

CME Group Tour Championship

Friday, November 17, 2023

Naples, Florida, USA

Tiburón Golf Club

Rose Zhang

Flash Interview

Q. All right, joined by Rose Zhang after her second round here at the CME Group Tour Championship. Take us through your round today.

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah, today was very solid. Started off with a par, which is always a plus, then with a couple birdies.

Felt like the front nine was hitting it pretty solid; just missed couple short footers. But after that, I felt like I put myself in a lot of positions. Was able to get the ball in the fairway, on the green, and make a couple more birdie.

On 14, it was definitely not an anticipated lay-up shot, but managed to make it back and I felt like everything was very solid from there.

Q. Rose, I know a little bit of a slower start yesterday; recovered really well today. What do you mentally work on or flip when you have a slower first round to get to a really good second round?

ROSE ZHANG: Right, you always have to think that you're never out of it when you're playing out here. You're playing so many rounds and you can't put emphasis on every round you play. It's important to learn from them, the shots that you didn't hit well, and kind of improve from there.

But other than that, every day is a new day. You should manage to fix whatever you can and go out and stay confident.

Q. You got two more new days coming up. How do you build upon a 66?

ROSE ZHANG: I think, like I said, there is a lot of positives from today. There is also a couple things that I do want to work on, so going into tomorrow and the day after, it's just building on the positives and giving myself opportunities from tee to green, and then making sure that my short game is well conditioned.



That's all I'm really thinking about. Everyone else is playing spectacular. When you're out there you really just have to stay confident.

Q. I know you gave your rookie season a B, but you've had so many highlights over the course of the entire year. What do you think was the biggest learning moment for you? Which event? Which point?

ROSE ZHANG: Wow, that's very difficult because going from the summer you play all these major championships right off the bat and it's very easy to feel fatigued.

It's hard to say what exactly changed kind of my entire mindset on tour. I would say that in Shanghai, that was when my family was there, my friends. They all flew from the States to China to go watch me play.

So from there, you know, I was able to sit around with them, have a couple good dinners, and really put myself in a perspective where this is the dream.

You know, it's always going to be a grind. You just have to embrace it. That's what I've been doing.

Q. I'm curious, I want to go back to the KPMG for a minute. There was a moment down the stretch where, I mean, I felt an energy on the ground that I haven't felt out here in a long time. Wondering what you felt as a player, as it seemed like everyone on the golf course was rooting you on.

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah, I never felt something like this before. It was honestly surreal, especially coming off Mizuho. That was my second event on tour. And being in contention really had everyone kind of getting the energy up and it felt really incredible. Felt chills on every single hole, every single tee shot.

At that point you still have to play the game and there is still a lot of people in the hunt, so that's all I was thinking about. But the energy was incredible. I don't think I'll ever feel something like that.

Q. Did that give you a different appreciation of what's possible in terms of your popularity? Awkward question, I know.



ROSE ZHANG: I'm honored that people like me. It's always good that they don't hate you, right?

I mean, I just embrace it. I really appreciate everyone's support. I've been really feeling the love on and off the golf course. Every one of the tour players, they have been so welcoming, which is something that I was a little bit worried about because you're the new rookie out here and new face, meeting old veterans and great players.

I'm very lucky for that.

Q. How do you get into girls' golf?

ROSE ZHANG: How did I get into girls' golf? Well, I started when I was nine. I played all types of sports, but my dad basically kind of threw a club at me and was like, try swinging it.

Going from there, I grew up with a couple family friends who just kind of wanted to take me out on the golf course, and fell in love from there. I did a lot of putting competitions with my friends, and that's how I fell in love with the game.

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