

U.S. Women's Open

Wednesday, June 3, 2026

Pacific Palisades, California, USA

The Riviera Country Club

Farah O'Keefe

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good morning. Joining me here in the interview area is the recent 2026 NCAA individual champion Farah O'Keefe. Farah, how does it feel to be back at the U.S. Women's Open presented by ally?

FARAH O'KEEFE: It's pretty cool, to be honest with you. After Chevron, I went straight to my U.S. Open qualifier in Florida, and I actually made it into a playoff to get the second spot but didn't make it out of that. I was kind of like, dang, I don't get to play this year.

Then Nationals rolled around, and I was like it would be really cool if I won because then I could actually go play at Riv. Then it just so happened to work out at the end of the week. It was kind of like a bonus, I guess, some icing on the cake.

Yeah, last week was such a memorable week. I think I'm going to think about that all the time throughout the course of my career because it's just so special to do that around people that you literally put the blood, sweat, and tears into the game with -- my teammates, my coaches.

I love them more than anything. They're some of my closest friends. They're going to be at my wedding.

So it's just cool. I really wanted the team victory too, but Stanford is just -- they're just Stanford, I don't know. They're just really good.

Yeah, but it's cool to be here. I'm super pumped for the week. Just trying to pace myself a little bit because there's going to be a lot of golf here in the next 14 days playing Curtis Cup also, but I'm looking forward to it.

Q. You just told me that you went back to Texas, but after a few days here at Riv, what are some of your impressions of the course?

FARAH O'KEEFE: It's incredible. I don't know, last year was at Erin Hills, that course was -- I have no other word to describe the course other than big. It was massive, and it felt like every shot that you hit was just into like a field.

But this place is, I would say, it's kind of the opposite. It's pretty tight. I feel like the fairways, they made them even tighter just for us. I don't know if it's true, but it feels like it.

Greens are good. They're a little bit -- compared to last week, they're firm, but also last week I was playing an NCAA championship, which is not the same as a U.S. Open. So I have to bear that in mind.

But the course is historic, right? Like you can't get onto any hole and not think of something that you've seen on TV on that hole, which is pretty, pretty cool.

Q. What are some takeaways from your past U.S. Women's Open starts that you're going to take into this week?

FARAH O'KEEFE: I think -- I don't know, it's kind of a big question. My first U.S. Open, I was like a 17-year-old kid. I had no idea what I was doing, and I was at Pebble Beach. I just remember being obsessed with the courtesy car. I was like this is the coolest week ever, like I get to drive a Lexus around. And I didn't make the cut, needless to say. I was just kind of enamored by everything. I thought it was so cool.

Then last year I was a little bit more determined to play my game and to play well, and I did that. I had some kind of unfortunate stuff happen with my putter throughout the week. The insert on my face kind of caved in. I had a hard time putting in Saturday's round. I almost, almost got Low Am, but Lottie is too good.

But I think going into this year, I feel like my game's in a really good spot. Mentally I feel like I'm a lot -- I would say a lot more mature than it was even just a year ago. I put so much hard work into how I think, how I process things with my team.

I just think more than anything I'm prepared and I'm ready and I'm looking forward to just a week of cool golf at a cool golf course in L.A. I mean, it doesn't get any better than this.



Q. Farah, you were deep into the run at the Chevron. What can you bring from that tournament to here, or does it even apply?

FARAH O'KEEFE: Oh, a hundred percent it applies. Yeah, I did everything that I was supposed to do through three rounds at Chevron. I gave myself as many opportunities as I possibly could. I made putts. I didn't freak out when I didn't make putts.

Then I got to Sunday, and I don't think I've ever been that close to a dream that far away before, and so I had no idea how to manage the expectations or anything like that on Sunday.

So I literally showed up on Sunday, and I remember thinking, don't mess it up. Don't get any worse than -- just don't mess it up today. Then I went out there and completely messed it up.

But I think that was the best thing that could have happened to me, that Sunday. It was really hard to swallow at the moment, but I got to the airport with Braden, our assistant, and he just was telling me, he's like, look, you've got to understand your next 24 hours, like the last 24 hours and the next 24 hours, like this might be the craziest 48 hours in the history of golf. Like you've got to understand you're doing something that's unreal.

So it kind of put things into perspective for me, and that was the best thing to happen that week. It was the best week to have an (a) next to my name because I didn't lose anything. If anything, I had the best time of my life.

