

# U.S. Women's Open

Friday, July 7, 2023

Pebble Beach, California, USA

Pebble Beach Golf Links

## Rose Zhang

Flash Interview



**Q. Rose Zhang, 71, and also you're 1-over par for the championship. So kind of even keel day. Three birdies, two bogeys. Tell us from your perspective about the round.**

ROSE ZHANG: Certainly. I felt like the first two holes I start off very strong, but, you know, I faltered a little bit. Had two bogeys in the back nine where I started, and that kind of shifted my round a little bit, but I was able to hole a really, really good putt on 17 and that kind of shifted my momentum into the back nine where I turned over to the front.

Felt very solid with my game in general. I knew that I had some errors yesterday that I wanted to prevent, so today I tried to work on those things and figure out how to play the course better.

**Q. Did the course play differently than the first round?**

ROSE ZHANG: Just a little bit. I was a very late tee time yesterday. This morning from the start it was a little colder. But on top of that, the wind was picking up. I felt like this wind was sort of wind that I was used to when I played back in the Carmel Cup last year, so felt a little more familiar to me.

I was just trying to get the ball in the fairway and on the greens. But I really had to grind it out since I wasn't exactly in the best approach when it came to greens in regulation.

**Q. Eight strokes behind now but it's certainly something you can make up. What might be the strategy as you play tomorrow?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah, really grateful that I was able to make the cut, and I'll be able to kind of steady myself and go into the weekend with a fresh mind. I've been in this position before where you have to chase and it's nothing new to me. I'll just be trying to do the same thing: Get my game plan and try to hit as many fairways and greens, because that will allow you to gain more birdie opportunities.

That's all I can do.

**Q. Yesterday on No. 8 you had a little difficulty there. What's the key to bouncing back after you make a big number?**

ROSE ZHANG: Certainly. Well, it just came really suddenly. I felt like I was doing really well. I was 2-under, and just making that double, it definitely changed the momentum of my round.

But all you can think about is the next tee shot and the next approach shot that you hit. For me, that's all I can think about. So that's how I try to minimize I guess the momentum from shifting too much.

But I think, yeah, in general, just large numbers, you really have to keep steady following that. Have a good mindset into every hole and shake it off as soon as possible.

**Q. Obviously you're one the most popular players out here already. How do you handle the big crowds that you play in front of?**

ROSE ZHANG: Super lucky that people like me out there. (Smiling.)

I think that it does change a lot of how I play just because you have people just randomly shouting at and you randomly cheering you on.

It's great and all, but definitely something that I've never been used to or been accustomed to. This is all very foreign and new to me. Week three as a pro.

But I think I'm just really lucky that they're out here and having a good time. I think that's how we grow the game and just women's golf, there is more people watching and it's incredible to see how many little kids, younger generations and even adults are out here.

Even though they don't know the sport, they want to come and support every player out here, so I think it's really cool.



**Q. So you've said that despite going pro you're going to continue to prioritize your education at Stanford.**

ROSE ZHANG: Yes.

**Q. Why is that important to you?**

ROSE ZHANG: For sure. First of all, I feel like this is an ambition from my own perspective and for my own ambition. I think just being at Stanford has enabled me to reach new heights, not just from my golf game, but as a person and through character development and meeting new people.

Being surrounded by incredibly talented people in their own right has really inspired me to push forward and become better on my own. I don't want that too end.

I feel like the two years I've had has been incredible but there is so much more that I can learn. Therefore it's not just the education I'm looking for, but also just being in that environment and widening my horizons to push myself further, not just on the golf course.

**Q. There is also a lot of Stanford alumni out there supporting you today.**

ROSE ZHANG: Yes.

**Q. Your coaches were the spotted in the crowd and you're playing alongside five other Stanford Cardinals. How does that feel?**

ROSE ZHANG: It's really cool. I feel like the alumni, I guess circles and networks at Stanford. It's something that you just can't replace with anything else.

It's such a cool experience to be surrounded by people who we all have the same common education and background and college. We have our own team spirit and fighting for each other.

So I think that with everyone being together and even with different years and different age gaps, we still have so much to talk about and so much commonality that I think it's really cool to see how big and amazing our alumni squad is.

**Q. Having two rounds under your belt, just wondering where your nerves are, especially with the big crowd, this being the U.S. Women's Open at Pebble Beach? Have you settled in?**

ROSE ZHANG: Settled in a little bit. Feel like the game isn't exactly where I want it to be exactly but you can't

really have that many weeks where you're always on top of your game.

You have to learn how to grind it out, and I'm slowly learning to do so. Once you're an tour it's a lifestyle. It's not playing tournament after tournament. I'm really just trying to navigate myself in that area.

But it's really cool. I don't feel as nervous as I would have thought, I would say. (Smiling.) If anything, I feel a lot of love and support.

**Q. You always are so process driven, one shot at a time. You mentioned a that I haven't heard you say, chasing, you have to chase. Will that change your strategy? I know the greens are really small, but do you feel like you may have to take a few more chances tomorrow?**

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah, no, objectively speaking, this is still a sport, this is still a tournament. You're playing for -- you're playing to get better, playing against people. But of course for me, I think I'm pretty realistic, but I don't think about chasing as much.

But in order to put myself in a position where I can play well the next two days and try to up that leaderboard, I have to change my game plan and be a little bit more aggressive, but at the same time these are tiny greens. So just being in the center of the green is perfectly mine.

So everything is the same. I'm just going to try to figure out my game a little bit more. Two rounds under my belt, I feel a little more comfortable.

**Q. Just kind of similar to that, did the cut factor into how you approached the last few holes in there? Was it just kind of a steady approach always?**

ROSE ZHANG: It's a pretty steady approach as always, but of course you do have to make sure that you're keeping the ball in play. That's why I feel like in general I'm a bit more conservative, especially on this golf course at Pebble.

The greens are tiny and the fairways are narrow, and if you're in the rough it doesn't give you any room for mistakes or errors.

I did have -- I think the next two days will be a little bit more aggressive approach, but I'm going to have to be able to hit those shots, so I think that's the first thing.

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