

# Women's Amateur Asia-Pacific Championship

Quick Quotes

Monday, 8 November 2021

## Natasha Andrea Oon



**Q. Natasha, welcome to the Women's Amateur Asia Pacific. We're here in Abu Dhabi. How are you finding the week so far?**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: I am finding it to be a little tiring. We arrived at around midnight, and I only had four hours of sleep, but the course energized me, and it's definitely really hot. So I made sure to stay hydrated out there.

So far, it's been a dream, and I'm so blessed to be in this event because I feel like the officials and R&A have done such a good job to make us girls all feel like professionals out here.

**Q. That's great. You must be very excited to be here because you did almost miss out on attending the championship due to injury earlier in the year. Can you tell us a little bit about what you've been through.**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: It's definitely so different than what I'm used to. I had a stress fracture in my fourth metatarsal, and that put me in a boot. That put me out of golf for two months.

I think it's a learning experience, and I've definitely grown from it. I've seen myself as somebody else as a golfer, which I've never had that chance. Coming into recent golf, I think it's definitely helped me to reframe my mindset and look at the golf game as just a game and being more grateful and counting my blessings every day because I have a healthy body, I'm out here competing, and just doing my best out there.

**Q. The stress fracture, how did you incur that injury?**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: I think my foot's just been really bad throughout my life. I just realized my athletic trainer told me that he thought I hadn't been walking right my whole life. With the different positions on the foot and just golf in general, just walking and walking, my foot just gave out.

**Q. So when your trainer said you haven't been walking**

**correctly, have you had to try and look at how you walk and change that?**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: Yes definitely -- I had a boot on, so I think that took the stress off. I was on the bench not really moving as much, just doing online classes. It was during COVID too. I think it probably was just the best timing for an injury honestly.

Insoles and slow progression and just teaching my foot how to be well again.

**Q. You said that you really changed your mindset about your game and it seems to be paying off. You've had three top ten performances since September. Talk to us a little bit about the events that you've been playing in. Your performance, you must be very pleased.**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: I've been very happy with how I've been playing the last three tournaments, and definitely going to this event, which is so big. I think it's a great confidence booster. I got to play with the world No. 1 in my last tournament, Rose Zhang, and learn from her.

I think my mindset in these three or four events, was just being grateful that I'm out there every day and taking it as a learning opportunity because my injury taught me that there's so much more to life than golf, and you should really enjoy your time out there instead of thinking about how it's going to affect you after or thinking about how the world's going to view you if you play a bad round because there's so much more life than golf.

**Q. So nice. Now, you've told us a lot about what your injury taught you, but you said you learned a lot from playing with the world No. 1 Rose Zhang. What things did you pick up from her?**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: Well, first of all, she is the calmest person I've ever met, and she's mature. Even though there's a crowd following her everywhere, she doesn't seem fazed at all. I love that energy from her, and I definitely want to incorporate it into my game.

I think for me I was half a spectator, half a player there because I was so in awe of like how well she holds herself



out there.

**Q. Now, you've just come in off the course here in Abu Dhabi. Can you talk to us a little bit about the layout and what your first impressions have been.**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: Definitely very hot. I'm from the U.S., so it's cold and nice and cool, it's fall, and I'm here, and it's humid and hot. But it does remind me of home.

The grass is great. We were out there, and I was just chipping and putting. I loved how it was rolling. It wasn't too fast or too slow for my pace or taste.

I think the course layout definitely has some narrow drives that you have to be good at, and there's definitely some iron shots out there that you have to place correctly, or if you go behind the hole, you're giving yourself a hard time.

So a lot of course management, course strategy. Definitely some holes out there where you can get a good score in and pick up some birdies. But it will be fun out there. I think we'll see some really low scores.

**Q. That will be exciting. What do you feel like is the key strength of your game usually?**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: Usually I think my irons, my accuracy. I love being on the range and just working on my swing a lot, so I think that's helped me be good on my approach shots. Recently my putting and my scrambling has shown a little bit of their better sides. So a little bit of both.

