

The Presidents Cup

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Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Royal Montreal Golf Club

Tom Kim

Quick Quotes



Q. So far this week, how has it been just overall?

TOM KIM: It's very good vibes. The team -- a lot of the same members in that '22 team, and obviously we've got a few new guys. I think we all got along really well.

The camaraderie is really different. I think we're a lot stronger than we were two years ago. I just think it's an exciting week. It's our home turf.

I think for me personally it's going to be very interesting to see. Instead of playing in the U.S., we're playing for the fans that are actually rooting for us. It's been really good so far.

Q. You're kind of a breakout star (indiscernible) Quail Hollow, the big putt you made, and the excitement you brought. What do you think that can do for you (indiscernible)?

TOM KIM: It definitely proved that, towards myself, that no matter how hard the situation, if I can just focus on myself, I can kind of be amongst the guys who have made a difference in this game. And I can still remember literally most of the shots that I hit that week because it was so memorable.

I think when you play for something more than yourself, it kind of puts things in different perspective. I think that's what it did for me in '22 to be able to have a solid start to my career so far. I'm hoping to make better memories than I did in 2022.

Q. How are you a different player now than (indiscernible)?

TOM KIM: I think a lot more scar tissue, number one. Number two, I'm balancing -- I'm kind of stronger because of the scar tissues, and I think that has definitely transitioned into not just trying to be a better player but trying to take care of things outside of the golf course and to have learned that at my age, for me, is, I think, is going to be super beneficial for longevity terms.

I think if you had rated me, like, a 1 in '22, I'm completely opposite. I'm a 10 now. So it's literally black and white.

Q. Been great all year long. The putter's (indiscernible) as of late. Is that something you worked on getting ready for this week knowing first (indiscernible) usually wins?

TOM KIM: I made a lot of changes to my golf swing this year. I do feel comfortable over the ball. This season has probably been the worst putting season I've had so far. I've definitely worked pretty hard after Memphis.

And obviously match play, it's a sprint not a marathon. So trying to do a lot of putting stuff and actually made a lot of changes, actually, the past few weeks just with setup and green reading, and changed a lot of fundamentals and been putting kind of decent. I'm kind of excited to see how the week goes.

Q. Who are you looking forward to playing with most this week?

TOM KIM: 12 guys. No.

Q. Presidential election year, the Presidents Cup, got me thinking about role models. Who is your role model?

TOM KIM: That's a good question. Does it need to be an athlete? I feel like I really looked up to Kobe Bryant for such a long time. I still do. Kobe was a guy who was so dedicated to the process and the journey to becoming great and never really talked about achieving something.

And I think the best guys in our sport and all the other sports, they all have a very similar mindset. They're not trying to achieve something. Of course the goal is to win but they're not trying to achieve it. They're so focused on how to get better. And I think that's kind of been the mindset I've had while I was growing up.

And it's something I've been feeding off of every time something isn't working. This year has been a tough



season for me. I felt this year was a big learning step for me just to now really loving the part of struggling and trying to get better and figuring things out and not feeling like achieving is everything.

Q. Do you feel an obligation to be a role model?

TOM KIM: In certain aspects, for sure. Michael Jordan always talked about, Kobe Bryant always talked about the fans playing, they're saving so much money to go and watch these guys play -- playing through injuries and stuff.

I do feel that in a certain way of, when I'm out on the course, trying to put a smile on my face. Trying to be, when things aren't going my way, not being so pouty, because there's kids out there, guys out there who just love the game who have watched you on TV, because I was in those shoes too.

I know what it feels like to be outside the ropes and watching these guys play. It's a constant reminder. It's not actually easy to consistently remind yourself when things aren't going well. But when you can put those things in perspective, I feel like it makes life a little easier.

Q. The things you're saying about (indiscernible) struggling. Do you think that was even harder because you were so talented (indiscernible)?

TOM KIM: You know, it's funny, a lot of people do think I've had a straight line, but that's actually not the case. After I turned pro when I was 15 years old, it took me five years to get to the PGA TOUR. I know it doesn't sound much, but from what I've had to go through to get to the PGA TOUR, we might need to sit here all day.

But it's different type of struggles. I feel like when you're young and you haven't reached the world stage yet, you feel like you've just got to keep going.

