

# LIV Golf Miami

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Trump National Doral

## Anthony Kim

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We've got a new face here today. Let's welcome Anthony Kim. He's the newest member of LIV Golf League and our season-long wildcard. Welcome to LIV Golf, Anthony.

ANTHONY KIM: Thank you. Thanks for having me.

THE MODERATOR: So your feature with David Feherty was just released where you really told your story of your return to professional golf for the first time. What has been the reaction so far?

ANTHONY KIM: I would say mostly positive. Obviously there's people that have their opinions and are not kind and positive. But you know, I'm focused on the people that are rooting for me and the people that see some of themselves in me and find some inspiration, and I'll just keep working on what I'm doing and focus on my family.

THE MODERATOR: So when you made the decision to return to professional golf, what made you choose LIV Golf?

ANTHONY KIM: There were lots of factors. Obviously I haven't done this in 12 years, and being away from the game, so many things have changed that I don't know all of what's going on between the PGA TOUR and LIV. I know that after talking to Greg, Jed, Richard, and a few people that I value their opinion, they thought it was best for me to go to LIV, and that's the best decision I made.

THE MODERATOR: You and I have had some chances to catch up the last couple weeks. For everyone else, you've been given this big global platform now. What do you hope to do with that platform?

ANTHONY KIM: It's such a cliché to say, but I'm very grateful for this opportunity. I've gone obviously through some tough things in my life, and you know, I'm taking responsibility for those things.

But with this platform, I'm hoping to help other people understand that life, you know, can throw a lot of s--- at



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you, but you go through tough things and they make you tougher, and you can make it through. You know, fortunately, I've had some great support; the love from my daughter and my wife and my mom have been amazing, and they have helped me through some tough situations, and I look forward to talking more about it with my doc. But for right now, I'm focused on golf and helping others.

**Q. It was 14 years ago today that you won in Houston. I'm just curious mentally as you try to get back to the game, how often do you go back to that place? As a second part to that, what is the goal for you? Is this just to see if you can do this again or are you hoping to make this your livelihood again?**

ANTHONY KIM: I definitely think about my first career, my past career, whatever you want to call it. There's obviously some good and bad memories to it but I'm focused on what I'm doing now. I've learned to stay in the present, worry about what you can control now, and do the best I can at this moment.

My goals for this season and moving forward are to work as hard as I can, be focused which I don't think that I ever have been. I appreciate the opportunity going on around me and the platform that I have and to be able to make a difference in the world, as crazy as that sounds, I feel like I will have the opportunity to do it, and the better I play, the louder my voice gets. And so hopefully if I play some good golf I'll be able to do bigger things.

**Q. When you were away from golf, did you know what was going on? Could you have told us who won the Masters in this year or were you completely oblivious to that stuff?**

ANTHONY KIM: I think I probably watched nine holes of golf when I wanted to fall asleep. But I didn't watch much golf. I just found out from DJ yesterday playing a practice round with him yesterday that Brooks won back-to-back majors, which is awesome. But I had no clue that that happened.

**Q. So like when Tiger came back and won the Masters and won in 2019, did you have awareness of that, for example?**



ANTHONY KIM: Where I was in my life, I really wasn't focused on golf. I definitely heard that it happened but I mean, you know, going through some of the things I've gone through in my life, I wasn't focused on golf. I didn't care about somebody who won a golf tournament. There's so many other big issues going on in the world that golf is such a small part of it. And obviously for all of us, it gives us a great platform to be able to speak to a large group of people but at the same time, it's just golf.

**Q. If you didn't come back and do this, if you didn't come back and play golf, what would life have involved, and would you have been comfortable? Would you have been okay? What would you have been done if not taking this path?**

ANTHONY KIM: Well, first of all, you know, I owe a lot to my wife and to my mom, and really, mostly my daughter. When she was born, she came a few months early and the fight that she went through was hard to watch. In that moment, I realized that I have to change my life and the things that I'm doing if I'm going to be able to support her, not financially, but emotionally and just be there for her.

So I don't know what I would have done but I was already on the right track. I don't know that golf was really in the picture until a few months ago because what a wonderful opportunity I have and I'm just grateful for this chance.

