

Shriners Children's Open

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Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

TPC Summerlin

Tom Kim

Press Conference



Shriners
Children's Open™ 

JOHN BUSH: We'd like to welcome Tom Kim into the interview room, making his debut appearance at the Shriners Children's Open. You just came off the golf course. If we can get your impressions on the golf course and also your expectations for the week.

TOM KIM: I think it's a great golf course for me. It's a great setup. I really like the way it's designed and it kind of suits my eye a little bit. I'm really excited to be here.

I was actually here last year in Vegas. I didn't play this event, but I was here during that week, and I remember I wanted to play, and I'm excited to finally be able to play here this week.

JOHN BUSH: Making your third TOUR start since winning the Wyndham Championship. Kind of recap your rookie season and also your expectations for this year.

TOM KIM: I feel like I'm a rookie now, but it's been a crazy few months, looking back, but I'm really excited to have this first full season and hopefully have a better year than I did last season. I'm really excited.

JOHN BUSH: Just coming off of your appearance at the Presidents Cup, if we can get you to talk about what that experience was like.

TOM KIM: It was absolutely insane. I had so much fun. I've never really experienced that big of team camaraderie before, and I can see why everyone wants to play in these team events. I can't wait to have another try at it.

Q. As a winner on the TOUR you can pretty much set your own schedule already. Why did you decide to play this event?

TOM KIM: This event? I mean, I'm very fresh, and I want to play as much as I can. I wasn't going to do anything -- I was probably going to go home and practice, so I would love to come out here and play tournaments, and it's a great stretch for me. I'm going to Japan next week and playing at the CJ.

Actually when the season, when I saw it, I wanted to play Vegas. I think it's a great spot, and the course kind of suits my game. It kind of happened natural for me. Picking a schedule for me still means trying to play as much as I can.

Q. Had you played the course before this week?

TOM KIM: No, I have not. This was the first time.

Q. How do you feel about a course that is considered one of the easier courses on TOUR where you know you have to make a lot of birdies if you want to do well?

TOM KIM: Yeah, I can definitely see that. I only played nine-nine unfortunately because just the way my body was at. Just playing nine-nine, I could see why a lot of the guys are playing well here. You've really got to keep up with the guys here. It's going to be fun.

Q. I had a question about your infamous putt now at the Presidents Cup and you started the early walk and all that stuff. Take us through your emotions of when you hit it and when it fell, and have you gone back and watched it, and what's your reaction when you see yourself reacting like that?

TOM KIM: I can remember every single moment of me walking up to that green and looking at that putt, seeing my whole team there. I was just looking down and thinking to myself that man, I want this putt to go in more than anything in the world, because I'm just not playing for myself, I'm playing for everyone on that team.

With where we were at on Saturday, knowing that one, two points is just a huge difference, and once I hit that putt -- I was putting so well that all I needed to do was just have the right speed on it. As soon as I hit it, I knew it was going to go in.

I wanted -- the reason why I ran that way, through my camp that way because I knew my team was behind me. I've watched it a lot of times. I still watch it sometimes because it gives me motivation.

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The funny thing is PGA TOUR did like a five-minute video thing on YouTube. They had the whole routine and everything. But what's funny is that after that video finishes, Max goes and says, subscribe here and like here, and I wish I would have turned it off because I'm still kind of angered at losing to Max.

Q. Just on that enthusiasm that you brought to that event, you're like that anyway. Is that one of your greatest weapons, your ability to have that enthusiasm while you play golf?

TOM KIM: I always have that fire inside me. But I rarely, very rarely show it during just normal tournaments.

But because it's match play and what you can do with that energy and those events is I felt like it was a perfect way for me to show something more of what I normally do, because it just allows for it.

Q. Where does your confidence and exuberance come from?

TOM KIM: Just knowing that I put in the work. I think that's where a lot of it comes from, and just having self-belief that under pressure I'd rather have myself in that situation than watch because I've watched a lot, and it's hard to watch and not do anything about it.

