

# The Amundi Evian Championship

Wednesday, 26 July 2023

Evian-les-Bains, France

Evian Resort Golf Club

## Rose Zhang

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, welcome back inside the media center at the Amundi Evian Championship. Pleased to be joined by Rose Zhang. Rose, welcome to the Amundi Evian Championship. What is it like to be back here in Evian, France?

ROSE ZHANG: It's incredible. The first time that I came out of the U.S. to play a golf tournament was at the Evian Junior Cup when I was 14. Coming back here brings a lot of memories.

And I was able to play the last two years as an amateur here and have that opportunity to be inside the ropes with pros, so it's really cool to just have that experience now and kind of start afresh as a professional.

**Q. I know you had a week off last week, were able to relax a bit. How much did the off week prepare you for the European swing?**

ROSE ZHANG: Helped a lot just because it was kind of like a moment in time where I can settle down a little bit. My body was low-key breaking down because I was sick in Toledo, and so I had the chance to rest up a little bit.

The travel part is very difficult as a professional, so for me to have that little break allows me to clear my mind a little bit and come into this European swing with a more fresh outlook on everything.

**Q. You were originally going to be a sponsor's invite for this event. Being able come in as an LPGA member, you spoke about reflecting on being here when you were 14, but what does it mean to be teeing it up this week as an LPGA Tour member and winner after all the memories you've had here in the past?**

ROSE ZHANG: It's incredible. I couldn't have imagined myself to be in position, even at the start of early June. Everything has been coming really quickly.

But with my status now I'm just really blessed and thankful. Regardless I was able to have that opportunity, but it is very different when you're in a different position



and have a different status.

Evian is just beautiful to be out here, so just excited to see how the week goes.

**Q. I know you talked about the travel and things that you may not have known I guess before you got out here as a professional. How have you been able to adjust since Mizuho and what have you learned maybe over the past few months?**

ROSE ZHANG: 100%. Yeah, I definitely knew that Tour life was going to be a little bit difficult. I feel like I reiterated that quite a bit in media in past events and even when I just started at Mizuho.

You know, safe to say it's just as I expected. You still have to go through it. I've learned that taking care of my body also involves just understanding your nutrition and anywhere from sleep to PT and working out. These are all things I'm still trying to navigate. I am currently month two into being a professional, so I feel like there is a lot more months where I can figure out a little bit more.

A lot of Tour players have given me great advice on how to maintain the longevity of their careers and lifestyles, so I have been really lucky to have them with their words. They've sort of guided me in terms of how I should prepare.

**Q. This golf course in particular, I know it's quirky. What parts do you feel like you know really well and what advantages do you feel like you have considering your game?**

ROSE ZHANG: Well, there is a lot of different things that have to do on this golf course. Not only do you have to be a great ball-striker, but being on the greens, just converting putts and allowing yourself to have the feel for lag putting and being around the greens with a thick rough.

These are all things that Evian really showcases, and you have to be able to perform to your best ability to even score really around this golf course.

Not only that, even if you hit great shots, there is some areas where you won't be rewarded, and the course management aspect is one of the biggest key parts of



Evian in general. So there is not a single flat lie that you have on the fairways. Once you're in the rough, you have to really struggle to get it out.

So a lot of things can add strokes, but I think my advantage is more so just trying to be as consistent as possible. Yeah, if all goes well, I'm sure my game could -- you know, I'll be able to perform well. I'm pretty just excited to start out.

**Q. Being in Europe kind of makes everybody think about later this fall, Solheim Cup coming up in Spain. I know that's on every young American's radar. How much is it on yours right now? I know bounced around in the Rolex Rankings and moving up quite a bit. How much are you thinking about that and what would it mean to qualify for that team?**

ROSE ZHANG: It would be a dream just because back in -- I've played two Junior Solheim Cups, one in Des Moines, Iowa and one in Gleneagles.

Nothing is better than representing your own country with amazing people, having teammates to celebrate and enjoy playing for the honor of the red, white, and blue.

It's a different format as well. I always loved team formats. I will say that of course it's a radar that a lot of people have to qualify for this event, and the prestige is absolutely incredible.

But I don't really think about the Rolex Rankings a lot. I haven't looked at it at all actually. I feel like if my game is there, by by-product I'll be able to qualify.

**Q. Rose, talking of your experience here in 2014, so did you say that was the first time you played golf outside of the U.S.?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yes. Golf outside of the U.S., but not in 2014, when I was 14.

**Q. Okay. When were you 14?**

ROSE ZHANG: It was possibly 2017.

**Q. You had been abroad but just not playing golf competitively?**

ROSE ZHANG: No, I basically qualified for Team USA, and it was the first time overseas that I played in a tournament.

So Evian was kind of my first exposure to European golf and golf outside of the U.S.

**Q. Was there anyone else playing in that Evian Junior Cup that we may know of?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yes, Alexa Pano was my other teammate, and on the guy's side, we had Eli Tran and Jackson Van Paris, who's currently in college and playing for Vanderbilt.

**Q. How did it go?**

ROSE ZHANG: It went well. We won. Got first place, and Jackson Van Paris, I think he got first in gold and I forgot if I tied third or something of that sort. (Smiling.)

**Q. You did fine.**

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah.

