



## Blue Bay LPGA

Jian Lake Blue Bay Golf Course | People's Republic of China | March 7-10, 2024

### Tuesday Pre-Tournament Notes

March 5, 2024

#### MEDIA AVAILABILITY SCHEDULE

All times are local to the People's Republic of China, 13 hours ahead of Eastern Time

No Zoom link; all pre-tournament press conferences will be uploaded to the Online Media Center and transcripts will be available on ASAP Transcripts

#### Tuesday, March 5

11:00 a.m. – Celine Boutier, Gaby Lopez, Lilia Vu, Ruoning Yin

#### THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE 2024 BLUE BAY LPGA

- Professional competition format: 108 players, 72-hole stroke play with cuts to 65 plus ties after 36 holes
  - This is the last of three LPGA tournaments in Asia this spring
    - This is the first and only event with a cut
- This is the 6th official playing of Blue Bay LPGA
  - The tournament has been played at Jian Lake Blue Bay Golf Course
  - The inaugural event in 2014 was held as a 54-hole tournament
- Jian Lake Blue Bay Golf Course was opened in 2012 and developed by the Shaoxing Jian Lake Group with architect, Mark E. Hollinger
  - Since 2018, hole 16 was changed from a par 4 to a par 3, and hole 17 was changed from a par 3 to a par 4
- There is one 2024 LPGA Tour winner in the field this week, **Lydia Ko**
  - She earned her 20th career victory this season
    - With her win, Ko became the seventh woman in LPGA Tour history to reach 20 wins before age 27, joining **Nancy Lopez, Karrie Webb, Se Ri Pak, Mickey Wright, Lorena Ochoa and Kathy Whitworth**
      - She also became the 29th different player in Tour history to earn at least 20 official wins
    - She also landed in a playoff with **Nelly Korda** for the LPGA Drive On Championship
      - Korda pulled away with the win, and Ko finished runner-up in her second start of the LPGA Tour season
    - Rolex Rankings No. 7 Ko currently sits one point short of the minimum threshold of 27 points for LPGA Hall of Fame induction
      - LPGA Hall of Fame criteria can be found [here](#)
  - Nelly Korda** (2024 LPGA Drive On Championship), **Patty Tavatanakit** (2024 Honda LPGA Thailand) and **Hannah Green** (2024 HSBC Women's World Championship) are not in the field this week
- There are three past champions in the field this week; **Gaby Lopez** (2018), **Minjee Lee** (2016) and **Sei Young Kim** (2015)
  - Lopez is the defending champion at Blue Bay LPGA
    - In 2018, she beat **Ariya Jutanugarn** by one stroke to win
      - She has played in the event a total of three times, with two other finishes of 24th and T18
      - Her lowest round in the event was a six-under 66
      - On her 25th birthday, she aced the 17th hole in the third round in 2018
      - She became a Rolex First-Time Winner with her win at Blue Bay LPGA
    - This is her fifth start of the 2024 LPGA Tour season
      - Her best finish was at the Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions (T12)
      - Last week, she finished in a tie for 25th at the HSBC Women's World Championship
    - This is her ninth season on the LPGA Tour
      - She has won three times, and two times since Blue Bay LPGA
      - She has represented Mexico in both the 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games
  - Lee won the Blue Bay LPGA in 2016
    - Lee holds three scoring records at Blue Bay LPGA
      - She is tied for the 18-hole scoring record with Ariya Jutanugarn and **Sun Yuong Yoo** at 65
      - She holds the 36-hole scoring record (132) and the 72-hole scoring record (275) from her win in 2016
    - This is her fourth time playing in at Blue Bay LPGA
      - In 2017, she finished T25, and in 2015 she finished T14
    - This is her second start of the 2024 season
      - In her 2024 debut last week, she finished T29
    - Rolex Rankings No. 5 Lee is in her 10th year on the LPGA Tour
      - She has won 10 times including two major championships, and the Blue Bay LPGA was her third win
      - She represented Australia in the 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games
  - Kim won in 2015 with a four-day total of two-under par
    - This is the fourth time she is playing in the event
      - She won the tournament in her first time playing
      - In 2018, she earned a top-5 finish (T4)
    - Blue Bay LPGA is her fourth event of the 2024 season
      - She has not finished worse than T17 in an event this year
      - Her best finish was a tie for third at Honda LPGA Thailand
    - Kim is also in her 10th season on the LPGA Tour
      - She has won 12 times, including a major championship
      - She has won three awards from the LPGA including 2015 Louise Suggs Rolex Rookie of the Year, 2015 Kia Most Compelling Performance Award and 2020 Rolex Player of the Year
  - Past champions not in the field are **Shanshan Feng** (2017) and **Lee-Anne Pace** (2014)
    - Pace holds the 54-hole scoring record (200) from her win in 2014
- There are eleven 2024 LPGA Tour Rookies in the field at Blue Bay LPGA (**Isabella Fierro, Savannah Grewal, Mone Inami, Gurleen Kaur, Auston Kim, Mary Liu, Yue Ren, Gabriela Ruffels, Mao Saigo, Yu Jin Sung, Liqi Zeng**)
  - Inami won the 2023 TOTO Japan Classic as a non-member last year and accepted LPGA Tour Membership in November
    - She has started in every event of the 2024 season thus far besides Honda LPGA Thailand
    - Her best finish was 8th place at the LPGA Drive On Championship
  - Ren is the only rookie in the field this week making her first start of the 2024 LPGA Tour season
  - For the other nine rookies in the field, this is their second start of the 2024 season
    - Grewal, Liu, Ruffels and Zeng missed the cut in their only starts of the 2024 season (LPGA Drive On Championship)
    - Kim had the best finish at the 2024 LPGA Drive On Championship among the 11 rookies in the field (T6)
- There are five sponsor invitations in the field this week; **Sandra Gal, Yujie Liu (a), Lucy Li, Iris Wang, Manlixiang Yang**
  - LPGA Tour veteran Gal is making her first start on the LPGA Tour since the 2022 LOTTE Championship where she missed the cut
    - She has one career victory on the LPGA Tour, the 2011 KIA Classic
    - She was a member of two European Solheim Cup teams (2011, 2015)
  - 13-year-old Liu is one of six amateurs in the field this week
    - This is her second start in an LPGA Tour event
      - Last year, she played at the Buick LPGA Shanghai and finished 78th