**Q. Couple quick things. Did you play -- during the 12 years, was there any recreational golf that you played that maybe even would have sparked thinking about coming back?**

ANTHONY KIM: Sure. I mean, you know, I had a property out at a golf club that I didn't go to for maybe three or four years, and I went and visited because my mom wanted to go. So we went, had lunch. I hit 30 balls. Somehow it ended up on the Internet, and then I was returning to golf.

I actually, before I went to Saudi, played golf with the guy that I borrowed his clubs that time. It's interesting, I'm hearing all these rumours that I played golf and was playing in big money games, and obviously people have a large imagination when they are sitting in their basement.

So I'm not worried about that.

**Q. Can you say exactly when you started working towards this? Like you know maybe the day or the month, like when you actually earnestly began, okay, I'm coming back, I'm putting my efforts into this? It sounds like it hasn't been that long.**

ANTHONY KIM: Definitely hasn't been that long. So I

want to say two months before Jeddah when I started talking to the LIV team and Greg.

I started to believe that I was going to play again. But until I actually got to where I was practicing in Palm Springs three weeks before, the tournament, I didn't really know that I was playing, seeing as, you know, my deal wasn't even done until the week before Jeddah. So it had not been that long.

**Q. Did you find that it came back quickly or you know, were you hitting it flush? Was there any big thing that has been a struggle so far?**

ANTHONY KIM: Over the last few events, I've gotten off to really poor starts. It's just bad golf. It's not anything that I feel like I need to worry about. Definitely the technology has changed. I'm hitting the ball further after seven surgeries than when I left. Obviously being 38 years old, things crack in your body that you didn't even know should crack. I'm adjusting to all these things, but yeah, golf is the same. You put the ball in the hole and you add them up at the end.

**Q. A couple of us talked to you at Quail Hollow at your last event, like the day before you withdrew. When you left that week, did you imagine you were never coming back or did that all evolve later on?**

ANTHONY KIM: At the time of that event, my life was already kind of going downhill. I was making poor decisions off the golf course, and obviously on, missing that many cuts. But I wasn't thinking about golf at that moment. I wasn't thinking about golf that year when I was playing. Once I realized after my surgery that I was going to be, you know, possible that I don't play again, I was completely okay with that. I actually had a Saturday one weekend a few months after I got done playing, and I had probably three or four rooms full of golf stuff, hats, gloves, balls, shoes, clubs, obviously, and I texted a hundred people and I said, just come -- whoever gets here fast on Saturday gets to keep it all. Let's just say it looked like a garage sale.

**Q. Given the success you had, does that feel like that was somebody else who did that, or now that you're back playing, okay, I remember what this is like?**

ANTHONY KIM: I definitely remember what it feels like to hit good golf shots and be in contention and play well but I'm a totally different person. I've had some experiences that I wouldn't wish on anybody. But through those experiences, I've learned what is important to me, and it doesn't mean that it has to be important for anybody else but it's important to me. Being a father is the greatest gift

that I've ever received, and I'm not going to let her down.

**Q. With all you've gone through, all your experiences, all you've overcome, if you could go back and talk to 25-year-old Anthony Kim, what would you tell him?**

ANTHONY KIM: There's not enough time in the day. I would tell him to be patient, to appreciate what you have in front of you, and really to take your time. Because if I took my time, I think I would have realized a lot more things. But I don't blame anybody but myself for the issues that I've had. With that being said, I was thrown into a situation because I had some success in golf that gave me different opportunities than a normal 23- or 24-year-old, and I took advantage of that.

Once you get going down that slippery slope, it's hard to make your way back, and unfortunately, I just kept going downhill and somehow, I've made it through. I'm sitting here in front of you just feeling really honored and blessed to be here because there's a lot of reasons I shouldn't be here right now.

**Q. Will we ever see the belt buckle come back?**

ANTHONY KIM: There's a 2.0 now, so I don't know.

**Q. Could you talk a little bit about how the approach to come and play at LIV came about? Did you put out any indicators that you might be interested, or did it come completely out of the blue, and if so, what your initial reaction was and how it came about?**

ANTHONY KIM: So a few years ago, I had heard that, you know, LIV was starting and that they would be interested in having me play. But at the time, these conversations were being brought to me through different people. I wasn't in the place to play golf, mentally, emotionally, physically, any of that.

