

# Women's Amateur Asia-Pacific Championship

Press Conference

Wednesday, 5 March 2025

**Rianne Malixi**

**Soomin Oh**

**Achiraya Sriwong**

**Arianna Lau**

THE MODERATOR: Okay, ladies and gentlemen, I am now delighted to be joined by some of our brightest young stars in the Asia Pacific region.

With us we have world No. 4 Rianne Malixi from the Philippines, who is the girls' and women's U.S. Amateur champion.

World No.9 Soomin Oh from the Republic of Korea, who's the Korean girls' junior and women's amateur champion.

World No. 39 Achiraya Sriwong of Thailand, and world No. 43, Arianna Lau of Hong Kong.

We will start with questions in English, and after that we will switch to native language towards the end.

Ladies, can I please begin by asking each you what it means to be competing in the Women's Amateur Asia Pacific this year. Start with you, Rianne.

RIANNE MALIXI: Yeah, so I've always been honored competing in this event. It's my fifth year and my memories here are just so phenomenal. Like the people here are so caring and so nice to all the players, to all of us.

And to have a lot of really good competitors in this field is just amazing. Like I'm just really happy to be here.

SOOMIN OH: I always dreamed of being part of the of the WAAP. Luckily I had a participating last year, but even though I made some mistake and the result wasn't satisfied, so this year I'm looking forward to enjoy and hope to have a better position than last year.

ACHIRAYA SRIWONG: I'm very happy and excited to play in this event. I know it's the biggest women's amateur



**Women's  
Amateur**  
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event in Asia, and I'm really looking forward to do my best this year in this event.

ARIANNA LAU: It's really amazing and such an honor to be here. Every time in this tournament I grow as a player because it's such a strong field and the players here are all very amazing.

So it's just an honor to learn from them. This year my goal is just to be better than last year and, yeah, do the best I can and enjoy.

**Q. Rianne, you have such an impressive list of victories, and just said this is your fifth WAAP. What would winning the WAAP mean to you? You already done so much. What would winning this tournament mean to you?**

RIANNE MALIXI: Well, it would mean a lot. I think we all touched on this is the biggest event in Asia Pacific. It would be a cool thing to win so close on your home soil. I'm Asian, so I will be very proud to win in my roots.

Yes, this my fifth time. Haven't really the job done yet, but having the opportunity to compete again is just amazing and I'm really grateful for the opportunity. Knowing that my birthday is coming up on the final day or actually the day after, I think it would mean a lot.

**Q. Very small follow up. You get a lot of great incentives for winning this tournament. Does that play on your mind?**

RIANNE MALIXI: Of course it does, but I try not to think about it while I'm playing. I'm just there just to play and hit it shot by shot. Knowing there is a lot of incentives in this event just makes it all the more meaningful.

**Q. Rianne, you've been part of the first WAAP academy which took place at Siam a few months ago. Being from the Philippines, can you just give us a little bit of insight into what that was all about and who was there?**

RIANNE MALIXI: So I believe there was 13 girls who were



... when all is said, we're done.®

handpicked by The R&A I believe join and participate at Siam Country Club. So three of us from the Philippines, couple from Vietnam, I think a couple from India. I may not remember, but there were like 13 of us and it was a really fun week.

We worked on our like short game, putting, and we mainly focused on our statistics and the data of the course and everything just in preparation for this week.

Knowing that we were able to use those lessons and really to bring that here on the course this week, I think it means huge. I think it's an advantage for us players because we were able to learn so much from that week fitness-wise, mentally-wise. It's just a big advantage for us.

**Q. Just to follow up, how important is it countries from the Asia Pacific get those opportunities to develop?**

RIANNE MALIXI: I think it's really important. I believe Asia is becoming really big in golf. I think even better than the United States. I mean, I know Asians can do better and really grow the game of golf. It's getting global in Asia, so I'm really happy to see that there are more Asian players competing on the LPGA Tour itself. There are more Asians dominating the leaderboard, the game. I'm just so happy about it.

**Q. One question for Soomin. There is a rumor you are a very talented dancer and performer. Just like to know if you're a better dancer than a golfer or better golf are than a dancer?**

SOOMIN OH: Of course obviously my golf is way better than my dancing. Dancing is just a part of the release the stress, which I think I believe I'm really lucky for it.

**Q. I have a question for Achiraya. Last year you finished third in the WAAP. What is your goal this week?**

ACHIRAYA SRIWONG: Last year was a good year, and this year I'm trying not to stress about it. I'm just trying to play my golf game. If the result is better, then I will accept it. I will do my best again this year to be better.

