

**CARL YUAN**

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**ZACH DIRLAM:** Welcome to the Fortinet Championship. We're here with Carl Yuan, finished second in the Korn Ferry Tour season-long standings to earn his first PGA Tour card.

Carl, why don't you just reflect a little bit on the season and how you feel coming into your first PGA Tour start in about a year?

**CARL YUAN:** Yeah, I'm really excited to be here, first of all, being a rookie on the PGA Tour. I spent four years on the Korn Ferry Tour. I thought it was a great platform for me to get ready for this. Yeah, I'm really excited for it.

**ZACH DIRLAM:** And you were actually in position during the super season to be in a position where you're going to get your card, you were on the bubble, went to represent China in the Olympics and sort of delayed your PGA Tour card by a year. Just talk us through your Olympic experience and how much of a thrill that was for you.

**CARL YUAN:** Yeah, it was awesome to represent my country to be in the Olympics and I'm proud to say I'm an Olympian now. It's an experience I'll never regret to experience. Yeah, I was so thrilled to be there amongst other greatest athletes in their sports. It was a big motivation for me to become a better person and a better athlete. Even though I didn't get my card in the Olympic year, but there were more drive and motivation coming to the last Korn Ferry Tour season. Yeah, I did my job, got my card and become a PGA Tour member here.

**ZACH DIRLAM:** We'll open it up after this one, but tell everybody the nerves that you felt on the first tee at the Olympics and if maybe something like that's going to compare this week.

**CARL YUAN:** Yeah, I never thought I could be that nervous over a golf shot. I mean, not even under other tournament like for win, for making the cut, whatever. It was just the first day on Thursday playing Olympics, it was a little different that the three players I played with, we all stand on the tee, the camera right up in our face and say where are you from? That's when I got really nervous.

Then I got on tee. First hole was a par-4, not too hard, but I have a hybrid and then I see the camera tower like 30 yards left of the fairway. I'm like, oh, that might be in play, that's how nervous I was. It was something awesome to experience. Like afterward I thought it's something I can learn from, yeah, and improve from it.

**Q. Carl, the success of recent Korn Ferry Tours -- Scottie Scheffler, Will Zalatoris,**

**Sungjae -- does that give you guys the confidence that you don't have to spend years out here to be successful initially?**

**CARL YUAN:** I think yeah. I mean, the Korn Ferry Tour, like I said, it's such a great platform for getting us ready for this big stage. We all can do well on the Korn Ferry Tour. I believe, if you have all the confidence and play good golf out here, we can do pretty good.

**Q. Carl, what was the highlight of your Korn Ferry season?**

**CARL YUAN:** I think definitely the win in Lafayette. It was a big momentum shift for me. Yeah, at that point I knew that I will be on PGA Tour this year. It's kind of a relief.

And yeah, there are a lot of things I wanted to work on during the season, which I was able to because I know I already secured my card and gave me some room to improve on some aspect of my game to get ready for the big tour out here.

**Q. How did you celebrate that win?**

**CARL YUAN:** It was my birthday week, so it was awesome. We went, had dinner. It was a couple other friends on the Korn Ferry Tour the week after. It was an awesome experience.

**Q. How did you get started in golf?**

**CARL YUAN:** My dad plays a little bit just for fun. He took me on the golf course when he plays. I still remember I was so little, I was like literally, like they have all those push carts and then I was like face down just like hugging one of his bag and the caddie was pulling me and his golf bag. That was my first experience being with golf on the golf course.

And then I started, it was like adult size 5-iron, which is extremely long, almost taller than me. Had that for a couple months surprisingly. I was really loving it, just like being outdoors, being outside on the golf course, on the range. I had a great time. So my parents decided to give a go on this for me and it was great.

**Q. How old were you when that happened and where were you?**

**CARL YUAN:** I was back home in China, in Dalian. I was about 9 or 10, 9 years old I think, yeah.

**Q. What are your goals for the season?**

**CARL YUAN:** My rookie year, but still want to finish Top 30 in the FedExCup, try to get one win this year.

**Q. Do you feel pressure to get off to a good start in the fall?**

**CARL YUAN:** I think definitely being out here there's some pressure. I think main goal is try to focus back home what I'm doing, stay good attitude, good golf will take care of itself.

