

Genesis Scottish Open

Wednesday, 12 July, 2023

North Berwick, Scotland

The Renaissance Club

Tom Kim

Press Conference

TOM KIM: This is where it started for me here, finishing third and edging close to that temporary status and walk. This is really where it all started and it's really nice to be back. I love Scotland. Obviously have great memories last year and I'm super happy to be back.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: You just got off the Pro-Am on the front nine, had a practise round. How is the golf course looking?

TOM KIM: It's good. Again, really similar to last year again. Actually when I first got here they are a little softer than it was last year but now they are starting to firm up again which is really cool. We've seen -- it's my first time playing links golf last year so to be able to kind of come back and see all the cool stuff again was pretty cool.

Q. You touched on it there, but when you came here last year, how much was the idea of actually being able to get some status on tour on your mind? Was there a point earlier than that where you thought, I've got a chance to do this, and this tournament put new great position?

TOM KIM: Yeah, for me, my main focus was trying to get enough points to I could try to get to the Korn Ferry finals. I wasn't expecting a top three finish, I'm not going to lie to you. I had limited events and I was trying to make the most out of it. For me at that time, that top three finish was an unreal feeling.

So to kind of be able to achieve that, it's just amazing to see the way I've done it. It's really, really cool. I wasn't expecting it but that really gave me the confidence of seeing all of last year and the fall, this is really where it sparked for me.

Q. What's it like coming back to Scotland after last year, no one knew who you were and now with what you've achieved?

TOM KIM: It's really cool. This is where we have the one of the best golf fans through the year. All of us players



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love to come back here and play golf. I still like flying under the radar and I find it very fortunate when people do recognize me. I'm happy to be back and hopefully I can put on a good show for all of the fans.

Q. As well as your golf, your personality has shown through over the last few months. How important is that for you and golf generally?

TOM KIM: I wouldn't say -- I'm trying to be me. I'm glad that everyone thinks on the good side of it. I'm just trying to be me out there and trying to have fun and trying to play the best that I can. I'm competitive. But you know, like I said, it's pretty fortunate how people are seeing the good side of it.

Q. You were saying that obviously this was your first time in Scotland last year. You sounded as though you were a bit surprised by what you saw. What were you expecting Scotland to look like?

TOM KIM: No, it was just more of last year was like, I was just -- it was my first time playing links golf. I didn't really -- if you had told me I would finish third in a Rolex Series at the time, and my best finish was 23rd at the U.S. Open was my best finish from what I remember. I wasn't really thinking much of myself at the time. I was just trying to learn. Like I said, trying to get to the Korn Ferry finals.

Just very fortunately it happened that I played really, really good golf and finished with a tie three. I was just trying to play my own game.

Q. When you were telling your parents, they must have asked you, what's Scotland like. What did you say?

TOM KIM: What was Scotland like? They were here so they got to experience it. Yeah, I stayed in Edinburgh last year, the city, a little far from the course, but got to see all the history around the place and obviously the air quality is the best in the world. The fresh air, I could live here. It's absolutely amazing.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: Have you tried the black



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pudding and haggis?

TOM KIM: No, I have not. I have not been brave enough to do it yet.

Q. Hate to drag you into the politics going on, and the hearing was yesterday and all sorts of revelations came out but the overriding thing is the uncertainty that is around what the future of the top end of professional golf is going to be like. For someone at the early stage of your career, I wonder how that impacts on you and what your view is.

TOM KIM: You know, I'm 21 years old, and for me, it's been a dream just to play where the best players are. That was the most important thing to me. All the guys who are on the board, all the top players, they are taking care of it. I'm just a young guy who is trying to have fun, just making his dream come true. So you know, I just want to play where all the best guys are. I haven't really paid much attention to it. I'm just going to keep my head down and focus on my golf, and guys at the top are doing the best they can for the Tour. So I'm very lucky.

Sorry, that wasn't really a good answer for you, but I'm just a golfer who just tries to play golf.

Q. You spoke a lot about Scottie. Can you talk about his inspiration and what you get from him and how do you see golf?

TOM KIM: So Scottie has been -- he's a good friend of mine. One of my close ends friends on tour. He's given me a lot of advice. It's amazing how far we go back. It's not many years but I played with him before -- to be able to kind of build that friendship, and he's No. 1 in the world, he's been playing so good for so long now and continuing to do so.

Just to be able to, for me coming up, to have someone close like him with the experience that he has, it's really unbelievable. Like at home, we work out together. We play a lot of golf. So I'd always ask him a lot of questions, and he's very, very nice to answer with sincerity and I'm very lucky.

I've learned not only so much about my golf game but outside of life, which I think is very important. So I'm fortunate to do that, even though he does give me a very hard time with everything, he's still a really nice man.

Q. Really none of us know exactly what's going to happen out of all this, but if LIV happened to be where the best players were five years from now, would you see yourself on LIV?

TOM KIM: I think five years from now is a little too far away for me to think about.

So like I said before, I just want to play where all the best guys are playing. That's my thing, and I think all the best players in the world feel the same way.

CHUAH CHOO CHIANG: Tom, thanks for your time here this morning, and good luck for the rest of the week.

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