended up in the bunker and it's just a tough up-and-down. Didn't hit my best bunker shot, but a pretty good putt to save the hole.

**Q. Now you get to go to the Stadium Course for the weekend. Your last competitive round there turned into a victory.**

JON RAHM: Yeah, well, I mean hopefully I can have a round like that again, 5-under, bogey-free. I'll take it for the weekend. But it's playing a little bit different this year, it's a little softer, a little slower, maybe it shows that some people have been scoring better than past years. But it's still a very, very difficult golf course and you have to hit it good and hopefully I just keep the mojo that I had last year going.

**Q. Identical scores, different golf courses. How do you feel like you played today compared to yesterday?**

JON RAHM: I definitely played better today. I hit the ball really, really well, couple of rocky drives that went off line, but for the most part it was really good. Really good with the wedges. It was good with the putter. It's just a couple of little mistakes that I could say, the short putt on 3 and maybe getting up-and-down on one of the two par-5s on my back nine but besides that it was a really good round.

**Q. You seem to play well in defense of titles.**

JON RAHM: Do I?

**Q. It seems like it. You pop up on the leaderboards a lot. You seem to know that this tournament title hasn't been defended since '76 and how did you know that?**

JON RAHM: Well it's -- we looked at it because somebody mentioned it. And I was thinking, trying to think back and what was the last time I remember somebody winning it twice and, yeah, I couldn't figure it out, I usually have pretty good memory on those things and it turns out it was '76, '75. So quite some time. I mean it's golf courses where you can shoot very low, you don't need to play perfect that's probably why there's different winners every year. There's a lot of new players that come on TOUR early in the year and there's a lot of new players that come on and they're playing good, so it's difficult to defend because you need to shoot very low over single time you play here.

**Q. As defending champion what excites you about being back on the Stadium Course this weekend?**

JON RAHM: Well that I have a chance again, definitely. Even though it's the third day, it's going to be a little firmer tomorrow, but it's going to be playing a little shorter compared to the last few days, so my ball striking if it stays on pace like it's been the last few days I'll definitely have a chance to post a score.

**Q. What is the biggest difference between the Stadium and the other two courses?**

JON RAHM: It's a lot more penalizing. Both La Quinta and Nicklaus, you can spray a little bit off the tee and not have to worry about it. There's a lot of holes and actually on almost every hole on Stadium where you actually need to place it in the right side of the fairway. Hole No. 5, where you need to hit a great drive and a great second shot, otherwise you're probably finding the water. If you try to play defensive you can end up in really hard up-and-downs. It's just a lot more demanding in every single aspect, but luckily tee to green is what's usually my strong suit, it's the reason why I won last year, so hopefully it goes through again.