

# FIR HILLS SERI PAK Championship

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

Palos Verdes Estates, California, USA

Palos Verdes Golf Club

## Rose Zhang

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, welcome back inside the media center mirror here at the Fir Hills Seri Pak Championship. Pleased to be joined by Rose Zhang, Irvine native, and as we were joking off camera, a Stanford student.

Welcome back to the LPGA Tour. We haven't seen you since Hilton, I believe. I know you've been busy at school and busy with The Match. What have the last few weeks been like for you?

ROSE ZHANG: Been very fulfilling. I feel like I've been able to have a lot of closer relationships with my nongolf friends and I've been having a good time there.

But as for the lack of sleep and the constant grinding in school, it's definitely -- hasn't been easy. I would argue that it's tested me in ways that golf couldn't test me.

But I'm very glad for the experience. Today is going to be the last day of whatever I have to do, so hopefully in the next couple weeks I can get it going and go back into the professional golf mindset.

**Q. This is also the first time we've seen you tee it up since The Match with Lexi and some members of the PGA TOUR. For you, what was that experience like overall? And when you walked away from that, how did you feel? What were some of the things that people said to you?**

ROSE ZHANG: It was incredible. Definitely outside of my comfort zone. I feel like anyone that knows me, I'm not a super outgoing, outspoken person.

At the same time, I was able to kind of just have a good time learning from Rory, Max, Lexi, and the entire time I felt like it was a whirlwind because not only were there a lot of crowds there, night golf is something I've never really done before.



When Charles Barkley is in your ear, it's a little bit different. I've got ten voices in my ear going back and forth about random things. Yeah, I mean, I had to be tested in that area, but at the same time, I got such good feedback and it was such an honor to be a part of that development of women's golf.

Now LPGA is a little bit more on the map. Not just because of me, but I'm very thankful that I was able to have that platform.

**Q. Coming back to Palos Verdes Golf Club. You've been here. Done pretty well here in your collegiate days. What's it like to be back here and also to get back under that golfer grind that you talked about?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah, definitely a little different. Last time I was here was last year and I was with my teammates. We were playing for a little bit of a different reason.

So representing the university versus me now as a professional coming here, it does feel a little bit different.

At the same time, it's really nice to come back with such good memories of the golf course. And I think just going out there, having that same game plan, it's playing a little bit different from last year, so for me to come out here and see the golf course a little bit more and making sure I have that game plan intact, it'll help me with that grind in the next couple days.

**Q. Obviously Seri Pak, with her name behind this tournament, first time hosting. Michelle Wie West hosted Mizuho; Annika hosted The ANNIKA. For you, what does it mean to see someone's name like Seri Pak host an LPGA event?**

ROSE ZHANG: It's very inspiring, especially with Seri Pak and her ability to bring golf to such a different level, especially in Korea, but also worldwide among all the women and female athletes.

She's definitely someone everyone looks up to, not just from her accolades, but even with this event she's inspiring younger generations like myself to be able to push



ourselves and hopefully do something more later on with our golf careers.

And for her to be able to host such a big event like that, it's definitely really cool to see.

**Q. You mentioned today is the last day before adjusting back. Can you walk through what you have left to do and then the challenge of adjusting backing to the professional golf world?**

ROSE ZHANG: 100%. Well, after this press conference at around 2:00 I have my final exam. It's going to be for media psych. It was a very interesting class. I had a lot of fun with it. I still have to finish that exam.

And I also have a 15-page paper that's due tonight for a political science class. That class is a little bit more niche, so requires more research and reading and integration of real-life context versus the context that we learned in class.

So it's a little bit more difficult there.

But after these are done I'll be golden for the next couple days and going forward until I come back to winter quarter next year, yeah.

**Q. What's your energy level like from zero to hundred right now?**

ROSE ZHANG: Hmm, I'll say it's definitely below 50%. (Laughter.)

But, yeah, I've been trying to recover from a really bad flu the last two days, been a little bedridden. But we're out here thriving. I think a lot of the stress has come on to me, especially this week, it's finals week, everyone is dying back at Stanford as well. All my friends are just going through it.

So once this kind of quarter wraps up everyone is going to be having a good time afterwards.

**Q. I think a theme of your press conferences has generally been how busy you are. Is that something you enjoy, being this busy?**

ROSE ZHANG: I do think that there is a balance that's required to be busy versus efficient and well rested. I still have yet to find that balance a little bit more.

I think I do appreciate a lot of obstacles that come my way where I can be tested. But I do see the trend quite a bit. (Laughter.)

I think it's something that I will be having to manage a little bit better.

