

Fortinet Founders Cup

Tuesday, March 17, 2026

Menlo Park, California, USA

Sharon Heights Golf & Country Club

Yealimi Noh

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, hello and welcome to the 2026 for the Founders Cup. I am joined by defending champion Yealimi Noh. First thing, just looking back to last year, you became a Rolex first time winner at this event. Talk to maybe how your life has changed, if at all, and do you feel any different to having a win on the LPGA Tour now?

YEALIMI NOH: Yeah, it was one of my biggest goals forever, so to be able to cap it off at the beginning of the season last year was an incredible feeling. Gave me a lot of confidence, a lot more calmness as well.

So, yeah, I don't think it's changed my life drastically. It's just what I was waiting for and got it done. But not over there; I still want to get more.

Q. And when you think back to that event last year, what comes to the top of your mind? Was there a feeling down 18? The post win celebrations you think about?

YEALIMI NOH: Yeah, I think the post win was super hectic. I was trying to get out on a flight that evening. Everything was kind of crazy. But the few weeks after it was really fun. Just enjoying it with family and friends and just, yeah, I mean I felt really calm on 18 which I was surprised by. I was mentioning it a couple times.

I just loved how confident and calm I felt, so that was nice.

Q. And with that too this is your first time defending out here. Have you got any advice or anything you're taking into this week? Obviously a couple other commitments that come with that. How do you look to prepare?

YEALIMI NOH: I think I really tried to focus on trusting my process and just focusing on my process and not thinking about results. I mean, not only is it my defending week, but also in my hometown. It's a little bit extra special, more something, a little nerves and pressure if you call it that.

It all comes with good things, and I'm happy to be in this position. Focusing on process and not the results and hopefully everything will go nice.

Q. And then what's it been like to be back in the Bay Area? Saw you got a couple goodies for some players, baked goods. What's it like to be back here?

YEALIMI NOH: It's so amazing. I mean, Palo Alto and Menlo Park this area is so incredible. I have so many players come up and say how nice it is. This is so nice. No wonder you never want to come back to Dallas. The course is in fantastic shape. Really, really thankful that Sharon Heights is hosting us this year and couple more years.

Happy to have a tournament back in the Bay. It's the best place in the world and definitely deserves an LPGA tournament every year.

Q. This event also has strong presence of the Founders and thinking back to their legacy. What has their legacy meant to you as an LPGA Tour player?

YEALIMI NOH: None of us would be here without them. Always really grateful, and I think we should always keep in mind that we're playing for something bigger. The women who came before us set the stage for us, so we need to do our best to represent it well and do our best.

Q. Do you have any history at this golf course specifically?

YEALIMI NOH: I don't actually. It was my first time playing here. I got here last week. Played a round on Thursday. It was my first time. I think this is like a very exclusive course, and being out here I was like, wow, this is incredible.

It's such a great course. Didn't spend much time down south as much as north to Monterey, but it's cool to be here. The weather is awesome, too.

Q. Where did you play most of your golf growing up in this area?



YEALIMI NOH: A lot of golf in Monterey. Thankfully I didn't realize how lucky I was until I tried to get a round at Pebble and I was like, wow. Or Spyglass. Wow, lucky to play this. East Bay, Nor Cal, not as much in San Francisco as I remembered.

I was playing at TPC Harding the other week and I was like, wow, I've never played here. Yeah, mainly East Bay and Monterey.

Q. As you mentioned you have a home this Dallas. How often are you here?

YEALIMI NOH: I'm here all of the offseason, so all winter. And I mean, the first couple tournaments are on the west coast of our schedule so I'm here almost like four, five months of the year, beginning of the year.

Q. Do you have a home club here or just play around?

YEALIMI NOH: I actually am very lucky to practice at Olympic. The director of golf there is amazing. Very accommodating for me to practice and play on the course whenever. So it's not a bad spot to be.

Q. No. Can you elaborate on what you put in players' lockers?

YEALIMI NOH: Actually I put a lot of the thought into it because I was stressing out a little bit. I was like, oh, my God, I need them to taste a little bit of SF. There is just so many great options. I live really close to the Ferry Building so there is a lot of stuff in there, a bunch of markets.

I got them I think almond croissant, pain chocolate from a bakery that just opened. Thankfully there was no line so I was able to get everything. And then some cookies from Tartine, a really popular bakery in SF.

And then my favorite blueberry muffin from the Ferry Building that is also gluten free.

I almost did custom fortune cookies with notes in it. I was told it was too much so I didn't.

