



# BUICK LPGA SHANGHAI

## Buick LPGA Shanghai

Qizhong Garden Golf Club | Shanghai, People's Republic of China | Oct. 10-13, 2024

### Third-Round Notes

October 12, 2024

LPGA Tour Media Contacts: [Matt Jesus](#), +1 (402) 957-4674

Course Setup: 36-36 – 72; 6,503

Scoring Average: R1: 70.962; R2: 71.198; R3: 70.889

Weather: Early morning smog throughout the morning will dissipate throughout the late morning into the early afternoon leaving partly cloudy skies and northeasterly winds gusting near 18-20 mph (29-32 kph) and highs reaching the upper 70s F (26 C)

Race to CME Globe Points: 500 points (winner)

Purse: \$2.1 million USD

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LEADERBOARD			
	Player	To Par	Score
1	Mao Saigo	-18	68-65-65 – 198
2	Ruoning Yin	-17	70-66-63 – 199
3	Sei Young Kim	-15	62-70-69 – 201
4	Yealimi Noh	-13	68-69-68 – 203

#### ROOKIE OF THE YEAR LEADER LEADS FIELD AT BUICK LPGA SHANGHAI

With six top-10 finishes already this season, 2024 LPGA Tour rookie **Mao Saigo** is in prime position to earn her seventh but even more primed to earn her first career victory in her rookie season.

Saigo came into the round tied for second but was just one stroke back of the leader. She started to find her groove early, recording back-to-back birdies on Nos. 3 and 4 before a string of pars took her into the turn 13-under and tied for the lead. While Saigo was playing slow and steady, hometown favorite **Ruoning Yin** put on a show for the Chinese crowd that came to see her going bogey-free on the front nine with four birdies to take her from 9-under to start her day to right in the mix at 12-under. Two groups ahead of Saigo, Yin found the momentum she needed to take her over the top carding three-straight birdies on Nos. 12, 13 and 14 to join the leaders at the top. Not to be outdone by Yin, Saigo added another pair of birdies on Nos. 12 and 13 and the two found themselves tied at 15-under coming down the stretch.

Yin would strike first recording her first eagle of the week on No. 17 to take the outright lead. Yin had an opportunity to grow her lead even more and tie the 18-hole scoring record set earlier this week by **Sei Young Kim**, but missed her birdie putt on No. 18 and settled for a par and a 9-under round. After Yin finished, Saigo found herself just one back of the three-time Tour winner. On the same hole that Yin took her lead, Saigo matched her energy and recorded an eagle of her own to leapfrog Yin and take the outright solo-lead for the first time in her career heading into Sunday.

"I think tomorrow I'm playing as a chaser, and I think just I have a little goal for myself every day, and I think if I'm able to complete my goal I'm happy about whatever the result is," Yin said about playing against Saigo in Sunday's championship round.

The 18-hole and 36-hole leader Kim has simmered down since her scorching hot day one. After recording nine birdies in her first round, she has just seven through her last 36-holes. Kim finds herself in solo-third still within striking distance of Saigo and Yin and will look to turn up the heat on those two during Sunday's round. 2021 U.S. Solheim Cup team member **Yealimi Noh** is in the hunt for her fourth top-10 finish of the 2024 season after ending her third round in solo-fourth. Noh went bogey-free, her second bogey-free round of the week, with four birdies.

Six players round out the top-10 all tied for fifth including CLPGA Tour players **Yanhong Pan** and **Haruka Morita**, six-time LPGA Tour winner **Nasa Hataoka**, three-time Tour winner **Jeeno Thitikul**, next week's defending champion **Minjee Lee** and 2023 Tour rookie **Lucy Li**. Defending champion **Angel Yin** will have a bit more work to do to try and repeat as winner finding herself T19 at 6-under after a 1-over third round.

#### WITH A WIN

Mao Saigo:

- Would earn her first win on the LPGA Tour in her rookie season
  - o Would be the first rookie to win on Tour in 2024
  - o Would be the first rookie to win on Tour since **Haeran Ryu** won the 2023 Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G
- Would earn her first win in her 23rd start on the LPGA Tour
- Would become the Tour's fourth Rolex First-Time Winner of the 2024 season, joining **Bailey Tardy** (Blue Bay LPGA), **Linnea Strom** (ShopRite LPGA Classic presented by Acer), and **Lauren Coughlin** (CPKC Women's Open)
- Would be the third player from Japan to win on Tour this season, joining **Yuka Saso** (U.S. Women's Open presented by Ally) and **Ayaka Furue** (Amundi Evian Championship)
- Would be the second player in a row to become a Rolex First-Time Winner at the Buick LPGA Shanghai joining **Angel Yin** (2023)
- Would be the first player from Japan to win the Buick LPGA Shanghai
- Would earn her seventh career top-10 finish

