

Portland Classic

Tuesday, August 11, 2026

Portland, Oregon, USA

Columbia Edgewater Country Club

Kaleiya Romero

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Joining us ahead of the 2026 Standard Portland Classic is Kaleiya Romero. You're in the field this week as a sponsor invitation. Can you talk about what it means to have the opportunity to tee it up this week at this event.

KALEIYA ROMERO: Yeah, this is my first exemption and first LPGA event that's not the U.S. Open, so I'm super happy for it to be in Oregon, kind of look a second home for me. My brother and sister, actually my whole family is in town to come and watch. My boyfriend lives like 45 minutes away and he's going to caddie. So just to play in like a second home for me and have it be my first LPGA event is super special.

For The Standard to allow me to be here, I'm super grateful for all of that.

Q. You spent some time coaching at the University of Oregon; can you just talk a little bit about that decision and what it meant to you to be a coach instead of a player for a minute?

KALEIYA ROMERO: Yeah, after I finished at Pepperdine, I wasn't really sure what -- I wanted to play professionally, but I did Q-school and it didn't go the way I wanted it to, so I kind of took some time to reassess where I was at.

My sister and I, we were talking, and I was like, well, I'd love to do a Masters, and she and my brother had been at Oregon. I was like, Oregon would be perfect. So we talked to the coach about maybe being a GA.

With that, I thought I was just going to be hanging out at practice, doing my Masters. But when our assistant coach got pregnant, they were like, oh, you're going to need to travel with us now and be our assistant coach for the spring, and I was super excited but I was kind of nervous because I didn't think I would actually be in a coaching role at all.

But like that experience I learned so much. I got better as a player and as a person, and just watching and hanging

out with the team, I learned so much from them.

Maybe they learned a little bit from me too, but I like it because it's a different story than a lot of people and their road to the LPGA, like mine took a different turn. But it still worked out okay.

Q. You're playing on the Epson Tour this season. You've been having a really strong season. Could you tell us a little bit about how that's going and how getting some professional reps on Epson is helping you to keep your game in the place you want it to be?

KALEIYA ROMERO: Yeah, it's definitely a lot more golf than I've ever played before, and having the back-to-back weeks, it's kind of nice for me because now that I'm playing well, I can just keep going.

Then going to different states and learning how to travel and manage doing all that and being on the road a lot, I think it's a great preparation for hopefully being on the LPGA next year and making this a full-time career thing.

Q. You obviously are very close with your sister. You caddied for her out at the Augusta National Women's Amateur. What does it mean for you to have golf as a shared experience and to see one another succeed through golf?

KALEIYA ROMERO: It's awesome to have her. Like I said, she was the World No. 1, so I was -- she's younger than me and I'm still learning from her. Even last year, I caddied for her at this event last year, so walking the course for four or five days, I feel like that kind of helped prepare me for now.

She almost came out to caddie, but she got into the Canadian tournament next week, so she has to head out for that.

Just to have her kind of doing the same thing, and we're doing our best to both try and be out here next year, to be able to travel together and kind of share all these experiences is super awesome.



Q. The first two rounds of the tournament are going to be airing on Rose City SportsNet, which is a women's-led sports network that's local. You call Oregon your second home. How does it feel to have something that's so accessible that younger girls are able to watch for free? How does it help the growth of the game?

KALEIYA ROMERO: Yeah, I saw all the support my sister had last year with kind of us both being out there and all the kids that come out to watch. I think it's super cool how many younger golfers want to be out here and watching.

I think it's nice that they have this opportunity in this area, like the Oregon area, to come and see some professional golf because I don't know if the men ever come out here, but it's really cool that they get to see the girls play and kind of have that opportunity.

Q. How would you describe the fan base's reaction to having something the size of The Standard Portland in their community?

KALEIYA ROMERO: I think it's really cool because, like being out here last year, there were a lot of Duck fans, and Kiara had a good crowd. I think being around that, it's nice to see that people follow women's sports, especially in this area, and kind of have it be, again, like a home crowd. There's Oregon fans, but there's also golf fans out here and people that follow our journey. I think it's pretty cool.

Q. What do you think is the difference between golf in Oregon and golf in other places in the Pacific Northwest or in the United States?

KALEIYA ROMERO: Yeah, I think the courses are different, just with the weather. When I was practicing at Oregon the last two years, you see rain, you get cold, and it's just a little bit different than growing up in California where it's always kind of sunny.

The courses are more narrow. There's a lot of trees. I think it trains you. I think it's harder out here. When I go to other places in the country, it's a little bit more relaxing because it's a little bit more open.

But I think Oregon really prepares you for tough conditions. I think both me and my sister got a lot better when we were practicing out here in Oregon.

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