**Q. Question for Achiraya. Two Thai winners n won this tournament, Atthaya and then Ella. So how do you feel about them, and have they inspired you? What do you expect to be like them or not in the future?**

ACHIRAYA SRIWONG: Jeeno Thitikul was my idol, and Galitsky was on the same squad as me on the National Team. It make me proud to know they're two winners, and it would be great if we have another Thai winner this year.

**Q. For all four young ladies, probably first time you played on this golf course. Thoughts on the golf course, and what's your -- what do you think you need to do well to score well this week?**

RIANNE MALIXI: So I've had the opportunity to play in this public course a couple of weeks ago, so I was able to touch on what it's like. I know it's a links course and the first timing I've stepped on this course it was really difficult just because the winds were blowing. It's fairly wide, but I believe it's very well protected by the bunkers and the greens are humongous. Humongous, but very undulating, so you have to really place them in the right spots.

Having the wind blow at the same time is definitely a challenge. It's something worthy of this event. This course is just very brutal. I don't think it's going to be really low scoring this week compared to Thailand. I believe it's similar it Singapore in a way.

But it does provide a challenge. It's very difficult.

SOOMIN OH: It's pretty much same as everyone's opinion that this course is unpredictable wind, and also we cannot catch exactly where the wind blow comes from and to. Also the green very undulated, so most the time I will play during the game I have to be patient and more be patient.

ACHIRAYA SRIWONG: I think the course for me is not too long, but it's a first time experience links golf so the wind is a big factor. You will have to know where the wind comes from and where the pin position is, know the angle of the green to hit it, to feed the ball into the hole.

I think it comes down to putting, because the green's pretty big. Whoever putts better will have a chance of playing well. I expect low scores from a lot of good players this week.

ARIANNA LAU: This course is quite different to what I normally play, but it's a good challenge because the wind is like a main factor of the course's challenging condition. It usually changes direction and can get really strong. And, yeah, also the green is very undulating and very big, so it's important to like just miss it in the right spots.

Like sometimes you get good breaks; sometimes might not be so lucky. It's important to stay patient and just accept the outcome for every shot.

**Q. Questions for Arianna. This is your fourth WAAP. Rumor has it this will be your last. Will you be turning pro? Second question, how determined are you wanting to reach the podium and be a champion this**



**time before you go on the next one?**

ARIANNA LAU: Yeah, this is my fourth WAAP. I will go to college in the U.S. and play golf, so maybe like after at least the first year, then maybe I will try to turn pro. But going pro has always been like my goal since I was -- since I started playing golf, so I'm very determined to reach that goal.

I hope that experiences like the WAAP and like other tournaments coming up as well as college golf can help me grow stronger as a player and hopefully I'll be ready by then.

**Q. To anyone that wants to answer, if you win the Women's Amateur Asia Pacific you get to play in the AIG Women's Open this year at Royal Porthcawl in Wales, another links course. Lydia Ko is the current champion. How much does that spur you on to want to go and compete in that major?**

RIANNE MALIXI: So I've always wanted to play AIG and really compete in links golf in a professional event. I had the opportunity after I won the U.S. Am, but unfortunately I couldn't go because of my visa problems. It was literally two weeks after my win so I couldn't secure it.

Yeah, it means a lot if I do somehow win this week and get into AIG. It's a dream come true. I've always wanted to play link golf in a professional event, and I've always done a lot of competition, amateur events on links golf.

Heading to that level would be very exciting.

**Q. And finally to everyone, it's International Women's Day on Saturday. Just wanted to know which women inspired you the most.**

ARIANNA LAU: So it would definitely be my mom because she has like supported me so much in my golf journey and just plays such a important role in like who I am as a person and also in like my development as a golfer.

She's going to be on the bag this week caddieing me. She has like always been my caddie so it's just really good to spend time with her and just make good memories with her.

ACHIRAYA SRIWONG: So I would like to say that all the women's in my family, my mother, grandmother, aunties are all my idols. Without them I wouldn't be here. They fully support everything I do. I do miss home, miss them very much.

Yeah, I want to see them.

SOOMIN OH: I think my mom is definitely inspired me a lot, not only as a golfer, but as a human being. I love my mom because my mom is of course mom. Sometimes she was like my best friend and whatever what happened to me is happy or sad, always she is always be there and encourage me and cheer me.

So, yeah, that's it. Thank you.

RIANNE MALIXI: For me, I like to dedicate International Women's Day to every woman out here, mothers, daughters, nurses, doctors, engineers, pioneers, you name them. But I want to dedicate this specifically to my mom and sister. My mom has been very supportive of me even outside of golf. She's more focused on what I am as a person and she's a Wonder Woman and my sister is a Super Girl. They're they supportive people on my team and I'm very lucky to have them.