But once you get here and you achieve certain things and you start struggling, it almost, it hits you harder than it does back then. And you start -- the doubts and those things come in.

But I've had a really good team around me. I'm a human being. Of course I'm going to have doubts. But I feel like I've done a really good job.

And this 2024 has really been a theme of perspectives. Perspectives are just, I'm realizing it's really going to help me throughout my whole career.

Q. On the lighter side of things, outside of golf give me a few things you think of when you think of

(indiscernible)?

TOM KIM: Outside of golf two things?

Q. Two or three things. Whatever comes to mind.

TOM KIM: Is it poutine, like the gravy? Poutine is great. What's the famous lake, Lake Lewis? It's a lake up in west, the West Coast -- Lake Louise. Those two. And snow.

Q. In a team environment like this, what are you the MVP of this week?

TOM KIM: I try to be everything I can be. I try to be really just a big energy booster for our team out there. At the same time going out there taking care of my job and I'm trying to put as much points as I can.

2022 was definitely -- I was excited and I was new and I was just happy to be there. And this year it's playing on our home turf, have experience, have won tournaments. I feel like now I have more responsibility.

It doesn't add pressure at all. It's just going out there and taking care of my job because over these past three years I've realized if I can play my own game I'm more than good enough to beat any of these guys out here.

Just trying to be that player of trying to be a leader but at the same trying to give my teammates some energy out there -- when I'm not playing and when I'm playing.

Q. Do you feel like there's a responsibility to (indiscernible) be that energetic spark?

TOM KIM: I'm just trying to help my teammates, really. I think that way because for two years you think just all about -- for the rest of your golf career you think about yourself. And this one particular week you're actually thinking about someone else.

And I want my teammates to play well. We were playing games today, and I was actually rooting against them. I told them I'd root against you today. But, trust me, when I'm out there on Thursday, like, I'm all for you guys. I want to be a good, good energy booster to my team.

Q. How would you explain inclusion in golf? There's so many good players (indiscernible).

TOM KIM: We're a small country. And for us to have as much -- there's four players from Korea playing in the Presidents Cup. It's a big deal. I feel we're doing a really good job growing the game back there. A lot of people are interested.

It's really good to see. I was from Asia and growing up there wasn't much Asian players doing really, really well. I feel it's different now.

I think it inspires the next generation to really attack their dreams because America does feel far away. These stages feel so far away it's afraid to attack them. And when you have more guys coming out here, seeing what they do inspires you, because I felt that way.

And I think we're on a good run. And I think Asian golf is definitely trending towards the right way. And I'm really excited and it's really cool to see.

Q. What are you the most proud of seeing, (indiscernible) your friends?

TOM KIM: Just the consistency. It takes a lot to play these events. Not only do you have to play good golf, you have to play good golf for two years consistently.

I've played with a few Koreans in the Presidents Cup before in '22. It's very enjoyable. It's very comfortable. I feel I can rely, we're all pretty close. It's good vibes.

Q. A few minutes ago (indiscernible). How do you manage the stress or the element to play for yourself but obviously you don't want to (indiscernible) your teammates -- how do you manage?

TOM KIM: I think our captains do a good job of telling us just play your own game. It's really hard to, when you're playing alternate shot, you don't want to leave your partner in the water or in the bunker. You want to play well.

But you just have to realize, you're playing your own golf. When you play golf, you're not really worried about anyone else.

I think just switching into that mindset of just not saying sorry, and just your teammate's got -- knowing your teammate's got your back. I know if my partner puts me in the trees I'll be okay. I tell him don't worry about it.

I'm sure my teammates feel the same way. It's just really being able to, allowing yourself to switch your mind to just being -- messing up.

Q. What would be the key thing on the first day? Everyone knows who is on the other team. Everyone knows (indiscernible). How mentally do you approach this?

TOM KIM: I think it's a sprint. Every day is a sprint.

You've got to win as much points as you can every day. I think you've got to treat every day as it's the last day.

Q. (Question off microphone)

TOM KIM: Actually, I didn't go to a famous place. I went to the airport and tried it. It was actually with three of my teammates and we all really enjoyed it. I love gravy and french fries is, it's a perfect combination.

Q. Want to come back to (indiscernible) are you more at peace after what happened in Paris?

TOM KIM: It's all the same. I was honored to play for my country. Obviously I showed a lot of emotion, but that emotion was because I couldn't get a medal for my country not for me.