#### LPGA ON-SITE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

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#### QUICK LINKS

[Interview Transcripts](#)

[LPGA Tour Online Media Center](#) (OMC): includes links to daily tournament notes, statistics and photo/video assets

[LPGA Statistical Database](#): Request access to LPGA Tour data from 1980 to present

[Stats Box](#): Includes all-time records, major records, purse breakdowns, stats documents, scoring files, points structures, and tournament histories

[Media Assets](#): For access to tournament photos and videos, please contact the on-site LPGA Communications team

[Tournament Website](#)

#### SOCIAL MEDIA

**LPGA Tour:** @LPGA, @LPGAMedia (X), @lpga\_tour (Instagram, TikTok)

**Tournament:** #BlueBayLPGA

#### TV/STREAMING TIMES (All times EST)

**Wednesday, March 6:** 11:00 p.m. – 4:00 a.m. (Golf Channel/Peacock)

**Thursday, March 7:** 11:00 p.m. – 4:00 a.m. (Golf Channel/Peacock)

**Friday, March 8:** 11:00 p.m. – 4:00 a.m. (Golf Channel/Peacock)

**Saturday, March 9:** 11:00 p.m. – 4:00 a.m. (Golf Channel/Peacock)

- Li was a 2023 LPGA Tour rookie
  - She already claimed one top-10 finish this year at the LPGA Drive On Championship (T4)
  - She played at Honda LPGA Thailand, where she finished 48<sup>th</sup>
- Wang played in both Stage I and Stage II of LPGA Q-School in 2023
  - She played college golf at Harvard University
- Yang is making her first start in an LPGA Tour event this week
  - She won the China Amateur Classic in 2017 and 2018

