



LPGA Drive On Championship
 Bradenton Country Club | Bradenton, Fla. | Jan. 25-28, 2024

First-Round Notes
 Jan. 25, 2024

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Course Setup: 36-35 – 71; 6,557 yards
Scoring Average: R1: 71.900
Weather: Mixed to partly cloudy skies with temperatures that peaked in the lower 80s and winds that started southeast and shifted to south-southwesterly
Race to CME Globe Points: 500 (winner)
Purse: \$1.75 million (winner’s portion is \$262, 500)
TV/Streaming Times: [How to Watch](#)

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LEADERBOARD			
	Player	To par	Score
T1	Lydia Ko	-6	65
T1	Nelly Korda	-6	65
3	Nanna Koerstz Madsen	-5	66
T4	Lucy Li	-4	67
T4	Sei Young Kim	-4	67
T4	Chanettee Wannasaen	-4	67
T4	Minji Kang	-4	67
T4	Ruoning Yin	-4	67

KO AND KORDA CO-LEAD AFTER FIRST ROUND

For the first full field event of the season, multiple-time LPGA Tour winners **Lydia Ko** and **Nelly Korda** lead the field after their opening rounds of 65 at the 2024 LPGA Drive On Championship. On a day that course conditions consisted of strong winds and undulating greens, 41 players broke par at Bradenton Country Club.

The first winner of the 2024 LPGA Tour season, Ko continues her hot start to the year, shooting a six-under opening round Thursday afternoon. She started off No. 10 in just her second start of the season and fourth appearance at the LPGA Drive On Championship. The 20-time LPGA Tour winner came out with a string of five pars before making her first birdie of the day on the par-4 14th. Ko picked up one more birdie on the back nine, No. 17. Making the turn at two-under par, she continued her par streak until hole 4 where she claimed her third birdie of the day and first of her back nine. She went on to make four birdies in her last six holes to move up the leaderboard quickly down the stretch. A main factor in her score today, Ko took advantage of the three par 5s at Bradenton Country Club, birdieing each to contribute to her lowest round of the year thus far.

“I played really solid, especially in the first half of our round today. The wind was really strong, and I had actually seen the forecast yesterday that normally the wind you would think would pick up throughout the day, and it was actually going to die down towards our back nine, so in ways I think we got pretty lucky. Last couple days it has been really windy, and I think the wind plays a huge factor around here,” said Ko, who was one of five players to shoot a bogey-free round on Thursday. “Some of the holes, you know, it might normally be a straightforward hole, but because of the wind it makes it a lot more difficult. I played solid, and I honestly think my chip-in somewhere mid-round, mid-front nine, was definitely a good momentum for me because that could have easily turned into a double.”

Ko joined Bradenton native, Korda at the top of the leaderboard. The 25-year-old was a part of the morning wave in Bradenton, Fla., where she made a quick rise to first place with her 31 on the front nine. Starting with a bogey on the first hole, she quickly recovered with back-to-back birdies on the following two holes. The eight-time LPGA Tour winner made another birdie on the par-5 6th, before scoring an eagle and birdie on holes 8 and 9. After making the turn at five-under, Korda made one of her last two birdies on the first hole of the back nine and proceeded to have a string of pars. She dropped one shot with a bogey on the 15th, but quickly erased it with a birdie on the par-5 17th.

“I didn't hit my tee shot very good on the past two holes and kind of a little left, so it was nice to -- and I didn't really even hit a great wedge shot in,” said Korda, who also birdied or eagled each par 5 on Thursday. “I was pin high so knew it was a right-to-lefter. It was nice to get that one on that hole so I could be under par on the back nine.”

Nanna Koerstz Madsen sits alone in third place after a first-round 66. The Denmark native had six birdies and one bogey, which included a set of back-to-back birdies on both the front and back nine. Behind her are five players in a tie for fourth place including 21-year-old **Lucy Li**, Korean player **Sei Young Kim**, 2023 Portland Classic champion **Chanettee Wannasaen**, 2024 LPGA Tour Rookie **Minji Kang**, and 2023 major winner **Ruoning Yin**.

