

# ANA Inspiration

Sunday, September 13, 2020

Rancho Mirage, California, USA

Mission Hills Country Club

## Rose Zhang

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We're here with Rose Zhang, who's the low amateur at this year's ANA Inspiration. What an incredible week you had, finished at 280, which is actually the lowest 72-hole score ever by an amateur, breaking the record held by Caroline Keggi and Michelle Wie. What is going through your mind as you finish up your week at Mission Hills?

ROSE ZHANG: Honestly I just feel so incredibly blessed to play such a prestigious event, especially in this LPGA major. Ever since I started golf I watched the ANA Inspiration and I watched Lydia Ko and Jin-Young Ko jump into Poppies Pond and Pernilla Lindberg. To be able to be on this venue is truly an honor.

THE MODERATOR: On making the leap into Poppies Pond, you've made the leap into Poppies Pond yourself as the winner of the Junior Inspiration several years ago. This is your second time here. How have you and your game changed since your first time here, and now that you're one of the best players in this field truly?

ROSE ZHANG: Honestly, I think everything changed so much. Two years is a huge difference, and I feel like I've grown physically and mentally. I just still kept the same mindset as I had two years ago about just doing my own thing and trying to improve each step of the way. I'm just extremely honored.

THE MODERATOR: I heard a story that when you played here in the Junior and then made it to the tournament, you stayed a little longer and did some volunteering. Could you tell us about what happened that year?

ROSE ZHANG: Yes, I did. The ANA Inspiration is close to my house. I live two hours away. I figured it was a great way to just go out there and see how the pros do it, and I went to go volunteer, was on the putting green, and then on the final day I watched everyone come in on 18.

It was honestly such a dream come true because at the time I was just seeing everyone so up close, such big names being in front of me, and I tried to learn as much as

I could during the time I belonged here, so it was a great experience.

THE MODERATOR: What year was that?

ROSE ZHANG: I believe it was 2017.

THE MODERATOR: You closed with birdies over your final two holes, had to be quite a rush for you. Talk me through those two birdies if you don't mind, especially that final birdie, which is the one that got you the scoring record.

ROSE ZHANG: Yes. You know, starting the day, I wasn't really playing well. I was 4-over through 5. But I tried to fight back and keep myself composed. On 17 and 18, I had a birdie opportunity on both of them, but they were quite tough putts, and I just tried to keep everything on line and keep myself in the moment. Making those two putts were definitely great.

THE MODERATOR: This is capping off a really, really successful month for you, having won the Women's Amateur about a month ago over Gabi Ruffels. What experiences do you take from that week at Woodmont that you were able to put to use here at Mission Hills?

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah, what I learned about myself at U.S. Women's Am was I really had the ability to fight back. Even though things weren't probably going my way, I'm able to grind it out and come out with the best score possible.

You know, this week I did just that, and I fought my way back, especially on how I started today.

**Q. I wanted to go back to when you volunteered. What job did they make you do?**

ROSE ZHANG: I was protecting the putting green from other people or outsiders coming in, so I watched them putt a lot.

**Q. You got a full uniform and everything?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah, I did, so it was pretty fun.

**Q. When you won the Junior Inspiration here, that's a**

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**one-round tournament, just 18 holes.**

ROSE ZHANG: Yes.

**Q. How much did you glean from what you did then to what you did this week for a full tournament?**

ROSE ZHANG: You know, on that event in 2018, I was really -- I was very clutch on the last hole, and I managed to make a 15-footer in order to win the entire tournament by one. It was definitely a grind, and being able to make it into the next week of ANA Inspiration and making the cut, it was definitely quite an experience that I won't forget, and it really helped me try to keep improving my game.

**Q. And as the Junior champion, you did get to jump in the lake, right?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yes, I did. They asked me if I wanted to jump in the lake, and I was like, of course I do; why would you ask that?

I think someone before me declined, and I was like, there's no way I'm declining that.

**Q. Lucy Li.**

ROSE ZHANG: Yes, Lucy.

**Q. Tell me about your last year of school. Are you actually in school?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yes, I am currently in school.

**Q. In the building is what I meant.**

ROSE ZHANG: No, my school, because we're a small private school, we decided to keep it virtual, and then if everything -- if COVID slows down a little bit, we were considering going back to in-person classes.

**Q. Spring semester?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yes.

**Q. Right now as we sit here today, what are your plans for college, for Stanford? Are you thinking four years or is part of this a temptation to come out?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah, I think college is such an unforgettable experience that you don't get in a lifetime, so I feel like I'm super lucky to be able to go to Stanford, and I was thinking if I play well in college, we will see how I feel then, but as of the moment, I'm really not thinking that far.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you so much, Rose. We're excited to see you down the road. Enjoy that trophy.

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