#### 2024 LPGA TOUR STATISTICS

Official Money: Lydia Ko, \$400,123

Scoring Average: Natthakritta Vongtaveelap, 67.750

Birdies: Brooke Henderson, 64

Eagles: Albane Valenzuela, 4

Holes in One: 0

Greens in Regulation: Paula Creamer, 88.9%

Average Driving Distance: Natthakritta Vongtaveelap, 294.000 yards

#### 2024 AWARD STANDINGS

Rolex Player of the Year		
1	Lydia Ko	42 points
2	Patty Tavatanakit	33 points
T3	Nelly Korda	30 points
T3	Hannah Green	30 points

Louise Suggs Rolex Rookie of the Year		
1	Mone Inami	88 points
2	Auston Kim	62 points
3	So Mi Lee	38 points

#AonRiskReward Challenge		
1	Olivia Cowan	-1.500
1	Rose Zhang	-1.500
1	Auston Kim	-1.500

Vare Trophy		
1	Natthakritta Vongtaveelap	67.750
2	Jaravee Boonchant	68.250
T3	Brooke M. Henderson	69.500
T3	Sei Young Kim	69.500
T3	Auston Kim	69.500

Race to the CME Globe Points		
1	Lydia Ko	839 points
2	Patty Tavatanakit	586.429 points
3	Nelly Korda	552 points

[Aon Risk Reward Challenge:](#) No. 15, par 4

The par-4 15th at Jian Lake Blue Bay Golf Course is a short par 4 that gets even more interesting with the forward tees in play. From the back tee, players are expected to take the conservative route, with less than 10% of the field likely to try to drive it near the putting surface (within 30 yards). From the forward tees, that number jumps to more than 40%. When the forward tees are in use, scores are expected to drop by about one-quarter of a stroke. This par 4 will provide plenty of birdie opportunities for players who make the better decision.

Through the first four tournaments of the 2024 LPGA Tour season, there is currently a three-way tie for first place between 27-year-old player from Germany, **Olivia Cowan**, 2023 LPGA Tour Rookie and Mizuho Americas Open champion **Rose Zhang** and 2024 LPGA Tour Rookie **Auston Kim**. They each it with an average score of -1.500. **Ally Ewing** sits in solo fourth place with an average score of -1.250. Both Cowan and Kim are in the field this week at Blue Bay LPGA.

The Aon Risk Reward Challenge is a season-long competition across the LPGA Tour that highlights the game's best players as they navigate some of the most strategically challenging holes on Tour. Players will take their best two scores from each Challenge hole, with the winners having the best average score to par at the end of the regular season. The winning woman will take home the Aon trophy and an equal \$1 million prize.

[Race to CME Globe Update:](#)

The Race to CME Globe Race continues at the Blue Bay LPGA this week with players vying for 500 points at the fifth event of the 2024 season.

**Lydia Ko**, who won the 2024 Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions and finished in a tie for 34th at last week's HSBC Women's World Championship, sits at No. 1 in the Race to CME Globe with 839.000 points. 2024 Honda LPGA Thailand winner **Patty Tavatanakit** moved into No. 2 with 586.429 points after another top-10 finish last week. **Nelly Korda**, winner of the 2024 LPGA Drive On Championship, dropped into No. 3 with 552.000 points after not playing in the last two events of the 2024 season.

The Race to the CME Globe is a season-long points competition with LPGA Tour Members accumulating points in every official LPGA event to qualify for the season-ending tournament, the CME Group Tour Championship. The player who wins the CME Group Tour Championship is named the "Race to the CME Globe Champion." The top 60 points earners and ties earn a spot into the season finale with the entire field competing for a \$11 million purse, increased from \$7 million last season, and is highlighted by a \$4 million winner's check, which is the largest single prize in the history of women's golf.

[CME Group Cares Challenge – Score 1 for St. Jude Update:](#)

The CME Group Cares Challenge is a season-long charitable giving program that turns aces into donations. CME Group donates \$20,000 for each hole-in-one made on the LPGA Tour in 2024, with a minimum guaranteed donation of \$500,000 to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, which is leading the way in how the world understands, treats and defeats childhood cancer and life-threatening diseases. Last season, there were 20 aces on Tour, including two from In Gee Chun, the most of any player on Tour in 2023.