Ruoning Yin:

- Would earn her second victory of the 2024 season
  - o Would be the second-straight year she won multiple times in a single season
- Would win her first solo event of the 2024 season and her first since the 2023 KPMG Women's PGA Championship
  - o She won the Dow Championship with partner **Jeeno Thitikul** earlier this year
- Would be the first player from the People's Republic of China to win the Buick LPGA Shanghai
- Would be the second player not from the United States to win in her home country joining **Patty Tavatanakit** (Honda LPGA Thailand)
- Would earn her fifth top-10 finish of the season and her 15th of her career
- Would be her first win in China since she was on the CLPGA in 2020

Sei Young Kim:

- Would earn her first win of the 2024 season and her first win since the 2020 season
  - o It would be her first win since the 2020 ANNIKA driven by Gainbridge at Pelican
  - o It would be 1,421 days since her last win on the LPGA Tour
- Would be the 19th different winner on Tour this season
- Would be the third player from the Republic of Korea to win on Tour this season
  - o She would join **Amy Yang** (KPMG Women's PGA Championship) and **Haeran Ryu** (FM Championship)
- Would be her second career victory in the People's Republic of China
  - o She won the 2015 Blue Bay LPGA
- Would be the oldest winner on Tour since Yang won earlier this season
  - o Kim is 31 years, eight months and 22 days
  - o Yang was 34 years, 10 months and 26 days when she won
- Would be the first player from the Republic of Korea to win the Buick LPGA Shanghai
- Would earn her fifth top-10 finish of the 2024 season and her 70th overall

Yealimi Noh:

- Would become the Tour's fourth Rolex First-Time Winner of the 2024 season, joining **Bailey Tardy** (Blue Bay LPGA), **Linnea Strom** (ShopRite LPGA Classic presented by Acer), and **Lauren Coughlin** (CPKC Women's Open)
- Would win on her 106th start on Tour
- Would be the 19th different winner on Tour this season
- Would be the sixth winner from the United States to win this season
  - o She would join Coughlin (2), **Nelly Korda** (6), **Bailey Tardy**, **Lilia Vu** and **Rose Zhang**
- Would be the second player in a row to become a Rolex First-Time Winner at the Buick LPGA Shanghai joining **Angel Yin** (2023)
- Would be the third player from America to win the Buick LPGA Shanghai joining Yin and **Danielle Kang** (2018, 2019)
- Would win the Buick LPGA Shanghai in her first ever start at this event

#### A LOOK AT THE LEADER

CATEGORY	Mao Saigo
2024 Race to CME Globe Rank	12
2024 LPGA Tour Wins	0
2024 LPGA Tour Top 10s	6
2024 Season Earnings	\$1.3M
Career LPGA Tour Wins	0
Career Official LPGA Tour Top 10s	6
Career Money (LPGA)	\$1.3M
Career JLPGA Tour Wins	6

#### ABOUT THE LEADER

Rolex Rankings No. 36 **Mao Saigo**

- Saigo hit 13 of 14 fairways, 16 of 18 greens with 29 putts
  - o She went bogey-free with five birdies and an eagle
    - She was one of six players to go bogey-free in their third round
- Saigo is in the top three in multiple statistical categories through 54-holes including
  - o Eagles: 1, T2
  - o Birdies: 18, T2
  - o Bogeys: 2, T1
  - o Greens in Regulation: 47 of 54, T3
  - o Putts: 86, T2
- Dating back to the third round of the Kroger Queen City Championship, Saigo has recorded eight-straight rounds in the 60s
  - o Coming into this week, she ranked fourth among the Tour in rounds in the 60s with 28
- She set the 54-hole tournament scoring record with her 198
- Saigo's 198 is also her career-low 54-hole score
  - o She shot a 199 at the 2024 Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G earlier this season
- This is the first time in her short career that she has led after a round of play
- She is making her first start at the Buick LPGA Shanghai
  - o This is her second start in China this season after finishing T12 at Blue Bay LPGA
- Saigo is in her rookie season
  - o She has made 18 cuts in 23 starts with six top-10 finishes
  - o She has a career-best finish of runner-up at the CPKC Women's Open
  - o She is tied for third for the most top-10 finishes without a win this season on Tour
- Saigo leads all other rookies in points for the Louise Suggs Rolex Rookie of the Year with 749 points
  - o **Jin Hee Im** is the next closest player with 671 points
  - o She would be the first player from Japan to win Rookie of the Year honors since **Hiromi Kobayashi** did so in 1990
- She finished T2 at LPGA Q-Series to earn LPGA Tour membership for the 2024 season
- She has competed on the JLPGA Tour since 2020
  - o She has six career victories with five of those coming in 2022 and one in 2023