**Q. I think you have a lot of French friends, people you know. Could you talk about your relationship with French people and French fans, and how about your French language.**

ROSE ZHANG: Yes, I do not speak French. Has nothing to do with all the French friends and close friends that I have here. A lot of my French friends, they live in Paris, the middle of Paris, so in the last couple years I've been able to come over every year and kind of stay at their place, play golf with their kids, and I created or formed a really close relationship with all of them.

On top of that, when I came to the Evian Junior Cup I made a really close family friend now who basically kind of takes me under their wings when I'm here in France, and it's been just a really enjoyable time.

I've really created close bonds with them.

**Q. (Indiscernible.)**

ROSE ZHANG: I played -- last year I was here for a month and a half. I actually played La Boulie and I practiced out of there.

**Q. So what do you enjoy the most about here? We talk about French people. Let's talk about French things. What are the things you enjoy most about this area?**

ROSE ZHANG: First of all Evian itself is so incredible to see the views. Every time I look out on the range, on the golf course it's just so beautiful. That's something breathtaking.

I think golf takes you many places, but I'm a huge foodie. I love bread. France makes amazing bread, baguettes, croissants, everything, especially desserts. So I'm a big fan.

**Q. Let's do a French test. Favorite French desert?**

ROSE ZHANG: You guys have amazing fruit tarts.



Anything of that sort.

**Q. Now that you know some French, your favorite French expression?**

ROSE ZHANG: Favorite French expression?

THE MODERATOR: Appropriate French expression.

ROSE ZHANG: (Laughter.) I learned one line, one sentence. (In French.)

The weather is nice today or something of that sort. Today is nice.

**Q. Why Stanford girls are so good as a team year in year out? How do you manage that?**

ROSE ZHANG: Stanford's really incredible. Just the people that Coach Walker has brought on the team, not only are they great players but great people. They have great personal character.

I think that's what really bonds us together. Not on are we decent athletes, really high profile athletes, but we also have the intelligence and intellectual aspect where golf is not just our own identities but we have a life outside of golf.

All ten of us the last two years that I've been there, we've created such a bond that's not only built through golf, but outside of it. We are the closest of friends, and that allows us to push ourselves further because we see each other at the golf course, the practice facility, and we push each other further to work harder.

If someone is better at doing something we ask each other how we should improve. Everyone is creating an open environment for becoming better. I think that's the push that allows us to be so great at what we do.

In general, like managing it, it's very normal for a lot of girls to be competitive around each other but we are competitive players but not competitive at each other. I think that's the difference between us and a lot of teams who may have problems with personal dynamics and whatnot.

**Q. It sounds great for the girls, but why the men division are not that good compared to the team, your team when you were there? Why?**

ROSE ZHANG: I don't -- I wouldn't say that's accurate just because every single year every single player has their own struggles and their own personal journeys and pasts.

Therefore, I think our men's team are just as talented, and I've seen them work really hard. I think they're really

driven, and I'm sure scores will come around. They've actually played really well the last past year, so really looking forward to how they continue to grow as a team.

**Q. You haven't decided to finish your studies and get your diploma, passing through the world, becoming a pro? You're not finishing your studies?**

ROSE ZHANG: No, I will be continuing to finish my studies in the next two, three years. I've talked to my counselors about how I can balance that schedule around my pro golf life, how to manage my studies, because that's something I'm very passionate about and I believe that it's something that I want to complete in my life.

**Q. I don't know if you've heard, but Jenny Bae, who I know you faced off against at the ANWA, won back-to-back events on the Epson Tour. Both of you having so much success early in your pro careers, speak to that.**

ROSE ZHANG: Of course. Jenny is absolutely amazing. I'm so happy for her for all her success thus far. I'm sure that you will continue to hear that name.

I actually texted her, and we always pumped each other up. We were in the same Curtis Cup practice session together, so really created a really good friendship from there.

I think her game is very solid. She hits it far and she's a great ball-striker. Her chipping, putting are also immaculate and she's not fearful of anything.

I expect to see her a lot more. I couldn't be more happier.

THE MODERATOR: Just one more and we will wrap.

**Q. Just a quick question. As we're starting the last major of the year, of all the majors that there are for the women, which is your first preference to win first?**

ROSE ZHANG: Oh --

**Q. And most important.**

ROSE ZHANG: To be honest I haven't really thought about that. I don't think I can put a good answer to it because just if you win a major, regardless, that's already an accomplishment on its own.

If I can win one major, that's good enough for me. (Laughter.)

**Q. But like for a lot of guys in tennis, Wimbledon is the grandfather of the tennis world.**

ROSE ZHANG: Yes.

**Q. For you, with all you are getting ready to accomplish, great things, what is the one major you wish to win the most? Let me put the question that way then.**

ROSE ZHANG: I really don't think I can answer that. I have no idea to be honest. Every single event is unique in its own nature, and I don't think I can put preferences to any event that's out there because every single staff is different, organization, venue, food.

Like just everything leads up, and then also I'm -- I would probably be at different aspects of life when playing each event, so I can't really tell you which one would be more preferable to win.

I don't think there is a major that's just the grandfather of everything. I think every single event is unique on its own.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, everyone, and thank you, Rose.

ROSE ZHANG: Thank you.

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