**Q. Coming into the Women's Amateur Asia Pacific, obviously, there's a lot of opportunities online for the champion, a chance to compete in the AIG Women's Open, the Evian Championship. Do you think about those prizes that are on offer, and does that sort of determine what goals you might be setting yourself this week?**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: I think at the end of the day it's just a tournament. Obviously, those prizes are like a dream, playing with professional golfers on world stage and live TV and major championships, like who wouldn't want that? But I definitely make sure that it doesn't faze me and make sure that I approach every single tournament with a clear mindset and assess the results and the prizes after because everything is not going to be long term.

Everything is temporary. And if I can give those experiences to myself, it's going to be great. I'm going to remember it for the rest of my life. If not, it's going to be

fine.

**Q. Natasha, because of that stress fracture, did it hamper your swing any way? Did you have to change something?**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: No, I didn't.

**Q. So it did not bother you in the swing as such?**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: When the stress fracture happened, I think we were going up to season, and the day that they diagnosed me in an MRI, it was literally a day before a tournament. We were going against Stanford, I think it was a Stanford match. But every time I swung a club, I think my left foot, that change in the bottom and the top, the change when I swung, it was just killing it.

So I stopped, and I said, I think I have to go see a doctor, I took an MRI. It was diagnosed as a very minor stress fracture, but as I healed, I didn't really feel anything anymore. I think right now it's more of let's make sure that it stays healed. So far, my swing, I don't feel anything, but if I do, I'll go ahead and assess it and see what's going on.

**Q. You have been part of the first two WAAPs, both of them. Can you tell us about the championship and such and what it does for regional golf?**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: Regional?

**Q. To the golf in the region, in the entire Asia Pacific region.**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: Gosh, this is like the number one tournament for Women's Asia Pacific, I think, in my book. Other than ANWA, I could not think of a bigger tournament honestly. Like U.S. Women's Open or U.S. Women's Amateur, this is like the Women's Open for me in terms of Asia Pacific.

I think it's done so much for women's golf because the scale of this tournament, the amount of work people put in to hold an event like this as professional, and these girls out here and me, we get inspired to play more golf because of this tournament. It's so professional and so official. I think it just pushes us to be better every day.

Because it's a taste of professional golf and a taste of, if you're successful out there, you get to enjoy these things.

**Q. The golf course, you said, it's hot and it's tiring out there, but there must be a couple of holes that must have really caught your attention when you played the round. Any of them that you really want to talk about?**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: Honestly, the 1st hole. I went on the tee, and I was taking out my --

**Q. That's the easiest hole of the golf course.**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: Really? I think off the tee there's a lot of thinking because --

**Q. Sand?**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: Yeah, the sand. Definitely the sand. They definitely placed it in a position where, if you hit it full in, you're going to be in it. So I think the 1st hole kind of stood out to me.

There are some par-3s, I guess, where I'm not sure what hole number it was, but if you went a little bit right, you're just on the water.

**Q. Was it the 7th?**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: Not sure, not sure. There's the green here, and then it's just down. So I think that's definitely something you should keep in mind when you're going for a pin like that.

I think it's just my first round, so I'm not really sure if I could pull any specific holes, but it's a good layout.

**Q. And what did you think of the tee shot on the 18th, when you were hitting towards this impressive clubhouse?**

NATASHA ANDREA OON: I think the 9th hole. That eagle kind of just looks at you, I thought just aim at the eagle. It's definitely a unique target to have.

But every time I look at that big eagle and the diamond, it reminds that you're in Abu Dhabi right now. This is so cool.

So definitely, I think that drive on 18, it's just such a nice way to end it because I think there's going to be people watching up there.

And it's such a narrow layout as well. There's water on the right. There's a bunker on the left. It's a par-5, where you can either go for it or play it safe. So it will be exciting.

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