

ROUND 4 INTERVIEW
August 7, 2022



JOOHYUNG KIM (-20)

JOHN BUSH: We would like to introduce the 2022 Wyndham Championship winner, Tom Kim, into the media center.

Tom, from a quadruple bogey first hole of the week to the winner's circle, if we can get some comments on the journey that you've been through this week.

JOOHYUNG KIM: Yeah, it's crazy. I mean, I've never won a golf tournament starting with a quad. It's 24 strokes later and here we are. I played great this week. It was hard to stay in the moment in the final round just knowing that I was so close, but I just never let my guard down until I holed that putt on 18.

Just it's been a crazy week with rain delays. I was worried, I was anxious actually playing my last three holes knowing that maybe we're not going to finish. I did not want a three-, four-shot lead needing to sit down for three hours or to come back tomorrow, so I'm glad I was able to finish. And yeah, here we are.

JOHN BUSH: You go from no status on the PGA Tour to special temporary membership after The Open to then wrapping up your card after Detroit last week, and now a full member. Can you take us on the journey and this stretch of golf that you've been on?

JOOHYUNG KIM: Yeah, it's been a crazy month. Just before the Scottish I was just trying to get enough points to get in Korn Ferry Finals, and finishing third there, you know, finishing third, I think I was zero points, how many points away from getting special temporary membership, I had to make the cut at The Open and I did. I played 3M, Detroit and Wyndham and really it's been a five-week stretch for me, but it feels like three months. Yeah, it's been a hectic month and a lot of things have changed, for sure.

JOHN BUSH: And before questions, you move to No. 34 in the FedExCup, so a lot more golf in your future over the next few weeks. If you can comment on your goals now going into the FedExCup Playoffs.

JOOHYUNG KIM: Yeah, I was actually, I wanted to go home next week, I was looking forward to that. I've been home two weeks this year, so I was like, you know what, secure my PGA Tour card for next season, I can go back and relax for a week, but I guess that's not going to happen. I would love to play three weeks in a row again. It's going to be my eighth week in a row if I make it to the TOUR Championship. It's a lot of golf, but I'm enjoying it and I'm honored to play on the PGA TOUR, it's incredible.

Q. By the way, it's hotter in Memphis.

JOOHYUNG KIM: I know. I didn't want to like -- I love to go, but it's so hot here and I heard it's hotter next week.

Q. One thing I wanted to ask you, clue us in on the Thomas the Train thing. Where did that come about, and you obviously steamrolled everyone today.

JOOHYUNG KIM: It's just a stubborn me, like you're supposed to let your parents name yourself and I was like nope, I'm to name myself Thomas. I loved the show as a kid. I haven't watched it or anything, but apparently I really loved the train. I was like, you know what, I'm going to name myself Thomas. I haven't told anyone this, but I've actually had a few more names that I could have named myself and I'm glad I didn't, but I went with Thomas. And as years went on, people started calling me Tom, it was shorter, so I kind of went with Tom after that.

Q. Now I have to ask what were some of the other names?

JOOHYUNG KIM: Do you guys really want to know? I was a big Toy Story fan, so I almost named myself Buzz Light Year. That was a close one there's a few more. It's actually, it's not an English character, it's actually an Asian character, but Buzz Light Year was probably the closest one to Thomas.

Q. How old were you?

JOOHYUNG KIM: I was probably like 4 or 5. I was young.

Q. Now my real question if I may, a lot of American fans learned your name this summer, even more are going to learn it now obviously. I just kind of wanted to, in the short time we have here, kind of get a sense of your life story, your trajectory. I had heard things you lived in five countries, your dad is a golf pro. Just stuff like that, your background.

JOOHYUNG KIM: Yeah, it's crazy to be just -- you know, normally I don't really get a chance in the U.S. just because of being new here and stuff, people not knowing me. For people to call, "Let's Go, Tom" today was really helpful and it gave me the energy to keep playing better.

I've moved around a lot in the world. I feel like it was probably the best thing that has happened to me just because of the adjustments you have to make from each country, each culture was a big thing, and hopefully America's my final destination.

Q. You've got another tournament potentially on your schedule, the Presidents Cup. Can you talk about wanting to make -- how much you want to make that? And also, Trevor was saying he went and watched you at The Open Championship. Can you talk a little bit about that?