Yeah, I learned so much about how to handle last day expectations, and I think the biggest takeaway was that I did everything I was supposed to and I can't look back at that week and say I messed it all up because I did everything I was supposed to. I just got to the last day, and my expectations got the best of me.

Q. Obviously there's so many great players that have come from Texas over the last hundred years or more. Are any of them or have they been your role models?

FARAH O'KEEFE: Yeah, I mean, there's a lot of good players from Texas -- Scottie, you know, you can go down the list. Scottie is probably the most recent, Jordan, Will Zalatoris. There's a hundred of them.

I've kind of gotten to know -- I wouldn't say get to know, but I've spent a little more time around Mr. Crenshaw in Austin. He's just -- I don't know, he's just the sweetest guy ever. I understand why they call him Gentle Ben just because he really is just a teddy bear. I got to see him last week after

the National Championship, and I ran up to him and gave him a big hug.

And his wife, it was funny, we were talking to my mom, and she was like, did you have the win hangover? And I was like, what? She was like, Ben would always get it after he won a big tournament. He's had the win hangover where he couldn't process anything. I was like, yeah, that's about what's going on right now. I don't understand anything. Like everything has kind of been black and white. Like I was totally fazed. Yeah, it's just cool.

Then obviously Mark Brooks is kind of my mentor and he's been helping me a lot with my game, mentally and physically.

Q. First, I've got to ask, how does an insert on a putter cave in?

FARAH O'KEEFE: I have no idea (laughter).

Q. Were you hitting putts too hard?

FARAH O'KEEFE: I really have no idea. No, I think it's from wear and tear over time. It must have been a really old putter. I just picked it up out of our academy at Texas. That's the only thing I could have said. Maybe it got damaged in transport, I have no idea.

All I know is I couldn't hit my start line to save my life because the putter was literally like that (indicating).

Q. You mentioned Mark. Did you ask him for any thoughts? He played a lot of tournaments here, as you know.

FARAH O'KEEFE: Yes, he did play a lot of tournaments here.

Q. And Ben too.

FARAH O'KEEFE: Yeah, they both did. Mark, we haven't talked yet. He texted me last night and he was like, call me. Let's talk. So I need to do that today.

He did set me up with -- actually, he reached out to Amy Alcott. I think I'm using her caddie this week. I don't know the direct connection, but I know that Mark went through Amy to help me find the caddie for this week.

I think it's pretty special to have friends like that and then build those connections.

Q. You are known for hitting the ball pretty far. What's going to be a plan on No. 10?



FARAH O'KEEFE: On No. 10, all the advice I've gotten is to lay up, so I think I might listen to that. Also sometimes your ego is sitting on your shoulder like you should hit driver. So I might, I don't know. We'll see what it turns out like.

Yesterday I laid up, and I kind of laid up in the wrong place. I laid up down the right side, and my caddie just looked at me like, this isn't going to work. I was like, okay, sounds good. We'll go left. So we'll see.

I think they have two tee boxes there. So if they move us up, then it's really going to be tempting. So we'll see.

Q. Farah, you've been the beneficiary of not only exemptions into major championships like the U.S. Women's Open, but also the LPGA amateur pathway. Why is it so significant to see organizations like the USGA and the LPGA to step up to support the growth of the amateur game, and how do you think that's going to help women's golf in the future?

FARAH O'KEEFE: That's a really good question. I think it's incredibly important. You see -- I don't know, you've seen players come out of amateur golf, like this way Catherine Park and Megha Ganne are making their debut, and they were my teammates at the championship in October.

I think you see more and more players come out of college, and they're just completely prepared to play professional golf because not only do they play full NCAA schedules, but they're also playing in U.S. Opens over the summer and playing in professional events over the summer already, and they're making cuts.

I think it's massive what the LPGA and what the USGA are doing to support amateur players making that jump into professional golf, especially when those players are completely capable of going in and winning on a Sunday. I mean, it's massive. It's moving the game in a really good direction.

Because you really do see, you see someone play in the NCAA championship last week, Megha Ganne won the team championship, and then there's the following that follows her this week into her pro debut at a U.S. Open.

So it's like you're kind of drawing the audience that already follows amateur golf and collegiate golf, and now there's more of a direct pathway for them to be able to go play at the professional level.