**Q. Test at 2:00. Do you need to cram for that test at all? And how many pages are left in your paper?**

ROSE ZHANG: Pages, I've got three to four pages, and then -- it's okay. We'll be fine. I have an outline. We'll figure out how to cram in everything else.

But as for the exam, it's not as bad. It's open notes, so hopefully that saves me a little bit more.

**Q. For you, maybe does just being back on the golf course feel like an escape from some of the stress of school? I know you balanced all this at Stanford full time. Do you feel like you're relying on that experience, too?**

ROSE ZHANG: A little bit. I do think that coming out here I think it's important for me to understand that I'm now the professional golfer in my life.

Being out here, it's definitely going to -- at least for me, I have high standards towards how I want to play, so I won't say it's an exact escape from what I want to accomplish and my obligations as now a tour player, but I do think it is using a different part of my brain and testing myself in different ways.

To some extent, it is nice to be a little bit away from school and not having to worry about exam full fledgedly.

**Q. You said at the Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions that you were a little stagnant last year. I thought that was very interesting considering all you accomplished. For you, do you feel less that way so far this year? Just been stuck in the school rut?**

ROSE ZHANG: That's a good question. I think that in terms of me being stagnant, I believe that the next couple events that I'm going to be playing in will really kind of tell how I am feeling mentally, physically, and how I'm able to perform.

But I am thinking that I've taken my time to realize where I'm stagnant in and build my team, build myself around that. So slowly I think I'm getting out of the stagnant era.

And it doesn't matter how I perform, but I do think that I am trending towards the right direction in how I want to do things later on and throughout the year.

**Q. This time last year you were in a totally different plane of life. Can you just reflect on how much your**

**life has changed and how crazy that past year has been. We are coming up on the Mizuho victory, anniversary of that. For you, do you look back and sit down and go, dang, this has been crazy?**

ROSE ZHANG: It's interesting, because it's a little bit difficult to think about that, especially when I do have so much on my plate. I do have people around me that have told me that, and when I am kind of in a rush to complete things and in a rush in life, they tell me it settle down.

One person that really helped me in that area was Coach Walker when I was back at Stanford. She was just telling me that I needed to be a little more kind to myself and really realize the big transition that I made from last year to this year.

So with that in mind, it's still something I'm working on. I do appreciate like everyone that's been involved to help me with this transition. It's still ongoing in terms of how I am dealing with everything.

**Q. So as an LPGA professional I'm fascinated by the fact that you have been able to catapult yourself into the professional world while still a college student. I would love the secrets. What is it about you that makes you so far above and beyond any other student of your age playing golf? How do you manage to become -- is it your game is ahead of everybody else? Is it the support? Coaches? What made you so good so fast?**

ROSE ZHANG: I would say yes, you touched on a really important part of my life, is the support system that I have around me. I have really good coaches, really good mentors. A good family. They've definitely elevated me as a person.

In transition, being able to take that on to the golf course and try my best is something that I've been able to handle a lot better than a lot of people that I see when I'm playing against them in collegiate events and whatnot.

But I think that I just have a really important sense of my own faith and mindset towards different things and towards life in general. Being able to build upon that, I'm able to put my whole efforts into whatever I do, whether it's in school, in practice, in golf.

I think that really just helps me to be the best player that I can be. But it's important to be competitive. And overall, faith, competitiveness, and support system, these all helped me.

**Q. Two questions, if I may. I'm curious about practice.**

**Were you able to hang out with your old Stanford teammates at all? What was your practice schedule like leading up to this week?**

ROSE ZHANG: I was able to hang out with my old Stanford teammates a little bit. I would say less on the golf course and even less in actual school just because they're super busy. I realized how busy the collegiate schedule is in general. They still have workouts and team practices, playing tournaments, so I do try to get out of their hairs a little bit.

In terms of practice in general, it's been a little bit difficult. I think that I've realized balancing 20 units in the ten weeks have not been super easy. I have had to time manage myself a little bit better while it was my off-season. So I was able to kind of have a life outside of golf, school, but it's -- you know, I've given and taken a little bit practice time to do so.

**Q. Was there a point where you thought to yourself, maybe I shouldn't go back for another quarter?**

ROSE ZHANG: I mean, I'm pretty excited to come back out here to be fair. Actually school stresses me out a little bit more than golf does.

I have considered taking online classes while I'm here on tour, so that's a two-be-determined plan.

As of now I'm taking the spring quarter off and then we'll evaluate what I do in the fall.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Rose. Have a wonderful rest of your week and good luck on your exam.

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