

# U.S. Open Championship 2023

Saturday, June 17, 2023

Los Angeles, California, USA

The Los Angeles Country Club

## Tom Kim

### Flash Interview

**Q. 4-under 66, an awesome start on the front with a 29. That's only the fifth 29 in U.S. Open history. What was working for you?**

TOM KIM: Kind of everything, really. Didn't have much mistakes. Really played solid golf. Didn't miss a shot, didn't miss a putt.

**Q. What was different on the back side there? You made a couple bogeys coming in.**

TOM KIM: I mean, to be honest, that back nine is really hard. You just don't really have any bail-outs. Those three bogeys really don't feel like bogeys because I barely missed it by a yard or two. But major championship golf, U.S. Open really brings it out of you.

Would have been nice to kind of par in and see that bogey-free or see one or two more birdies, but if you told me at the start of the day, I'd take that score.

**Q. Did the course play any differently than it did the first two days?**

TOM KIM: Yeah, a lot firmer and a lot faster.

**Q. You're still young, obviously, but you've played a few majors now. How would you compare the atmosphere out there compared to other majors you've played in the past? There were some comments that it's a little quieter than normal.**

TOM KIM: Yeah, I think they restricted the people to 20,000 people. Man, I would have loved to see this place packed. It's LA and it's in Beverly Hills. It is an amazing venue.

No, I think once you get into some holes there's a lot of people. I think it's pretty cool. Like I said, it's LA and it's the U.S. Open. Can't get any better.

**Q. Tom, when you're playing as well as you were for the first nine holes, I know it's only Saturday, but is it hard to keep yourself from thinking about the**



**scoreboard and the leaderboard and overthinking that part of it, or did you block it out?**

TOM KIM: Yeah, I think it definitely -- it did catch my mind once I was 7-under, after 10 where, man, if I can keep this going, have a good finish, I might -- and if the leaders kind of stumble, I might have a chance to be really close up there on Sunday, but it was a really short thought because I still had the hardest part of the golf course right in front of me.

It popped in for a second, but I got rid of it.

But no, the goal this week has been not to look at leaderboards, and I've been doing a great job on that. I didn't start great to the week. I had a 3-over on day one. But I kept doing what I needed to do and kept my head down and at least kind of have a chance to have a good finish tomorrow.

**Q. Did you even know you were 7-under through 10?**

TOM KIM: I did, yes.

**Q. Then you parred 11, and that seemed like a big par.**

TOM KIM: Man, 11. That hole, don't get me started.

**Q. But that was big because it seemed like a lot of people -- in fact, I think you gained a half a stroke just simply on a par. I was wondering what you allowed yourself to think about 62, 61. Do those thoughts even enter when you get past that hard of a hole?**

TOM KIM: No, not really. Like I was 7-under through 10, but I knew that the hardest part of the golf course was right in front of me, so I kept telling myself, I've just got to keep hitting good shots, and if I make birdies, great, if I don't, it's fine because I feel like the back nine you shoot even par you gain one or two shots on the field. It's a tough back nine.

11, they had the tee up. It was actually more trickier than when it was at the back because now you're between clubs, you've got to pick your bounces, know exactly where

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you want to land it. And that front pin, if you go in that right bunker you don't a really good shot to get up-and-down.

A lot going on on that hole, but it was a great 2-iron. I was going to go with a 3 but Joe kind of pulled me on the 2. It definitely was a nice par to kind of keep the momentum going.

**Q. Do you feel like there's any birdie holes from 11 on? Where you just go, I might get one here?**

TOM KIM: I think maybe 15 is a really good -- like 15 is probably one of the more realistic ones because it's a wedge, so if you have a wedge, you have a chance to get it close and have a chance.

But par-5, 14, like if you hit a good drive, get it up there, especially with a back pin, definitely, but those are only two holes out of how many. So not a lot.

**Q. Why did you think the 15th was playing tough today?**

TOM KIM: I mean, it was 76 yards, 80 something to the hole. You have four yards of green to work with. You're long, you're dead; you're short, you're dead. It's a really simple wedge shot, but with the wind kind of going down to left, down to left, you've got to really hit it at the right time.

It's a wedge. You don't want to bail out left. Then you have like a 40-footer down the hill. I just kind of got cute with me and kind of got plugged in the bunker.

I think a bogey -- bogey from 80 yards stats-wise isn't great, but I don't think it's -- definitely double is in play there.

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