I would rather put myself in that situation.

Q. You mentioned Max and having to see him and turning it off. You've got a big pairing coming up, another couple days with him. What are the first thing that comes to mind about Max and is there a message you want to send to Max for the first two days?

TOM KIM: He's really, really cool. He's an amazing person. It was the first time I got to spend some time with him on that Sunday, but as much as I hate losing, he played great on that final last stretch. I'm still pretty pissed about it, but in a good way. I have so much respect for him, and it's going to be fun. Obviously I have my partner, playing with Max and my partner from the Presidents Cup, so it's going to be a fun first two days.

Q. What have you learned so far in your young career? You've had so many different experiences; what's the overriding message that you've learned?

TOM KIM: Wow, that's a hard question. I think enjoying is the biggest thing, because there's a lot of times where it gets a little difficult with travel and going to places every week, and sometimes maybe not having the perfect food or

something like that.

But I enjoy a lot of things out here, and I love golf, and I love practicing.

I think enjoying is probably the biggest lesson I've learned.

Q. You said Michael Jordan and Tiger Woods have inspired you in the past. How, in what way have they?

TOM KIM: Obviously with Tiger, the way he was able to prove people wrong a lot, being hurt with a broken leg and winning the U.S. Open. Stuff like that is just -- not a lot of people do, and I think that's the separator with what he's done in his career. I would love to get a chance to meet him, but he probably doesn't even know who I am.

Just stuff like that I feel like has changed the game. He's one of the main reasons why I wanted to play on the PGA TOUR and for sure a lot of the guys.

With Michael Jordan, it's a different sport, but I feel like they have a very similar mentality, and they were the best at what they did for a very long period of time. Just picking those guys just gives me a nice mindset to have and just keep me motivated, just not get too relaxed a little bit. Just because I'm on TOUR, things might get -- they treat us so well here, so you might not be humble enough, but it keeps me humble that these guys have achieved so much and they've always strived to get better, so just things like that.

Q. After your win at the Wyndham, you were kind of on the map. After the Presidents Cup, you're a household name for you now. What's been the biggest change for you, and what difference do you feel coming into a week like this after a Presidents Cup?

TOM KIM: I feel like nothing has really changed, but a lot of people have been like telling me that hey, you're such a star now, things like that, but I feel like really, am I that big of a star? I played the Presidents Cup, it's great, I had one win. But you've got guys like Justin Thomas, Jordan Spieth and those guys. I've still got a lot to do. But it's amazing how people are starting to recognize me, and it's a great feeling, and I really appreciate it. It's been fun.

Q. Players always have a lot of goals; what's your number one in 2023 or this season?

TOM KIM: I mean, to wrap it all up, I think it's just to have a better season than I had the previous year. I had one win, so it would be great if I could win one more time this season and every season going forward. At least a win is definitely up there.

But I think for me, it's just gaining the experience and learning more about myself, playing a full season on the PGA TOUR. I know I'm going to learn a lot, but I'm going to play with a lot of good players, so just stuff like that, just getting to know myself a little bit more and know what works for me and things like that just get me really excited.

Q. Things have changed for you; you're much more well-known. Are you learning the balance of juggling all of that?

TOM KIM: I mean, I'm always myself. I don't really -- the situation hasn't really changed of who I am a little bit. No, I don't really think it's really changed for me.

I think it's going to be the same way. Tiger has 82 wins on the PGA TOUR. Until I get to 83, it's going to be hard for me to think a little different.

Q. This might be a tough one to answer, but if you could put odds on you winning the FedExCup, what do you think they'd be?

TOM KIM: I'm not really good with odds. I mean --

Q. There's 156 players every week, 225 probably in the FedExCup every season. What chance are you to be the top dog at the end?

TOM KIM: I think I'll just go with "no comment" to that. I'll keep that confidence to myself.

JOHN BUSH: Tom, thank you for your time. Best of luck this week.

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