I just think it's brilliant to pool that audience and to get

everybody on the same side rooting for competition in the women's game.

Q. Last time I saw you was at Chevron, then you played in a qualifier, then you had playoffs for NAAs, now you're here, and then you have Curtis Cup. You kind of talked about all of a sudden your summer really got ramped up. What's the mental process of staying present, staying in the moment, not getting ahead of yourself that you're working through?

FARAH O'KEEFE: I think the first thing is just to have gratitude. I wouldn't be here without my team, and I wouldn't be here without all the people that believe in me and help put the hard work in every day.

I just have so much gratitude, and I feel so thankful for everything that we've been able to do at Texas.

Then kind of the second thing is don't forget to breathe. Sometimes you're just, you're so go, go, go, and you forget to breathe. Before you know it, the day's over and you're trying to settle down and go to bed, and you can't because you've been going 100 miles an hour all day.

Yeah, I think I'm very, very, very fortunate to have people in my corner that help keep me organized, and they don't -- I'm not a very organized person by trade. So to have people that help keep me organized and everything kind of is flowing smoothly instead of getting somewhere and not knowing what to do, I think is also a really big deal.

Also, I have the right people around me. I don't know, that's kind of the answer to your question. I don't get overwhelmed because I have all the right people.

Q. Speaking of those people, I know you had your Fortnite crew out with you at Chevron.

FARAH O'KEEFE: Oh, my God.

Q. Who do we have with you this week? I know you guys linked up, which is super fun. Who's with you this week?

FARAH O'KEEFE: A little bit smaller crew this week. My mother is going to be here. My brother just moved in at college. He's actually playing football at East Texas A&M, so he couldn't get here.

Yeah, I am sure they'll be watching on TV, I hope. Hope is key. That kid.

Q. What would you take away as a win this week? What are truly some of your goals, your expectations



for yourself? Just speak to what are just some of the little checklists that you're working through?

FARAH O'KEEFE: I think as long as I -- as long as I don't get frustrated, I think it will be a win. I got to remember that I had the coolest week of my life last week, and without that week, I wouldn't be here. So I can't take anything for granted.

I'm going to make sure that I do everything that I did last week, and then I have -- really I should have no expectation about where I finish because this golf course is a beast and it can really kick your butt. I saw it plenty of times yesterday. Only one practice round, and I was like, wow, this place is going to be hard.

But I do think that as long as I just do everything that I know works and I don't have an expectation for the outcome, then it will kind of take care of itself.

Q. Could you just talk about your journey. You're a walk-on at Texas. Nobody really recruited you. You just happen to be from Austin, you wanted to go there. To now you're No. 4 in the world in terms of amateur golfers and one of their players. Just talk about that journey.

FARAH O'KEEFE: I wouldn't call myself a walk-on. I had some scholarship, but it wasn't a full scholarship when I signed. Yeah, it was -- I think about 16-year-old Farah and 14-year-old Farah even and thinking about college golf and where I wanted to go play.

For a while there, it wasn't looking too good. It kind of looked like I was either going to have to pick a school that I was not going to be happy at playing golf or I was going to go to school to learn and to pursue like an academic career.

I was very, very, very blessed to get that call from Texas because truly I played in like maybe one big event before, and it was like the Texas Girls Invitational, still considered a local event. So I was very, very lucky to get that call and to be given the opportunity to go to Texas.

I look back at the journey, and it's just -- I don't know, it's insane. It's just insane to think that -- I mean, I think about like during COVID, I mean, I literally sit in my garage and we had a little home gym. I would do like -- I was watching Bryson DeChambeau on YouTube get longer and longer. He was on that journey to hit the ball really far. I was like, that's brilliant. I need to figure out how to hit the ball further too.

He talked about the neural connection to your muscles and

all this kind of stuff, and I was kind of just fascinated by it. He was swinging -- I don't know what he was swinging. He was swinging really heavy clubs at one point to try to build that strength and that connection. The only thing I had was a Lacrosse stick.

So I'm sitting in the driveway just like (motioning) with a Lacrosse stick every single day. It worked. I did get a little bit longer.

I just think about that compared to now, if I want to get faster, I have a state of the art gym at Texas, and I can go ask somebody, can you help me with my meal plan? So it's pretty insane to see that I've been able to grow that much in such a short time. It's pretty exciting. It's cool.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports