

# U.S. Women's Open

Wednesday, June 3, 2026

Pacific Palisades, California, USA

The Riviera Country Club

## Rose Zhang

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Please welcome to the interview area Rose Zhang, two-time USGA champion. Rose, how does it feel to be back at the Women's Open?

ROSE ZHANG: It's honestly incredible. I feel like the USGA -- I feel like I'm a part of the USGA fam at this point. I've been playing the U.S. Women's Am, the U.S. Girls' ever since I was young, and even at 16 I played my first U.S. Women's Open and made the cut, and I felt like, wow, this is so different from any other tournament that I'm going to be playing in.

So it's honestly great that it's at Riviera. It's close to home. I have a home crowd, which is really fun. So it's cool to get the week started.

**Q. You've had a lot on your plate as it's been documented over the last few months, but you're officially graduated and focused on golf. You had to work a little harder to get into the field. Talk about that journey and finally being exempt.**

ROSE ZHANG: It's funny because I was talking to some people on my team about how this year feels like a rookie year to me. Honestly, ever since I turned pro in 2023, I didn't really have to play a U.S. Women's Open qualifier, and in my head, wow, this is what it's like to be grinding for a position out here. All the girls are so competitive, they're so good at golf.

I felt like I needed to take a step up and try my best. Grinding and coming into the U.S. Women's Open, I think really helps me realize that the fight is still in me, and I want to prove something, I want to do something in professional golf.

So here I am, and it was quite a journey to say the least. We played a solid 39 holes in the qualifier (laughter).

**Q. It might not be down the street, but it's probably as close to a home game as you're going to get for a U.S. Women's Open. I know you have family and friends out here. Talk about what it means to play this**

**championship so close to home.**

ROSE ZHANG: It's so cool. City of L.A., I grew up just an hour away, down in Orange County, Irvine area. It's always been like an hour -- no traffic -- drive up. Being able to play junior golf in the area, played Whittier Narrows and small muni courses. When I played SCPGA Mini Tour, I just feel like this is where the culmination of my golf career has really started.

I'm just so grateful. It will be really cool to just experience that with everyone.

**Q. How refreshing has it been to just be Rose the golfer for a little bit now that you've put the schoolwork down and gotten a degree?**

ROSE ZHANG: It's honestly crazy to say that. I feel like I've never taken a break up until now. I feel like last two weeks that I haven't been playing was the first real break that I've given myself.

Everyone comes back -- or once I came back, everyone is like, did you lose weight? Did you grow taller? I'm like, no, I probably just slept and rested (laughter). My cortisol levels probably lowered by half.

But it made me realize that professional golf is really the lifestyle. You have to make sure that you're resting. You have to make sure that you're working hard, but the rest component is all encompassing and it's a part of your actual performance. I'm hoping the rest and the prep work will help me. It's a start.

It makes me excited to be feeling good when I enter tournaments. Even when the game isn't there, I think it's still good to say that I'm not always fighting my body when I'm out there competing.

**Q. As an L.A. girl, just react to being at Riv and what this means for not just yourself but for the women's game as a whole.**

ROSE ZHANG: I feel like Riviera has always been known for the Genesis Invitational. It's always been known for the



men's game. Safe to say that there's going to be a women's event here. The fact that Riviera has been taking such good care of the female players and for us to be feeling like we're getting princess treatment, special treatment when we're out there on the range, around greens, and even playing, you already see a lot of people being really excited and coming out on practice days.

I think this is a really special venue for all of us to enjoy, especially it also helps us in the future when there's going to be more special venues that's are willing to host female events and see how incredible the women are playing.

**Q. When do you walk, and what is that going to feel like to take that walk across the stage and finally put that chapter to an end?**

ROSE ZHANG: I walk next weekend, and I'm actually doing the Stanford Wacky Walk with some of my friends. It just means you dress up like something stupid and then you walk into commencement.

Obviously getting on stage or not wearing the outfit, but I'm coordinating that with some of my friends. It's just enjoying the tradition and enjoying the fact that I grinded five years to be able to just walk across the stage and then come back with a piece of paper (laughter). It's honestly, I think it's a life achievement for me.

**Q. You already touched on it a bit, but could you speak on the high quality nature of this venue and the future U.S. Women's Open sites in years to come.**

ROSE ZHANG: The Riviera conditions right now are incredible. They're the best that I've ever seen them. I played only two times in the past year, but it's safe to say that everything, from the green conditions to the fairways to the rough, it's all super lush.

It also speaks to how much big venues and big golf courses are putting into female events like the U.S. Women's Open. I'm really excited to see the lineup of golf courses. I know there's a lot of incredible course that's are coming up that the USGA has lined up for us, from Oakmont to Interlochen, Inverness, all these golf courses that you see used to be more men's oriented golf courses, they're now going to be part of history for the women's as well.

**Q. The 10th hole, how are you going to play the 10th? Are you going to hit it up next to the green, lay it back, or a little bit of both?**

ROSE ZHANG: Unfortunately, I'm not one of those long hitters. So I will say, if it's the back tees, it will be a very

easy layup. I think -- I've been playing the back nine in the morning, so in the afternoon we'll see if that fairway hardens up and taking on the bunker going left and seeing if I can get a pitch. I think it will help a lot, especially when it's a back pin and there's not much room to land it.

I'm thinking likelihood is layup. If not, if I'm feeling good, let's go for it (laughter).

**Q. Rose, welcome home. What does it mean to play Riv to you? Did you ever even get an opportunity to play here before just as a guest or a friend or whatever?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah, I've been able to play as a guest last year, but I haven't really actually played Riviera at all in my junior golf days. I was playing a lot of muni courses. I played a lot of public courses.

But I will say that this was always a spot that I heard about my whole life, even when I just started golf. It's incredible to say that I'm going to be playing a U.S. Women's Open at Riviera so close to home with people coming to watch that haven't seen me in a long time.

It's good to catch up with the people around me as well. So seeing them and having them come and cheer for me is also a great support system. I've been very, very grateful for that.

This will be a fun and memorable week regardless.

**Q. Did you ever come here during the men's event?**

ROSE ZHANG: Unfortunately, I never came for the men's event. I've always -- traffic always gets really bad. There's no parking. I'm like I'd rather watch on TV.

But I was also -- when I was younger, to also be honest, I didn't really watch golf live. It was always Saturdays, Sundays were the times that I'm grinding on the golf course myself. So a little bit different.

**Q. I spoke to John Bodenhamer just now about the growth of the game and how that is huge when you come to a place like this or Pebble Beach a couple years ago. How do you see that? And just little girls and boys watching this.**

ROSE ZHANG: 100 percent. I think in the last five years this game of golf has grown so exponentially and is just going to keep growing with big venues at areas like Los Angeles, areas like Pebble, or you see anywhere you go honestly that has a really prestigious venue, you're going to have little girls, little boys come out and say this is what I

want. This is what I want to watch. This is an experience that I will get to enjoy and maybe be inspired.

I think it's honestly such not only a great experience for them, but it pushes them, it drives them to also want to be in that place eventually when they grow up. Regardless of what it is that they do later on, it places a seed in them to say that I want to be in the game of golf, whether it's on the sidelines, I want to work for an institution like the USGA, I want to work for or help players get better, whatever it may be, I want to be a player myself. This is all things they can dream of and dream big for.

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