

The Presidents Cup

Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Charlotte, North Carolina

Quail Hollow Club

Sungjae Im

Press Conference



Q. Sungjae, welcome to Quail Hollow. Is this your first time playing Quail Hollow?

SUNGJAE IM: This is my fourth time playing at Quail Hollow.

Q. The Quail Hollow course, is there a hole that concerns you the most out here at Quail Hollow when you play this course?

SUNGJAE IM: So, generally, the course is very long. But 10 through 15, 10 through 14, those holes are really tough. That's where I feel like a lot of the match is going to be decided.

Q. The predictions are that the USA win easily. How does your team feel about that?

SUNGJAE IM: A lot of people are predicting that the U.S. team is going to do very well. We understand the World Rankings behind it. They are higher ranked. We put a lot of effort into putting our emotions and team bonding together. I like our chances this week.

Q. Is this the strongest South Korean men's golf has ever been?

SUNGJAE IM: Yes. Short answer is yes. There's four players here. I feel like it's about as strong as it's been.

Q. Why? Why is it so strong now? What's changed?

SUNGJAE IM: A lot of Korean players are hungry to come over to the United States so the mentality and the hunger factor, I think it's strong as ever, and that's why I feel like the Korean team, the Koreans in general have been stronger than ever.

Q. How do you compare trying to win a Presidents Cup versus the prestige of maybe winning a Major championship?

SUNGJAE IM: So the Majors, there's four a year. In two

years, there's eight of them. So there's obviously different Majors and different ways to prepare it. But the Presidents Cup, you know, it happens every two years. We're not even certain that we're going to be on the team so there's a little bit more pressure behind it. But the preparation doesn't really change. Good golf is going prevail. But there's a little bit more pressure behind the Presidents Cup because it's not just for him. It's for the whole international team, and it only happens once every two years.

Q. What about another event, the Asian Games, now that they have professionals playing. How important is that as a Major event compared to the other events?

SUNGJAE IM: There's several reasons why the Asian Games is important to the Korean players. But most of it is, you know, as a Korean, to win the gold medal for the country and to be one of the best Asian players would be very, very meaningful.

Q. Do you know if you will still be on the Asian Games team next year, or will they choose it again differently next year based on the rankings? Because he would have been on the team this year.

SUNGJAE IM: So it's not confirmed yet, but they are reconsidering the picks and doing that April or May. So if I can keep up the good play, I'll be on the team.

Q. (Not in English).

SUNGJAE IM: So we played yesterday with the Korean players and today with the Canadian, and today I played with Sebastián Muñoz. Both days, you know, we kept it very light. We were having competition, keeping it fun. But also, at the same time, having a nice, friendly competition to get into tournament mode. And, you know, we took him for nine holes, they took us for nine holes so we had a nice banter. But had a very light atmosphere, but at the same time keeping it competitive.

Q. (Not in English).

SUNGJAE IM: So yesterday, we played with the Korean players. Yesterday was not competitive. We played just to



get to see the golf course and get to see the course conditions.

Q. (Not in English).

SUNGJAE IM: So in order to play this course well, I feel like I have to drive it well, be in the fairway. Lots of long irons to middle irons. So in order to have birdie opportunities, I have to obviously drive it well but hit my irons really well to make some birdie opportunities and to be able to at least make easy pars.

Q. What does Tom Kim bring to the team?

SUNGJAE IM: He's got a great sense of humor. Brings a lot of positive energy. He's obviously the youngest player on the team so he's kind of the baby. But brings a lot of positive energy and a lot of humors to keep the energy very light and lighthearted.

Q. Great short game stats last year. I was wondering if you do anything different with the sand wedge in terms of grind or anything with the design of the club.

SUNGJAE IM: So yeah, I use an SM7, Titleist SM7, which is maybe a couple generations old with four degrees of bounce. Not a lot of bounce. With a little bit of relief on the back and have used it for about four years. Nothing really special, but that's the model that I like and I've been using for the last four years.

Q. (Not in English).

SUNGJAE IM: All the captains and co-captains have been super friendly and nice. This is my second time. So I recognize a lot of the captains and co-captains, and I'm carrying on the same nickname. But, you know, this year nothing new. Just I'm carrying the same nickname from the last Presidents Cup.

Q. I guess a follow-up about the captains. Is there any specific captain or captains that you have a close relationship with, maybe that there's a special bond there?

