

# *Danny Lee*

*Translated from Golf Digest, Korea, April 2009*

I interviewed him at the NZ Open. He won the Johnny Walker Classic (which is a European Tournament) last February. His name comes from the catholic Irish song "Danny Boy". Korean name is Jin Myung Lee.

He won the 2008 US Amateur Championship at the youngest age, beating Tiger Woods' record. Right now, he is a star and the golf market believes he can get people interested in golf again. The mood wasn't very good when I interviewed him because he got cut from the Moona Links Classic in Australia and finished towards the end in the Michael Hill NZ Open. He also didn't play well in Queenstown.

When his mum was interviewed, she said that she thinks his results have been bad since the Johnny Walker Classic because there is lots of pressure on him now. He is much more popular in New Zealand than in Korea.

In the second week of April he will do his masters (?) and then he will become a professional. However, he has not had much time to practise because he has had continuous interviews and award ceremonies. The NZ Golf corporation gave him awards for "most improved" and "best amateur". This happened throughout the whole competition but him and his family have realised this is something he is going to have to learn to deal with.

When he got cut from the NZ Open his parents said "that's ok, you have to lose to win".

In January he went on a European tour but he got cut. Even though he was an amateur, he thought he would get invited to pro competitions, but he didn't so he felt sad. He decided he didn't want to wait to be invited anymore, he wanted to become a pro.

He started playing golf when he was 8 and came to New Zealand when he was 14. Now, many golfers try to learn from Lee. When he first began learning golf, he was forced to practice all the time, so even though he loved golf, he hated the practices.

He came to New Zealand because it was too expensive to play golf in Korea. His brother is 17 and at Auckland University. Now at his home club Springfield, many parents are trying to force their children to play like Danny was as a child. His mum has only just stopped following him around and is letting him practise by himself.

San Diego golf businessman Lampart is becoming his new manager and Anthony is going to be his new caddy. He has caddied for Erin Bentley, Greg Norman, Tim Clark, just to name a few.

Danny believes Korea created him and New Zealand raised him. The Korean President thanked him for giving Korea pride, but John Key said "No, he's a Kiwi". When asked who he lays for (NZ or Korea), he says "that's a hard question, like asking if you like your mum or your dad better".

He doesn't want to be one of those people who leave New Zealand to play for another country for more money.