Q. Great idea.

YEALIMI NOH: It was a good idea because S F and Chinatown is connected. Maybe next year.

Q. What fortune would you have?

YEALIMI NOH: Welcome to SF or the Bay Area, good luck this week. I like doing stuff like that.

Q. Back to last year, such a big moment for you for a lot of reasons. I think you had some emotion after that win. What did it mean to you having so many close calls and breaking through and living out your dream like you had had for so long?

YEALIMI NOH: Yeah, I mean, I was saying that it was kind of like a long time coming for me. I felt like I had a lot of close calls like you said. Just finally being able to get it done and then felt like it was weighing over me a little bit. I just really wanted it. Everyone wants their first win so bad.

To get it done was like, yes, I got it done. Now I just want more obviously. Yeah, just felt really good to finally kind of solidify my place and be like I finally have a win under my belt. Now hopefully aim for more.

Q. What did it change on the golf course for you? We hear a lot of people talk about the first win. You just play different. Feel different. What did to change on the golf course?

YEALIMI NOH: Yeah, definitely a lot more confidence. I think even on bad days the feeling of knowing I can come back and shoot those scores. I think even after the win, the few rounds after and just throughout the year when he was having a bad start especially like bad starts, I know I can recover from it and come back.

With that confidence knowing that I can play well in tournament golf and just having that extra confidence.

Q. If you been away from NorCal for a while what's the first place you stop?

YEALIMI NOH: So when I was in Asia, two weeks in Asia, great food, amazing Asian food and everything. I couldn't stop thinking about -- God there is so many. A sandwich for one, an American sandwich. I actually have like breakfast from this place called Proper Food in SF. All the office workers go for take out. Somehow I go there every morning for breakfast.

It's a salmon bowl with rice and I could not stop thinking about it. My fiance was even like -- I was like, you know what I'm really craving? He's like, Proper? I was like oh, my God, yeah. I got it the next day.

Q. You mentioned practicing at the Olympic Club. How has that shaped your game? Such a unique course. Different than the East Bay courses you grew up on.

YEALIMI NOH: Yeah, for sure.



Q. How has that impacted your game?

YEALIMI NOH: It's great. Olympic Club is very challenging, especially the Lake Course. I feel very fortunate to practice there and so many members there. That's right all so nice and welcoming. Being able to practice on the Lake Course a lot helps for sure.

I mean, it's definitely a different type of golf. I mean, San Francisco golf is different. I hope it's always colder, always -- the ball goes shorter which is annoying. It's always good to practice, and make it a little tough for me on off weeks.

Q. How often do you practice there?

YEALIMI NOH: Every day when I'm here. Every day, yeah.

Q. You just said fiance. Just speak to what it's been like to be a fiancee and start planning a wedding?

YEALIMI NOH: Yes, super exciting. I've always loved planning things so planning a we had something definitely fun. Just having a support every week and he's out here this week. Just always having that and I think that's when my golf started to -- I've started to feel better off the golf course. Was a lot happier I think to reflect on my game as well.

Just having that extra love. (Smiling.) Happy.

Q. What's his name?

YEALIMI NOH: Jackson. A note on that, when I first started playing on Tour, I never really played for fun with golf, golf rounds. It was all like a job. Not a job but playing rounds when I'm home I just want to practice or stay at home. With him and his family I was able to play golf for fun. We started going on golf trips, which I never did before. We have one planned this year. I was like, why would I travel for golf when I do that every day?

On the offseason we travel to cool places to play golf and I was like, this is really fun. We play stupid games and stuff. That's what really helped me get out of my slum pee years. Just finding the fun in golf again and enjoying it again really helped me, and he's a big part of that.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

YEALIMI NOH: Definitely the Monterey trip. Pebble on his birthday last year. We do Hawaii Golf trips. We have a trip to Bandon planned this year.

Q. Is he good?

YEALIMI NOH: He's very good. He's very good. Almost too good to where I have to try.

Q. Did he play competitively growing up?

YEALIMI NOH: No, I actually played tennis competitively. Picked up golf only a few years ago. His progress has been insane. Really cool to watch. We feed off each other and practice with each other. He's really helped me stay in tournament mode on the off weeks.

Q. Did you go to Juli Inkster's Solheim Cup thing?

YEALIMI NOH: I did on Sunday. I did the -- I had to -- couldn't go to the dinner but we played on Sunday which was awesome. Los Altos which was really fun. Played with Lucy, Andrea, and Nelly, so it was super fun.

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