**Q. What do you consider the best part of your game?**

**CARL YUAN:** Actually, I think my putting has improved so much in the last year also. I do have a lot of confidence in that. Yeah, I think that's definitely the best part of my game along with I think the mental side of the game has improved dramatically over the last three, four years since I started working with a mental coach that give me a different aspect on how the golf game is. They really helped me big time.

**Q. Adam kind of asked my question. Are you the type that likes to have expectations or does that make things too difficult for you? Do you like to just kind of come out and see how things unfold?**

**CARL YUAN:** That's a good question. I mean, that's something I try to experience -- experiment in the last season. Some tournaments I want to come out and say I'm going to finish top-3, shoot a low round of the day or something. Most time it didn't quite work out as the way I wanted to. So I think I have goals, but expectations, sometimes they can definitely get in my way. Yeah, normally I just set some mental goals, like process goals and if I accomplish all those, the score normally will take care of itself.

**Q. And last question, what are you most confident, what part of your game are you most confident right now?**

**CARL YUAN:** Driving the ball great. I think I love the greens out here and I'm a good putter, so I can really rely on that. I think just my mentality going through a tournament, going through a round, going through a shot, I think I've improved so much on that. Even sometimes I don't have a good day, that's something I can still lean back on and get me through the day.

**Q. Do you feel like this course kind of suits your game pretty well?**

**CARL YUAN:** I think it's an awesome course. I think it's challenging, pretty narrow off the tee, firm greens and if you're in the rough approaching the green, definitely would be some challenge through that. Work through a good strategy, I think play smart golf and rely mostly on my putting. Yeah, try to get through the week well.

**Q. I think the people who follow the Korn Ferry Tour are hoping, and do you think you'll still have your flare, some of the fun? I don't know of anyone that has more fun when they're on the course than you, especially with swinging and just the bigger stage. Carl will not change or do you think maybe he will?**

**CARL YUAN:** I think I'll definitely be who I am. I think I figure why -- I play my best golf just being who Carl is. I think play along with my personality is a big key for me to have fun. It's

definitely No. 1 thing I'm trying to do on the course. No matter what score I shoot, when I get off the course, I can look at my caddie, we had fun out there. There were some shots we could go really back to say we did great there, always reflect on that side of it.

**Q. And then Marty joining you as well, it's great to have a fellow countryman. You referred to it's almost like a college teammate, you guys cheer each other on but push each other. How big of a deal is the fact that you're going to be out here and have him to kind of -- you guys can have somebody out here and not just be all by yourself?**

**CARL YUAN:** I think it's awesome. Me and Marty, we know each other since we're 10 or 11. We've been really good friends. We talk a lot and it's great that we have a friend out here to push each other. And we're really competitive. At the same time, we try to have a good time together.

**Q. How did you become such a shaper of the golf ball?**

**CARL YUAN:** What's that?

**Q. How did you become such a shaper of the golf ball?**

**CARL YUAN:** I think I just -- I think I'm a really creative person. That's just what I like to do since I was young and just become a part of my game.

**Q. Can you give an example of your creativity outside of golf?**

**CARL YUAN:** My parents always think when I solve some problem, I think through stuff. I'm the one who will always think outside the box. Instead of thinking what other people would do, I always think what other people wouldn't do and sometime build on that. Same thing to my golf game, I try to explore new ways to play. May not necessarily turn out to be the right one, but I'm not afraid to try them.

**Q. When you were growing up, what did your friends back in China think of you wanting to be a golfer?**

**CARL YUAN:** I think golf didn't quite develop that early in China and a lot of them were not so familiar with it. Yeah, but the thing is, it's awesome that I get to do something I really like, being athlete and chase my dream. It's pretty awesome at a young age that I was able to do that.

**Q. Who were the golfers that you looked up to?**

**CARL YUAN:** When I was young, definitely Tiger, Seve, Mr. Palmer. I just liked the way they act on and off the course and their personality, that much passion that they have with the game.

**ZACH DIRLAM:** Any final questions? I guess I'll just end it with is there a hole out there that has a shot shape that you already know is going to deliver like a signature Carl followthrough this week?

**CARL YUAN:** I think probably one of the par 5s, maybe it's one of the longer ones, I would just give a good go of it. If I hit in the fairway, great. If not, I will lay up and make a birdie.

**ZACH DIRLAM:** Thanks, Carl.

**CARL YUAN:** Perfect. Thank you, guys.