JOOHYUNG KIM: Yeah, so it was Wednesday I remember I was playing a practice round with Si Woo, and Trevor, he suddenly walks up and starts walking with us for like two or three holes. It was the first time I got to see him and I would love to make his team obviously. I've watched the Presidents Cup ever since I started playing golf. Even before I was starting full time in Australia, there was a couple there. I would love to make that team. Hopefully, this gives me a close chance to make that team.

Yeah, it was actually pretty nerve wracking for me for him to walk a couple holes, obviously you don't want to shank one in front of your future captain potentially. Yeah, I was actually hitting it pretty good. I said to my caddie, you know what, I think I'll be ready for that. If you can hit it good in front of the captain, I think you'll be OK. Hopefully I'll get a chance to represent his team in Charlotte.

Q. (No microphone.)

JOOHYUNG KIM: I did. We exchanged in conversation. It was in Detroit was the first round he came up to me and just watched me hit a couple balls on the range warming up. He texted me this week, just texting with my group and saying good luck. And I talked to him yesterday as well, so hopefully he's looking at positive things towards me.

Q. Are you surprised at all this, that you won? And you don't shave yet, correct?

JOOHYUNG KIM: I wish I would have shaved yesterday so like I could look good in front of the camera. I didn't really think about it. No, yes, I do shave, just a heads up.

Yes and no. Like I've expected so much of myself and so does my team, we expect the highest. And it hasn't been the easiest. It might look easy for a lot of people, but it's a lot of work behind the scenes just from the manager just going so much beyond for me and just my family who put sacrifices.

I wish my family was here for this week. They left yesterday to Dallas, so I had a flight at 8:00 p.m. today, I guess I'm not going to make that. Yeah, I got to book a flight to Memphis.

To answer your question, this is just a start for me and I still have so much I want to accomplish and this is just -- I bought the car, we bought the car, we just need to drive it, so hopefully I keep pushing that pedal.

Q. You mentioned some of the sacrifices your parents and your family have made. Can you go into that a little bit?

JOOHYUNG KIM: Yeah, I mean just everything like the time that they have to sacrifice for me and just the things that they go through, the little things that I don't need to worry about. I feel like even if I was a parent it would be a pain in the ass, but just yeah, just like booking stuff for me sometimes and when I was younger they would travel with me all the time. I

wasn't the most -- I didn't have the most financial comfort when I was younger, so that was -- I'm just glad that I can support them now and they can just travel with me. Yeah, I can't say exactly one thing that they've sacrificed. They've sacrificed so much for me. I'm just really glad that I can give this back to them.

Q. When you look at other younger players who have had success at a really young age, Jordan Spieth, Collin Morikawa, all their personalities seem very mature, they don't seem like 20-year-olds. I'm just curious, in your life and people who know you, do people think you're very mature?

JOOHYUNG KIM: Yes, in certain ways. I'm a jokester around my family and my team, but when it comes to something serious like golf, I have heard that a lot. But if you get to know me, I'm just a 20-year-old.

Q. Just a 20-year-old with a PGA Tour win?

JOOHYUNG KIM: Yeah, it has a nice ring to it.

Q. You had already clinched your PGA card last week. Were you able to play a little bit looser this week? What was the approach this week? Was it different than it has been?

JOOHYUNG KIM: A hundred percent, it took so much pressure off. I think that's why I was able to rebound so nicely after the triple bogey. I think last week that back nine was one of the -- again, it was a 9-under-par round as well, but it was tough. Just knowing that if I could play well that week, I could come in here this week just not worrying about have I secured my card and everything.

I told myself from the start of the week, just have fun, enjoy it, you've got your card already, just enjoy every single moment of it and just have fun and just don't get too intense about it. But this back nine was crazy, it was probably the most intense round I've played. My putter felt like 200 pounds today, I'm not gone in a lie, it was crazy.

JOHN BUSH: We can't be in North Carolina without mentioning Michael Jordan, who you mentioned out in the trophy ceremony. If you can comment on that.

JOOHYUNG KIM: Yeah, I've just been a big fan of people who have accomplished so much in their career and I learn a lot -- I don't know any of them personally, but I'm a huge fan, just that Mamba mentality. And I watched The Last Dance probably 10 times just because there's so many great quotes by him and there's a reason why he was the best basketball player.

Once it was confirmed this week he was from North Carolina and to win somewhere where he's from, it's an honor. He's not going to know it, but like for me, it's a little special thing in my heart.

JOHN BUSH: All right. Well, congratulations once again to Tom Kim.

JOOHYUNG KIM: Thank you, guys. Appreciate it.