Q. What's the difference playing for your team (indiscernible) and playing for yourself?

TOM KIM: It's different. I think golf is such an individual game that when you have an opportunity to play for something else bigger than yourself, you take it.

And I learned that in '22 how big that is. I really wanted to make sure that after '22, I wanted to play in Canada and after this week I'm sure, again, next week I'll feel like I want to play back again in the U.S.

Q. How much can you look forward in golf where you need to stay golf focused, the energy of the crowd can impact, like American football (indiscernible) tackle. But in golf you have to stay focused with everyone screaming behind you?

TOM KIM: Just be better. You can't say crowds did this and that. There's no excuses. The one thing great about golf is you can control yourself, you can't control the outcome. And I think that's the beauty of it.

And I'm in America, that's what I went for. I just did me. I looked at my teammates, looked at my 12 guys and our captains, and that's all I thought about. That's what I'm going to do this week.

Q. Yesterday I think it was on the 15 or 20 you were running around like an airplane, I believe. What happened there, I guess?

TOM KIM: It was a putting contest. And we were playing some skins game. We were playing some competitions in the middle. And it was kind of like there was a lot of trash talking going on. Once I made it, I had to react at it.

Q. Is it fair to say this week you'll have fun like that?

TOM KIM: Absolutely. You'll see it.

Q. (Question off microphone).

TOM KIM: It's fun. You can't do anything else. And I feel like it's that one aspect when you can actually run around the green and not get crap for it.

Q. Seemed like you and (indiscernible) were having success on the side. Can you talk about how that went?

TOM KIM: It was such good vibes. We were 2-over after two alternate shot and we really had no chance. We were two back on the last hole and Min Woo hit a really good drive, I hit a good iron shot and he had to make the putt.

We really had no chance and got lucky, got out of there with a win. And I feel like it was a really, really good start to having that team environment. And we were all rooting for each other and against each other at the same time.

But once Thursday comes, it just brings back '22. Us as a team coming together, wanting a putt to go in so badly. That's a very special feeling. And it was just a slight taste of it.

Q. Was it like a five-hole skins?

TOM KIM: I think it was five holes, just alternate shot, best score wins.

Q. One player on your team (indiscernible)?

TOM KIM: Who was what?

Q. Who was one person on your team that (indiscernible)?

TOM KIM: I would say Adam Scott, but more because he's just like visually so outstanding.

Q. Who also on your team would you never pass the aux to?

TOM KIM: What do you mean pass the aux?

Q. When you're in the cart.

TOM KIM: Oh, out of my teammates, right? I mean, I'm pretty weird with my playlist, so probably me. I would choose -- don't give me that playlist to me because you could hear hip hop one time, you could hear ballads

sometimes and some CCM. I'm pretty weird.

Q. Four years ago (indiscernible) said (indiscernible)?

TOM KIM: Adam Scott. Adam Scott.

Q. The other team, who is your best friend?

TOM KIM: For one week I absolutely dislike him.

Q. (Indiscernible).

TOM KIM: We got here three weeks ago.

Q. (Indiscernible).

TOM KIM: It's really pretty. I think it's a very special season now. We're going into autumn. And the leaves are starting to go red and it's so pretty.

Q. (Question off microphone).

TOM KIM: No, it's really cool. We've watched it. I've watched it a few times, and I really want to win. I really want to hold the Cup. I feel like we have a really, really good chance this year. We're so close. It's just a matter of us 12 players actually performing and getting out there, getting the job done.

Q. What did you think is going to be the main challenge?

TOM KIM: It's not skill. It's really not skill. People may think we're against the odds. But it's really not.

It's just about doing it. It's not anything else. It's just about going and literally taking what's ours. We're not that far off. We're not -- it's not like we lack anything. It's just really taking it. It's a matter of doing it.

Once we do it, once we get over this hump, I feel like it's going to be really, really good for us.

Q. (Question about the U.S. Team transformation)

TOM KIM: I just remember that our last International one was in Australia and we came really, really close. And that team was really, really strong too.

In Charlotte, we had a few things go not our way, and we know why it didn't go our way. And the stats showed it. And we still gave it to them. We still gave it to them until the very end. Just shows you that we're not that far off. Like I said, we've just got to take it.