I think once my documentary comes out, people will understand how low of a point it got, and it will make more sense. But I wasn't in a place to play golf. And a couple months ago, I actually broke my foot. I broke my ankle eight or nine months ago, and so I was in a cast for four months.

Obviously after that, golf was out of the picture. So I played a few rounds with my wife. The day before I broke my ankle, I played my first full round of golf. Then the next day I went out on hole 6, I tried to jump a creek and being 38 years old, I didn't make it and wound up breaking my ankle. I thought it was out of the picture.

A couple months ago, maybe four months ago, five months

ago, I got a call that LIV was interested and also got a call from the PGA TOUR that they were interested.

So I got with the people I trust and I made my decision, and I'm really, really happy to be here.

**Q. Was it with your wife that you actually started playing golf again, sort of recreationally, and leading to that fateful ankle break?**

ANTHONY KIM: Yeah, so she wanted to play four or five days a week, and so I jumped in cart, turned on some music, and I DJ'd, caddied, did it all, right. Nine holes a day, we'd go out there. First few things were the pink grips that she uses, and I just started to think that I could do this again. Whether people believe that I can do it or not, I believe I can do it, and hopefully I'll be in contention this year.

**Q. In the interview, I think you said you got help about two years ago. Just to clarify, what did that look like? What help did you get, kind of, and how has it helped you these last two years?**

ANTHONY KIM: I talked to people I trust, and people were concerned about what I was doing and the place I was in. You know, there's not enough time to get into detail about all the things right now.

But I got professional help. I think that I didn't deal with a lot of the trauma and whatever came from my life, and I buried it because I didn't want to show anybody weakness, right. And I thought by showing vulnerability, that was weakness, and I've come to a point in my life where I don't care if somebody thinks that about me or not. My daughter is all I care about, and I know it almost sounds corny for me to say but as long as she's proud of me, I'm a happy man.

**Q. I'm sure it's a journey and whatnot. How comfortable do you feel with kind of where you're at right now in that two years?**

ANTHONY KIM: I feel very comfortable. I have a great support system. People that love me, whether I play golf or not. I don't know that I could have said the same when I was 23, 24 years old with the people I was hanging out with.

Again, they weren't all bad people. I made these poor decisions. But I have people now that if I even think about going in a bad direction, that they are going to let me know their opinion and I really appreciate that. I'm so grateful to have such a great team around me.

**Q. I was hoping you could walk us through the logistic challenges of returning to golf after 12 years, such as, have you been fitted or clubs or getting familiar with the current technology, or even just coming up with a practise routine and finding a coach?**

ANTHONY KIM: Yeah. I didn't know how to even get back into the game. So I've just been playing some holes, hitting balls when I feel like it. Nothing structured yet. I actually learned a new rule today that you can take practise swings out of the hazard from DJ, and you can remove loose impediments from bunkers. I know I should have done that in Saudi because I was in every bunker there was but I didn't.

So I'm learning as I go. And important as golf is and as important as it is to win and to be in contention, I just want to be in the right mental place. Life is too short to be super upset. I would get upset if I played a bad round of golf for two weeks, and it would bother me, eat at me. Now whether I play good or play bad, and obviously I scored poorly in my first few events, after the round, I get to see my daughter or go to the pool with her. I could care less what I shot. I know that the next day, I'm going to lace up any shoes or not lace up my shoes and go try my best again.

**Q. You've made a lot of references to your daughter, what is her name?**

ANTHONY KIM: Isabella.

**Q. And how did you guys come up with that name?**

ANTHONY KIM: My wife found, I think, three names. I didn't like two, so we went with that one.

**Q. I know you said you were saving a lot of the details for your documentary, but was there one low point you can remember where you said, I've got to turn this around?**

ANTHONY KIM: I mean, you know, not to get too far into it, but when doctors are telling you that you may not have much time left, that's a pretty rude awakening. I still think about it to this day when I'm out there and I get frustrated with my golf, you know, how far I've come. And other people don't need to know the journey. I'm going to share it, and the people that find inspiration and strength from it, I hope it can influence them in a positive way.

But yeah, it was -- I got to a point where, you know, I may not be here speaking to you guys.

