

The Presidents Cup

Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Charlotte, North Carolina

Quail Hollow Club

Tom Kim

Press Conference



Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Driver, I would say -- played with Adam today so Adam's driving it really good. So I'd pick Adam. Iron play, confident in myself so I'll pick me. Short game, I think Hideki's got really good touch so I'll choose Hideki for that. Putting, I guess I'd have to pick myself because I won that putt on Sunday.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: It's great. You know, I've dreamt of this as a kid. For me to be able to represent the international team is an absolute honor. So I'm super pumped. I can't wait for Thursday to come. I've always dreamt of doing crazy fist bumps because it's match play. So I'm really looking forward to it.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Ball's going to go far. Adrenaline is going to pump. You know, swing as hard as you can, try to hit one good down the first hole. So the stands are incredible how they designed it. I think it's very unique. I can't wait for the fans to just keep on shouting.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Like it's -- can't put into words, really. I feel like I can speak for every player that -- every single player who can play for whether it's the United States or the international team, everyone wants a spot here. For me to be able to get, you know, inside the rankings and play, it's an honor. Like I said, it's hard to put into words about how pumped I am.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Not much. Like I wouldn't say, like, I'm a big trash talker. I just, you know, I just -- I'm a jokester with the guys I'm close with. And the whole team, I feel like I have a really good relationship with. So I just, as the youngest team member, you know, I just like to joke around a lot.

I'm lucky enough that they don't give me shit for it. But I'm pretty fortunate.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Jordan Spieth? Ooh. I don't think I'll be able to trash talk to Jordan Spieth, you know. But I'm not that close enough for me to do something like that. But I think Scottie, you know, he gives me a really hard time. So, you know, it would be fun if I could play with him whether it's singles or whatever. We'd probably give each other a hard time.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: I mean, it happens. It's golf, you know. Can't make every single putt. Got to move on and, you know, it is what it is.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: I think we don't play enough match play. It's very unique. We get one or twice a year, right? So it's very, very different and you got to go with a different game plan. Instead of thinking about a 72-hole stretch, the most important is the hole in front of you, right?

So it's very unique. Like I said, I feel like with the fist bumps and everything, that's something you can do because it is match play. You know, like, it's the first hole and you do it. It's kind of weird, if you play a 72-hole event. Because it is match play, you can do some things like that, it's very unique.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: I have not. But if that is true, you know, it's really awesome. It's really cool.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Like I think I was there because I just won the Order of Mary on the Asian Tour. So it was kind of a spot I needed to fill. But I've always known I wanted to play on the PGA TOUR. That was the main goal for me. To be



honest, I didn't have any status, whether it was the Korn Ferry Tour or the PGA TOUR. It's a crazy U-turn for me, but I wouldn't have changed it any other way.

The goal was to play on the PGA TOUR. So sacrificing a lot of things to be out here is something that our team hopes to encourage a lot of people to do instead of taking the easy route, you know, hopefully they can play, you know with a lot of good players on the PGA TOUR.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: For me, that's why I started golf. Growing up, I saw Tiger Woods as my idol. The way he did things on the PGA TOUR was, I felt like, was the only -- to do the things that he did, I feel like the PGA TOUR is the only place for that.

I don't see golf anywhere else other than the PGA TOUR. What drives me the most to be the best player I can is try to play -- go to the Major championships and play in the biggest events. I feel like if it was a different goal, I wouldn't be where I am today.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Not really sure. I would put a no comment on that. But all I can say is my goal was to be on the PGA TOUR, and it's definitely happened for me.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Yeah, it's definitely gotten big, you know. It's a small country in Asia, and it's incredible how we've gotten four of the guys in our team and, you know, it's incredible to see, again, it's really good for Asian golf, I feel like. To see we have four Asian golfers on the PGA TOUR and the Presidents Cup, I feel like it could inspire a lot of people back at home in Asia to say, okay, if we go to the PGA TOUR, we can play the Presidents Cup, you know. Stuff like that.

So with what's going on in the world, and especially in Asia, for us to be here, I think it's really good for Asian golf. So I'm very happy for that.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Yeah, I watched that, you know. As a Tiger fan, you expect Tiger to win. You know, first Asian to win a Major, it's a great title, especially to beat Tiger at his prime. It's something no one can take away from him. So I feel like, you know, the way it's entitled, you know, it is called that, but I don't like to call that word because I feel like we have a really good team. If we get really good match-ups, I

feel like we're good enough to play against the Americans. So, you know, I hope, you know, on Sunday we'll have a really good chance.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Yeah. My basketball, I'm a big NBA fan. I love the sport, but I'm terrible at it. So that's number one. I like to take that role because, again, I'm the youngest guy on the team, and I'm a big jokester. So playing that role, I feel like I can bring good energy and, you know, bring enlightenment to the team.

When things get tough, I feel I can bring people up. That's going to be my role, and hopefully I can fill in my shoes.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: I'd be both. I feel like I'm a very good team player. I told Trevor I would love to be a team player. Whatever he feels is best for the team, I'm going to do that. But when I have a chance, I am going to shoot, yeah. I am going to shoot.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Yes. It's in North Carolina so it's very close to where I won. That's why I felt like it was a great venue for me because it brings back good vibes of when I putted really, really well.

Apparently, so I changed my putter grip. It was getting old so I had to change my colors, and it was apparently the North Carolina kind of famous color. So it's going to be good vibes and hopefully, you know, the crowds were amazing that week so I know it's going to be crazy this week as well.

