

# The Chevron Championship

Tuesday, April 16, 2024

The Woodlands, Texas, USA

The Club at Carlton Woods

## Rose Zhang

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, I'm joined in the media center at The Chevron Championship by Rose Zhang. Rose, welcome.

ROSE ZHANG: Thank you.

**Q. Making your debut at the championship this week. How have you prepared for this major and your debut?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah, I actually came out a little bit earlier than usual just because I haven't seen this golf course yet.

Last week was a nice little week off and got to work a little bit on my game. Then came out here, played a little bit, and it's just been very simple prep.

I think it's just everything is going pretty smoothly, and everything is pretty abnormal -- just normal.

**Q. And we saw you two weeks ago make match play at the T-Mobile Match Play presented by MGM Rewards. Anything in particular you did in your week off to relax maybe nongolf related?**

ROSE ZHANG: Well, I'm officially a Las Vegas resident, so been working on the home a little bit more when I was in my off week back at home.

And I didn't really do anything to be honest. It was definitely a nice time off. I actually got to have dinner with Michelle and Marina right after the event so it was nice to kind of catch up with them.

It was a very simple time, so...

**Q. When did you make it out to the course last week? How many times have you played it so far?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah, well, I came out or I flew out Saturday and then on Sunday I just practiced a little bit. Got do a little bit of short game putting. Then yesterday went out and played 18.

Looked at the course a little bit more briefly, and today was a little pro-am. So just very simple. Didn't really do anything too crazy. Just honing in on some skills.

**Q. Building off what Carly said, was last week the first week off in the year between school and playing on the LPGA? And if so, how are your energy levels coming into this week with that?**

ROSE ZHANG: Actually, it is. It was my first week off. Especially in the ten weeks, I felt like there was a lot more stress involved when it came to going back on campus and going back in the flow with studying and practicing a little bit more.

Then when I was playing on tour for a little bit, it did take a little bit of adjusting for me just because it's an entirely different atmosphere out here than in college.

So it was really nice to kind of let loose a little bit in the off week. By letting loose, I really didn't do anything. I just stayed home, ate good food, didn't do anything too crazy.

**Q. You had a lot of success in majors last year: Three Top 10s. What is it about majors, be it the setup, the stage, that allowed you to succeed in your first year as a pro?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah, last year I mean, all the majors, they always play tough. There is a reason they're called major championships at prestigious venues. These venues in particular really challenge all parts of one's game.

So being able to really understand course management, understand commitment when you're out there with your game plan, it's all just part of being able to perform well when you're at a major level.

So last year I did take it into my stride. I played major championships before as an amateur that gave me a little bit of experience into what the atmosphere is like, so that definitely helped me a lot last year.

Going into this year I think the mindset is the same. You



know that out there you're going to be having to play tough conditions and the setup definitely isn't going to be easy.

So understanding how to get and navigate your way around the course is more important.

**Q. Any skills in particular you were focusing on practicing the last couple days?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah. Well, the greens are firm just because they're new surfaces, which I heard from a lot of players and a lot of people this past week.

Once you land the ball it's going to roll out. There is going to be a lot of lag putts, a lot of the speed work around the greens. There is a lot of grain out here, so understanding how to make sure you're using your wedges and using the bounce right.

These are all things I've been thinking about and taking into consideration. (Smiling.)

**Q. Just reflecting about a year removed now from a Augusta National Women's Amateur and seeing it replay, you reflected a little bit on social media about it, but what were your emotions and how much a year has changed things for you?**

ROSE ZHANG: It's been a pretty long journey it feels like, even though it's only been a year. I was just cheering on all my friends when I was watching ANWA this past two weeks. It was super almost nostalgic just knowing that I won't be going back there to compete ever as an amateur.

But, I mean, once I look back, it's always fun to just watch. And Masters week, oh, my gosh. It was a masterpiece with how everything played out.

I just love watching golf. These two weeks have definitely been just on top of my list to, after the round, go back and watch, have fun, and really learn about how other players are playing and learn a thing or two.

I think everyone really got to feel that and know that from all the players' performances, from Lottie winning ANWA and coming in so clutch. I know she's in the field this week, so, so happy for her.

And Scottie, what a performance he had and his platform to be able to bring out his faith is really incredible.

**Q. On that topic, do you have any message for Lottie this week as she makes her LPGA debut after winning ANWA?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah. I mean, I know that Lottie is probably over the moon and just so happy. I'm super happy for her. A lot of players out here are just so excited to see her out here.

But I would just say live in the moment. It's already such a great opportunity to tee it up against the best in the world. So really just embracing that and having a good, fun week, even in tough conditions or regardless of what happens. Just have fun.

**Q. How much are you working on or adjusting ball flights going into a week with a course like this?**

ROSE ZHANG: Well, I think I don't really want to change too much, because once you have the fundamental grounds of what your game looks like, you kind of just want to understand how you can be comfortable and work with that when you're out here on the golf course.

Especially in major weeks you have to learn how to somewhat be comfortable with the shots you're playing with minor adjustments. It's mostly the short game and the lag putting that will make the difference with a lot of players.

At the same time, making sure that your ball flight is high enough to be able to land it somewhat a little bit softer, that will be very crucial.

I feel like the long hitters have a huge advantage out here playing. So even though you're not trying to hit out of your stocks, just getting a little bit of yardage doesn't hurt either.

**Q. What have your thoughts been on The Woodlands here through a few days?**

ROSE ZHANG: It's been great. The overcast is actually super nice. It's not too hot. I felt like it's very -- I mean, it's a little hard to describe bermuda, but in this bermuda condition it's pretty lush. It's very -- it's a little bit humid and fairways are soft but greens are a little bit firm.

So it's definitely a contrasting kind of golf course, but I've been really enjoying it thus far.

**Q. We weren't sure last year if the celebratory leap, that tradition was going to live on. Lilia Vu continued it and jumped into the lake after her victory. Have you had a chance to look at the lake beside 18, and would you jump if you won here on Sunday?**

ROSE ZHANG: That's a really good question. I was talking to my caddie about it. I've played ANA, played the ANA Junior Inspiration before. The pool definitely looks a

little nicer than out here.

I saw the board. And, you know, at that point, if you're a major championship, why not? Just jump in. Yeah, I don't think I would do it voluntarily.

**Q. We're right here by the Olympic Rings. With it being a big year with the Olympics and Solheim Cup, how much is that on your mind and how much are both of those experiences a goal for you?**

ROSE ZHANG: It's a big year, especially with the Solheim and the Olympics coming up. I think that the game speaks for itself. If you're playing good enough and you're playing to be the best that you can be, then naturally I think those selection will ultimately come out in your favor.

Before that, you do have to put in the effort and you have to put in the work and make yourself be a part of that team. Or at least I guess try to get there.

So I think it's more so the process of just trying to play the best and if things come out like the way they do, and they come out in my favor, then that's great. If not, just keeping my head down and working hard also doesn't hurt.

**Q. Rose, how would you describe the degree of difficulty of what Nelly is doing, four in a row? Winning one event is hard enough on tour. To win four in a row, just how can you put that into perspective?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah, I don't think I can put a scale to what she's accomplished. That's honestly just such an incredible feat. There is only one Nelly Korda, and I think she really shows how she's the best right now in the game. Even growing up I've always watched her play. There was obviously something special about her.

So to see her do all that she's done, especially last four events, it's been really inspiring.

But, yeah, it's very hard to put a scale on what she's done. You say difficulty level. You honestly can't really -- it's so difficult and it's so rare.

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