THE MODERATOR: That's very sweet words from all of you ladies.

**Q. We've had many fantastic players who have taken part in the WAAP, gone on to win LPGA Tour events, win majors, to be world No. 1s. Can each of you share with us what your personal golfing ambitions and hopes are?**

ARIANNA LAU: So every since I was a little kid I've always like dreamed of playing on the LPGA Tour. So it's just amazing like watching them on television. And just winning a tournament and just like playing on this stage, it has always been my goal. Every time I like play tournaments like this and seeing so many good players and like also like in the Olympics as well, it would be a dream come true to like one day represent Hong Kong to play in the Olympics.

So I will work very hard. I know it is tough but, yeah, I will keep on chasing my goals.

ACHIRAYA SRIWONG: My dream is to be an LPGA player, and my ultimate goal is I want to be number one in the world.

My name, hence my dad really likes golf. My nickname is One On. I think I'm born to play this game, and since day one when I pick up the golf club I love this game. It's like dream every day to do what I love. Ultimately, I want to be a winner.

SOOMIN OH: Since I started play golf it's all because of I want to join the LPGA Tour, which is my always first goal for my future.



And then once I reach my first dream, then I want to be invited to the PGA TOUR events, like Michelle Wie.

RIANNE MALIXI: So my ultimate dream is of course to be the best player in the world, and it takes a lot of grit and patience and determination to reach that level.

And we have to know that there are people who also want to be like this. Everyone wants to be the best. It's okay to take a look at role models like Yuka, Lydia, Jeeno, they've played this event. It's good to share a bit of history with them and that means a lot.

It means that we're on the right pathway for success and we can compete on the LPGA Tour any time soon.

**Q. You're one of the highest ranked golfers in this championship. Does that bring pressure or inspire you to perform? And how do you assess your competition this year?**

RIANNE MALIXI: Well, pressure is tremendous just because a lot of people expect from you. They expect you to play well. They expect you to do better. They want to beat you. Everyone wants to beat you. It's hard because you also lose some friends; people come and go.

But you have to also understand that you want to be the best for a reason. And heading to this week I've been prepping a lot and I know the competition will be really great here so I'll work my butt off for this week.

**Q. Soomin, Korean team has consistently performed really well over the past few years at WAAP Championship. The team hasn't been able to lift the Cup yet. So this year, how do you assess your team and how hard have you worked to achieve the best possible result?**

SOOMIN OH: We cannot guarantee and we are not sure the result, but through the winter starting January until February we had a camp in Thailand together with TGA and Taiwan. We train really hard, not only golf skill, but also the physical training as well. And also we practice and more focused on the short game and recovery.

So we believe what we have done and there must be something to learn from the camp. I'm pretty sure not only myself but also all the teammates, they can do their best for the tournament.

Thank you.

**Q. Golf in Thailand has reached a lot of success in the past few years. What have you learned from these**

**successes and like by coming from a country that has such great success and achievements in the sports, do you think that you have an advantage over other competitors?**

ACHIRAYA SRIWONG: The advantage would be with all the successful players. I've seen how much they have practiced, how much patience they have with the game. It's a great example that what they do can lead to success. I think I see it. It can be done.

Advantage would be the style of golf course that we play. The short game for Thai players is amazing, and I learn a lot from that. I also learned diligence and patience of the good player that sometimes it doesn't pay off right away, but you have to wait and believe that what you do will lead to success.

**Q. I got one question for Rianne. So you have played golf in Vietnam. What do you think about the golf courses in Vietnam, especially the Hoiana Shores? One for Soomin. Have you ever played golf in Vietnam, and what do you think about the difference between the golf environment between Korea and Vietnam?**

RIANNE MALIXI: So I played in Vietnam 2021 for Southeast Asian Games, and that course was very different compared to this one. This one is complete links, and the one I played four years was very different. It was very grainy, but does provide a bit of a challenge.

But it's beautiful out here. I love Vietnam. I love the food. I love the people. And, yeah, just happy to compete here this week.

SOOMIN OH: The first answer is I've never been to Vietnam before so this is my first time visiting Vietnam. And also the first time participating in the tournament held in Vietnam.

The second question was the big difference between Korea and Vietnam. The golf environment is the grass. Of course I've never been to any other course in Vietnam so I cannot say only grass. But for here, Hoiana Shores, definitely the different types of grass and also the layout is totally different.

It's flat here but Korea, most of the course is built middle of the mountain so it's very hilly and left and right side is out of bounds. This is totally different.

THE MODERATOR: Ladies, thank you is much for your time today. You've done a wonderful job and we wish you all the best of luck when you compete on the golf course.

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Thank you.

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