Q. What's different about the conditions of the golf course at Quail Hollow?

TOM KIM: I feel like Quail Hollow is a longer golf course. It's a bomber's golf course. Rory has success here. The greens are slopey, they're fast. Feels more like position golf. A lot of par 5s are reachable. The course isn't as long. So this week, I feel like a lot of patience will be in play. You have to hit a lot of good long irons, especially for me. So just stuff like of that is a little bit of difference. It's in North Carolina. I have good vibes here. I'll bring those good vibes.

Q. Until recently, what did you know about the Presidents Cup?

TOM KIM: I knew everything about it, you know. I've

watched so many events. The first one I remember watching was probably in Melbourne. I thought it would be amazing to play for that team, and for me to be able to stand here as an international is something that I don't -- I can't really realize yet, you know. I walked into that hotel room and see all the gear was, you know, I got a little teary. But it's an absolutely amazing feeling.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: I'm Tom Kim.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: I feel like Adam because he had -- I think he's played the most of anyone on the team. I think it's his tenth Presidents Cup. That's amazing. That's 20 years. His first Presidents Cup was when I was 1. So it's a lot of experience, and he's such a great sport for our team, you know. He's a veteran.

I have a lot of questions that I'm curious about because I'm a big fan of Adam Scott. Who isn't? So he's been very nice to tell me a lot of things and kind of put everyone under his wing, and we can kind of feed off his experiences and he's amazing.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Just a lot about whether it's technique or whether it's practice or whether it's being under pressure from, you know, from basic 101 to skill 101. So just everything about that. I was curious about whether it's, again, technique or mental things. Just everything.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: We have a really great bond, like a lot of rookies and a couple of veterans. So veterans are kind of, you know, being nice to the rookies and telling bus how to do things a little better and how to go around the course, how to deal with pressure. And stuff like that.

So it's a great vibe. Again, like we said, a lot of young guys and a lot of veterans so it kind of evens it out. It's definitely enjoyable in the team room.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: My NBA team? A player? I mean, retired-wise, I loved Michael Jordan. Kobe Bryant. Kobe was definitely one of my favorite basketball players ever because of the mentality. Right now, alive, I'd have to say it's Steph or LeBron, right? LeBron's cool, but Steph's a point guard and shoots a lot of 3s. So kind of mix them both.

I feel like golf is relatable, right? You mix in both and see what you can make of yourself.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: I feel like it's different in a lot of ways, but I feel like a little bit it comes to, like, caring about yourself and what works for you, you know. Not worrying about what other guys are doing and what works for them. Just kind of feel like what's important to you and what works for you is the biggest part.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: For sure. I mean, I traveled a lot as a kid, and turning pro at age 15 was a lot different from what other guys do. Teenage years is where a lot of people would say, you know, that's where you have fun and you enjoy a lot of things.

I turned professional, and I didn't have a life outside of golf. But like I said, if you'd have told me when I was 15, if you would sacrifice these early years to play on the PGA TOUR, to play on the Presidents Cup, would you take it? I would do it every day. There's ups and downs, but I would do it all over again. For sure.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: I feel like it's very, very different now with the changing a little bit. There's so many good players now. I think it's very, very strong. But I hope, again, it's not about us, right? It's about how we can play better and inspire other people back at home to come over to the PGA TOUR, a lot of young guys.

All of us, I can say, we're trying to inspire a lot of kids in Korea and Asia.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: We're all really good. We're all really close. We're good friends and want the best for each other and support each other. So we spend a lot of time outside the golf course too. Obviously, there is a good, healthy rivalry. But all we do is we just focus on how can we play the best golf and, you know, good golf kind of takes care of everything.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Yes. It kind of worked well for me, but, like, for some guys it didn't really work well. So it's kind of unfortunate for them. But, again, fortunate for me. But,

again, like I said, whoever plays the best golf ends up on that team. I'm focused on getting my job done this week and keeping my World Ranking up there, and I've never had a chance to play for my country. So if I could make my start at the Asian games, it would be an honor.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: I took some time off. I definitely still practiced a little bit, but I went back home for a week, which was nice. But it's funny how during the season, I was like, man, I wish I could go back home for a week or two, rest up. But when I was back home, I missed being in the States. The practice and everything was really nice. I'm excited to be back here and I'm well rested.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Definitely had a lot of people recognize me a little bit more, which is great, but I've still got a long way to go. I was really excited to come back here being fresh and kind of start the 2022-23 season.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Just tell me this, am I inside that category? Because I don't have enough events to -- all right. I think it would be -- I think it could be me. No? Who is it? Christiaan? Yeah, that was my first instinct. I had a good stat on 25 feet this season. Too confident.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: You're not wrong, but for me, we've planned this out for a very long time, and it's happened sooner than we expected, I'm not going to lie. But for me, that first win was really -- I was so happy I had a place to play next year, for a few years on the PGA TOUR because my goal has been to play out here. For me to have a full schedule was the biggest part of that deal, and I'm a very lucky and happy guy right now. Not gonna lie.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Yeah, the only reason why, he inspired a lot of people. He inspired me. I wanted to be the first Asian to win a Major championship. But I was 7. You know what I mean? I always wanted to be the first Asian to win the Masters as well. Hideki has done that. There's definitely a lot of things I can achieve as the first Asian. So I'm not -- he definitely inspired a lot of people, but that definitely played a little role in it.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Yes. He was the first Asian, so it was awesome.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: Both. I dreamt something in English yesterday. It's natural to me. I had a few questions about that back at home because some people might not speak English. Do you dream in English or Korean? I dream in English a lot, actually, and they were surprised at that.

Good question, actually. Great one.

Q. (No microphone).

TOM KIM: I hope a random language comes into my mind. I'd be, like, what's that?

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