SUNGJAE IM: Not one in particular. Even K.J. Choi, although he's Korean, obviously he's a little bit more comfortable because of the language and the cultural. But every captain, co-captain's been very helpful and just feel like, again, second time around, with familiarity, feel comfortable with all the captains.

Q. It may be only your second Presidents Cup. Given the youth of the team, do you feel as a veteran mentor of the group?

SUNGJAE IM: I've only played it one more time than some of the rookies. So I don't really have anything that much to say. But when they do get nervous or they get a little bit tense, I feel like I can lighten the mood.

So the one experience that I had, I feel like I can help them with their emotional and mental state. But nothing crazy. I don't have anything grandiose to say. But I feel like I can calm them down with my presence, and just having that one year of experience is going to be helpful.

Q. No Korean player had ever earned three and a half points at Presidents Cup before you did it. Were you surprised at your success a couple years ago, and do you feel like there's a burden now to match that?

SUNGJAE IM: So, you know, I don't want to put a lot of pressure. Of course we want to win, and I think the point of it is to win the team portion, whether I get how many ever points. But I really want to enjoy and soak in every moment of Presidents Cup. It's a special event. So, you know, not so much how many points I'm going to win but to really enjoy and soak in all the experience from this week.

Q. A few questions on a lighter note. You're on the road all year long. What is your comfort food?

SUNGJAE IM: I think it's an obvious answer, but having Korean food and going back to, you know, our comfort food is Korean food. So having rice and stews of our Korean culture is kind of my comfort zone and gives me a lot of energy.

Q. And then, secondly, if you could be any animal for a day, what would you be and why?

SUNGJAE IM: Tough question. It's a hard question. So I want to be king of the jungle so a lion for a day would be pretty cool, and the toughness in the jungle.

Q. How was your experience when you played the Korn Ferry Tour a couple years ago?

SUNGJAE IM: So I remember the course being very nice. It was kind of tight. The ball was going really far because Bogota had a lot of elevation. But I really enjoyed the experience. The course was amazing, and, you know, obviously got off to a good start that year on the Korn Ferry Tour. So all good memories from Colombia.

Q. You played with Sebastián today as your partner in your match. How was playing with him? Do you expect to play with him on Thursday or Friday, actually?

SUNGJAE IM: I think it's really fun to play with Sebastián because once he gets hot, he gets really hot and can be very aggressive. And I think we complement each other because I'm a little bit more subdued and conservative, and we could be a good partner.

Now, as far as playing together in the tournament, hasn't been confirmed. So we are, you know, just trying to see who bonds well, who will play well with each other. But he and I partnered up today and won our front 9. So that's pretty good news.

Q. It's all questions from team members.

SUNGJAE IM: Team member, okay.

Q. Who has the most one-putt percentage in the past season?

SUNGJAE IM: Christiaan?

Q. Correct. Who from the team has hit the longest drive the past season?

SUNGJAE IM: Taylor. No?

Q. Corey Conners. 404 yards.

SUNGJAE IM: Wow.

Q. Who from the team has hit closer to the pin from the 225-yard range.

SUNGJAE IM: Corey?

Q. Muñoz.

SUNGJAE IM: Muñoz, oh.

Q. Who from the team ranked highest in putting from five feet?

SUNGJAE IM: Hideki.

Q. Mito. 92 putts out of 101. Who from the team has made more eagles the past season?

SUNGJAE IM: Eagle. Me?

Q. Yes.

SUNGJAE IM: Really? Oh.

Q. 18 eagles.

SUNGJAE IM: Oh, 18 eagle.

Q. Who from the team has had the longest streak without a three-putt?

SUNGJAE IM: Christiaan?

Q. Adam Scott.

SUNGJAE IM: Adam Scott.

Q. He's actually first in that category. He has 221 putts without three-putt. And then quick ones based on your opinion. Who eats the most?

SUNGJAE IM: SUNGJAE IM.

Q. He actually said SUNGJAE IM too. Who would cry if the international team wins?

SUNGJAE IM: Trevor.

Q. Who has the most team spirit?

SUNGJAE IM: Trevor.

Q. And who gives the best advice?

SUNGJAE IM: K.J.

Q. (No microphone).

SUNGJAE IM: I haven't really thought of the actions, but I think I'd really scream to the top of my lungs and hug everybody.

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