#### THINGS TO KNOW

- **Ruoning Yin** had the round of the day with her 9-under to help her sit in solo second
  - o She went bogey free with an eagle and seven birdies
    - Her seven birdies were tied for the most in the third round of play
  - o Yin's 199 54-hole score ties her career-best 54-hole score of her career
    - She has hit this mark three times in her career, most recently at the 2023 ANNIKA driven by Gainbridge at Pelican
  - o She needed just 26 putts, tied for the fewest needed
  - o Through 54-holes of play, she leads the field in greens in regulation hitting 49 of 54
- **Sei Young Kim** is trailing for the first time this week in solo third
  - o Kim recorded four birdies and a bogey in her third round
  - o She hit 17 of 18 greens in regulation in her third round, tied for the second most
  - o Her 201 54-hole score is her second-best 54-hole score of the 2024 season
    - She recorded a 197 at the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G
- **Yealimi Noh** finds herself in solo fourth
  - o She went bogey-free with four birdies
    - She was of six players to go bogey-free in the third round
    - It is her second bogey-free round of the week
  - o She has just two recorded bogeys through 54-holes, tied for the fewest among the field
  - o Her 203 ties her lowest 54-hole score of the season
    - She has hit the mark twice this season at the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship and the Portland Classic
- Defending champion **Angel Yin** is T19 after a 1-over day
  - o She recorded two double-bogeys, three bogeys, four birdies and an eagle in her round
- Epson Tour graduate **Jiwon Jeon** recorded her second career hole-in-one and of the season in the third round
  - She recorded the first ace in her career in the second round of the Portland Classic earlier this season
  - o She hit a 5-iron 166 yards on the second par-3 of the front, No. 7
  - o 2024 LPGA Tour rookie **Auston Kim** recorded her second ace of the year in her second round
    - She hit her nine iron 148 yards on the first par-3 of the front, No. 2
    - She recorded her first hole-in-one at the JM Eagle LA Championship presented by Plastpro
  - o She and Jeon are the first players to record multiple hole-in-ones in a single season on Tour since **In Gee Chun** in 2023
  - o 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
    - The donation total is now \$420,000

#### QUOTABLES

*Juwon Jeon (+1, T60) on her second hole-in-one of the season*

"Well, so I was kind of surprised that I had a hole-in-one on number, was it 7? No. 7. I was surprised because on the tee you can't really see the hole. So I thought it was a good shot and good 5-iron, like a little drawing, hits the green, and I was like, oh, it's a good shot. Then I didn't see it land and then roll, so I didn't really know where it finished. So when I got there Hinako like came up like, you made a hole-in-one, and we were just like celebrating afterwards. So it was very excited, very fun moment there."

*Mao Saigo (-18, 1) on making her eagle putt on 17 to take the lead*

"I knew that scores and standings were changing throughout the day. I just concentrated on playing my best. I made some good shots and made that last long putt that put me into the lead."

*Ruoning Yin (-17, 2) on seeing all the fan support in China*

"Yes, I just talk to my caddie today on the course. I said it's really good to see all kids come out to watch. Even some kids just maybe don't know much about golf, but just able to see them running around and just come to hang out in the tournament, it just gives me goosebumps."

#### ON LPGA.COM

[Lucy Li In Hunt Again at Buick LPGA Shanghai](#)

[Minjee Lee Hitting her Stride Late in the Season at Buick LPGA Shanghai](#)

[Auston Kim Cards Her Second Ace of 2024 Season on Friday at Buick LPGA Shanghai](#)

#### SOCIAL SNAPSHOT

[A Superb Round for the Hometown Hero](#)  
[Mao Saigo's Eagle Putt for the Lead](#)  
[Ruoning Yin's Eagle Putt on No. 17](#)  
[Ace Alert for Jiwon Jeon!](#)  
[Speechless Shot from Patty Tavatanakit](#)

**TOURNAMENT SCORING RECORDS:**

*18 holes* – **62, Sei Young Kim (R1, 2024)**

*36 holes* – **132, Sei Young Kim (2024)**

*54 holes* – **198, Mao Saigo (2024)**

*72 holes* – 272, Danielle Kang (2019)