**Q. Bubba and Bryson yesterday talked about the team**

**golf and the support system in team golf. Is that something that you're looking forward to in terms of coming to LIV where you're going to be on the team and have that support system?**

ANTHONY KIM: Yeah. I mean, obviously I'm not -- I'm a wildcard. These hats are available in the shop. But I'm a wildcard, and I'm not on a team. But I have my support system. Would love to be on a team. But right now I'm focused on this year and playing good golf.

But I think it's great to have a support team out here, especially when you're young. Some of the opportunities these young guys are getting, it's amazing. Because it's easy to get off track when you don't have people that are looking out for your best interests.

Yeah, I'm excited to have my team here. I think I have a very strong one, and hopefully we'll have a lot of success.

**Q. First off, I want to say it's an honor just seeing you out here. There's a lot of fans out there that are going to be more than happy to see you back in the U.S. You obviously spent some time on the TOUR, but I want to know some of your takeaways from LIV. Have you gotten the sense that it's one big family, whether it's a teammate, whether it's somebody helping you out, another player in the League, giving you a tidbit here or giving you a tidbit there, the way you travel, how your caddie is treated, your family? What have you taken away from LIV since joining?**

ANTHONY KIM: Well, first of all, when Greg and I spoke before I made the decision to come to LIV, he talked about how he wanted me to be around my family and to feel supported, not feel like I'm an island and you walk by everybody and you to the extent say hello. I'm not saying everyone on this tour is best friends, but there's definitely a lot of support out here.

My family has been treated world-class by everyone, whether it be Jane and the media team, Greg, Jed, all those guys have been amazing. It's easy to reach out to them and get support.

I know that I have a lot of people coming into town this week, and Martin with travel has just made everything so easy.

So I'm not going to say anything about the PGA TOUR in a negative way at all, but LIV is doing it at a different level.

**Q. And also, if there is a day where you do get your own team, is there any names in mind that you might want to come up with or that you have in store?**

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

ANTHONY KIM: Maybe Drunk By the Turn (laughter).

**Q. When you talk about, it doesn't matter what you do on a golf course, you get to see your family, your daughter, go to the pool, but how much does that help with, I guess, no -- you appear to have no pressure on your game. You are relaxed, and this is a second chance, how much does that actually help your golf?**

ANTHONY KIM: Tremendously. I got a lot of my self-worth from what I shot that day, and I think that a lot of athletes, a lot of -- whatever profession you're in, how you do that day at work determines how you feel about yourself.

At this point in my life, I'm able to separate those two, which I feel like is a super power right now. I know that whether I make a 15 or whether I make a 3, my daughter is still going to want to eat strawberry ice creme and I'm going to do that with her. That's most fun part of my day. Golf, you know, through these experiences with my family, every experience I get to have, I appreciate that more, and it makes golf a lot more simple.

**Q. You mentioned not knowing some of the updated rules, I know in Jeddah, you didn't know about the drop, how to drop now. I'm just wondering first, are there any others that you've had to come up to speed with? And also, have you been able to experiment at all with TrackMan, and what has that shown you so far?**

ANTHONY KIM: So I have used TrackMan now a few times. I'm not smart enough to know what all those numbers mean. I want to know how far the ball carries and how far it ends up going. There's like 16 or 13, something like that, numbers, that are on that screen, and I didn't sign up to do math, you know, I just hit a ball into a hole.

So those are really the only two numbers I've been looking at, and you know, whether it's been one of the reps come out and help me with the TrackMan, or whether it's been from LIV and where he does all the equipment, I've been learning a bit more about it and been using it. I don't want to overcomplicate it. At the end of the day, you have to get the ball in the hole.

**Q. Are you amazed at what's available to you with something like that and how far that's come?**

ANTHONY KIM: Totally. Now, you know, I used to -- the game has changed so much. I thought that when I first got on to the Tour with titanium drivers. But now it's come to a point where you don't have to hit a ball in the center and

you can get the same amount of yardage and accuracy as somebody who does hit it in the center. Obviously not being a huge guy, my advantage was being able to hit the ball in the middle of the face and be in the fairway.

But now, everyone's hitting it long. Everyone is hitting it semi-straight. So it ends up becoming a bomber's putting contest. And I'm not the longest guy out there, but using the right technology, I'm hitting it a little bit further, and hopefully I'll make a couple putts this week.

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