

Shriners Children's Open

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Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

TPC Summerlin

Tom Kim

Press Conference



Shriners
Children's Open™

JACK RYAN: We'd like to welcome the champion of the Shriners Children's Open, tomorrow Kim, into the interview room. As you've heard, Tom, a few times today, you're the first player since Tiger Woods in 1996 to win twice on the PGA TOUR before turning 21. What comes to your mind when you hear those words?

TOM KIM: It's really amazing. A few months ago, I didn't have any status in the U.S., and now being a two-time winner on TOUR, having that place with Tiger, it's an unbelievable feeling for me. It's an honor for me, and it's definitely a dream come true.

JACK RYAN: What's the last few months been like for you? Like you said, didn't have any status late in the season last year, and you're able to join the TOUR, win, play in the FedExCup Playoffs, play in the Presidents Cup, and now win for the second time. Could you just describe the last few months?

TOM KIM: It's been crazy. It's been really fast. Definitely doesn't feel slow, that's for sure.

Coming off a win, Playoffs, the Presidents Cup, and a win this week is -- I mean, it's absolutely amazing. I've just got to keep going, and I'm enjoying the ride, so hopefully many more to come.

JACK RYAN: What did it mean to you to have Sungjae, S.H. and K.H. Lee out there to see you?

TOM KIM: It's amazing. You know, they're my big brothers, and for them to wait on the 18th green for me, I'm really grateful for that.

It's special for me for them to be there.

Q. Can you explain how, since you had never played this course before Thursday morning, how you play 72 holes without making a bogey?

TOM KIM: It's amazing. With the way I started the week, I had a really bad cough, and because of the way my body felt, I had to play nine holes and nine holes.

But I felt like playing nine holes, nine holes with limited time, I had to really get my work in, and I felt like the course really suited me well. It came to my eye, and I felt like if I just strategized my course around it here, around the course here, I could have a good week, and that's exactly what I did.

Q. As far as the round today, there were other players lurking, but it was basically match play between you and Patrick at some point. Did you feel that way, that at some point it was down to the two of you?

TOM KIM: I mean, I just had to really focus on my own game, and I feel like the experience from the Presidents Cup, like you said, it could have been match play, but I didn't really think of it that way because really, on this golf course, there's a lot of low scores, and anyone who plays well will have a chance. Someone just shot 9-under I think last year to win and come back and win by a lot. I just told myself, stick with the game plan. Whether I win or not, as long as I execute my shots and do what I need to do, that's all I focused on, and I'm just grateful to be on top.

Q. You had talked earlier in the week how you feel like your life hasn't changed. Everyone else is telling you you're this rock star and superstar, but you feel like you're the same person.

TOM KIM: Of course, 100 percent.

Q. Does this change with this second win?

TOM KIM: No, it hasn't, absolutely not. I've still got a long way to go, and I want to hopefully have a long career on the PGA TOUR. I've got a lot of work to do. There's a lot of guys that I still need to get better at golf, and there's a lot of guys out here who have a lot more success than me, so I've got to learn and I've got to keep playing better.

Q. Twice on that back nine you set up a two-shot lead and twice he came back at you and tied it up. Just talk



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about, I guess, the pressure that that was putting you under and the feelings you had going through that back nine.

TOM KIM: When you have a two-shot lead and you have a guy like Patrick coming at you, no lead is safe. I just told myself, well, we have a game plan. I was really grateful that Joe was beside me with the experience he has, and he really helped me through this week.

I just stayed really patient. I played my game plan, and I just got really lucky on the final hole. Patrick has played so good this week, and I got really fortunate.

Q. If you could take us through, I guess, your thoughts when you saw his ball head towards the desert there. I know you were probably expecting it to even go maybe extra holes, but then all of a sudden it was there right in front of you.

TOM KIM: Like I said, I played my own game plan, whether he made birdie or not. I had to hit good shots, and I just -- like I said, I have a game plan, and we stuck to it. I was just hoping I could execute myself.

Q. I'm not sure you know, but Tiger's first win was in Vegas, and he made the comment, I think it was the seventh or eighth tournament, he was surprised it took so long. What was your mindset coming on to the PGA TOUR and your expectations?

TOM KIM: My expectations was just to be out here and just hopefully I can win. But I'm not going to lie; I've been very fortunate, and I'm just -- yeah, I'm really fortunate, and hopefully I have a lot more in the bag.

Q. How will you stay motivated with all this success? What will you do to keep winning just like Tiger did?

TOM KIM: I've got lots of work to do on my game. I'm not going to lie. There's some weaknesses that I need to get better at, and I need to keep the strengths that I have. Hopefully I can have a long career, and I've got to work really hard. I can't get satisfied at all. I've just got to keep playing better because there's a lot of guys who work really hard and who have achieved a lot more than me. I'm not even close to Tiger. Whether it's Tiger, Rory, Justin, Jordan, those guys, I've still got a long way to go, so I just need to keep working hard.

Q. What did your Korean big brothers say to you on the green there?

TOM KIM: They were just saying, congratulations, you did a really good job, and it's amazing. For them to just -- with

the busy schedules that everyone has, for them to stay there for me, I'm really grateful for that.

Q. Tom, you said that you were hoping to keep your card and play out here. Have you now gone to expecting to win, and now has your role kind of changed from hoping to expecting?

TOM KIM: No, golf on the PGA TOUR is really hard. It's really hard to win tournaments.

I think everything in life, you can't expect everything. I've just got to keep working hard on my game, and just being -- I'm very fortunate to win twice on TOUR and to be even out here. I think the mindset is for me I've just got to keep working hard and be grateful for what things come along.

Q. You're 20, but is it a little tiring winning Wyndham, playing in the FedExCup, Presidents Cup, here? I think you might be jumping on a flight tonight. Are you tired, or is it just because you're 20 that you're good?

TOM KIM: I mean, I'm playing on the PGA TOUR as a 20-year old. It's hard to get tired from this. I'm a five-year-old at Disneyland for sure. That's the way I would pronounce it.

Q. You kind of skirted around this, but you're going to have to reset your goals for higher things in the near term. What do you think those will be? I mean, obviously people are already talking about you as a potential World No. 1. People are already talking about you as a FedExCup winner, major winner. What is it you'll set your sights on?

TOM KIM: I mean, I think goals really stay within the team, but it would be amazing to do those things. Like I said, I've still got a long way to go. I'm 20 years old. I've still got a lot to learn from these guys. I've just got to keep working on my game, and hopefully there's a lot of good things along the way. But I've just got to keep working hard, keep my head down and keep working.

JACK RYAN: Tom, congratulations again and thank you very much for your time.

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