

# U.S. Women's Amateur Championship

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA

Southern Hills Country Club

## Catherine Rao

### Quick Quotes

**Q. You're on to the quarters for the third straight year. What is it about the Women's Am that brings out the best in you?**

CATHERINE RAO: I think part of it is almost the pressure of being on a stage this big. Every year I come out here and I try to appreciate being out here every year. I love this event so much. It's so well run. The courses are so incredible. This course is kind of diabolical, but it's in beautiful shape, and it's fun to play.

**Q. 5-up through five to start. How were you able to do that?**

CATHERINE RAO: I don't think there was too much of what I was doing. I go into every match doing the same thing, just try to hit greens, two-putt par and get out of there. Bailey was hitting really good shots, and just didn't work out, and that's unfortunately this course. You hit good shots, and it doesn't always reward you.

**Q. You missed most of last year with an injury, right?**

CATHERINE RAO: Yes.

**Q. Do you mind detailing your injury and what you went through and your rehab process to get back to where you are now?**

CATHERINE RAO: So this is really embarrassing. I have a couple of back issues that started when I was maybe a senior in high school, so that's on and off, and it doesn't bother me too much, but basically the injury that took me out was I fell off my scooter, and I dislocated my shoulder and really messed up my labrum and the joint and everything was just really bad. I played through it in the spring and the summer, and when I got back to school, I picked up a backpack and I felt it slide out, and I was like, I can't. I was like, I want a golf career, so I can't have this thing keep getting more and more injured.



It was a really hard decision. Obviously I want to play on the team. I want to be there for my teammates. It sucked, but rehab is just every week, go in, get it done. I hate it. Always the band work, the cupping, the massage.

**Q. How long were you out between competitive rounds?**

CATHERINE RAO: So my last competitive round was U.S. Am last year and then the next competitive round I played was my U.S. Open qualifier in May.

**Q. So you had a little bit of time over the summer to get back to playing. Did you expect to be at this position you are right now this week or did you think you were trying to get ramped up for the season?**

CATHERINE RAO: I think there's always been a part of me that knew I have it in me. I've been playing golf long enough where I just need to get comfortable out on the course again. A little nutty, first few months were a big struggle, especially going to Ireland for the R&A, playing in those conditions. I really had no idea where my game was at. I'd hit a good shot and it goes 40 yards. It was kind of tough, but every year no matter how much time I took off, how much I would practice, making it to quarters, it's always the same every year, and I'm really grateful to be here.

**Q. Do weeks like this make everything you went through have a little more purpose?**

CATHERINE RAO: Yeah. I think looking back on it now, it was like, wow, that was a crazy few months. I just can't thank the people enough for being behind me and my friends who supported me, my coach, my teammates, everyone.

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