A LOOK AT THE LEADERS

CATEGORY	Nelly Korda	Lydia Ko
2024 Race to CME Globe Rank	4	1

2024 LPGA Tour Wins	0	1
2024 LPGA Tour Top 10s	0	1
2024 Season Earnings	\$24,216	\$225,000
Career LPGA Tour Wins	8	20
Career LPGA Tour Top 10s	55	104
Career Money (LPGA)	\$8,961,489	\$17,167,692
Career LET Wins	3	7
Career Epson Tour Wins	1	0

ABOUT THE LEADERS

Rolex Rankings No. 9 Lydia Ko

- Ko hit 12 of 14 fairways and 17 of 18 greens with 28 putts
 - She had six birdies and no bogeys on the scorecard
 - She is one of five players to go bogey-free in the first round
 - Ko birdied every par-5 at Bradenton Country Club on Thursday
- This is seventh time in her career that she has led or co-led after the first round of play
 - Of the previous six times, she won three of those times and finished as runner-up twice
 - The last two times she led or co-led, 2022 CME Group Tour Championship and 2022 ANNIKA presented by Gainbridge at Pelican, she went on to win
- This is Ko's second start of the 2024 LPGA Tour season
 - Last week, she won the Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions to reach 20 career wins
 - She is one point shy of earning her spot in the Hall of Fame
 - LPGA Hall of Fame criteria can be found [here](#)
 - With a win, she would be the first player since **Celine Boutier** in 2023 to win back-to-back LPGA Tour events
 - Boutier won The Amundi Evian Championship and the Women's Scottish Open
- This is Ko's fourth time playing in the LPGA Drive On Championship
 - Her best finishes were in 2020 at Reynolds Lake Oconee and in 2021, finishing at T8 both times
 - Her opening round 65 is her best first-round in her past three playings
 - It is also her lowest round in the tournament since 2020 when she shot a four-under 68 in the third round
- Ko is in her 11th season on the LPGA Tour
 - She has amassed over \$17 million in career earnings, ranking No. 5
 - She has started in 226 events, making 211 cuts with 20 career victories and 84 additional top-10 finishes
 - She is a two-time Rolex Player of the Year (2022 and 2015)
 - She became the youngest player to win the award in 2015
 - She has earned the Vare Trophy three times (2022, 2021 and 2015)
 - She has won the Race to the CME Globe three times as well (2022, 2015 and 2014)
 - She was named the 2014 Louise Suggs Rolex Rookie of the Year, the youngest winner in LPGA Tour history
 - She has represented New Zealand at the 2016 and 2020 Olympics and was a silver

Rolex Rankings No. 4 Nelly Korda

- Korda hit 11 of 14 fairways and 17 of 18 greens with 30 putts
 - She recorded one eagle, six birdies and two bogeys
 - She was one of six players to record an eagle in their opening round
- In her first round, Korda was 4-for-6 on putts from 10-15 feet, 66.7%
 - According to KPMG Performance Insights, Korda's average from last season was 23.2% and the LPGA Tour's average was 28.9%
- This is only the sixth time in her career she has led after the first round of play
 - It is the first time she is leading after round one since the 2022 Dow Championship
 - Her last lead in a solo event came at the 2021 AIG Women's Open
 - In 2019, she led after her the first round of the Taiwan Swinging Skirts LPGA and went on to earn her third career victory
- Her opening round 65 is her best first round at this event
 - Her 65 was her lowest round since her 2022 start at this tournament, 64 in her third round
 - Including her opening round, she has only shot four rounds in the 60s in her previous four starts
- This is Korda's fifth start at the LPGA Drive On Championship
 - She has not missed a cut in her previous four starts and has a career-best finish of T15 in 2022
- This is her second start of the 2024 LPGA Tour season
 - She tied for 16th at the Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions last week
- In 2023, Korda made 18 starts and missed only one cut with nine top-10 finishes
 - Her best finish came at the HSBC Women's World Championship where she finished second
 - Of her nine top-10 finishes, three were in the top five
 - She finished fifth among the Tour in scoring average at 69.85
 - She represented the United States for the third time at the 2023 Solheim Cup
 - She went 2-2 to improve her Solheim Cup record to 7-4-1 overall
 - She also represented the United States at the 2023 Hanwha LIFEPLUS International Crown, where the team placed third
- This is her eighth season on the LPGA Tour
 - She has made 111 cuts in 128 starts and has earned eight wins and 47 additional top-10 finishes
 - Her last win came at the 2022 ANNIKA driven by Gainbridge at Pelican
 - She is the defending gold medalist after the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo

THINGS TO KNOW

- **Nanna Koerstz Madsen** is in solo third after a five-under 66
 - The last time she shot better than a 66 on a par 71 course was a six-under 65 at the 2023 ShopRite Classic where she finished T4
 - In last year's edition of the LPGA Drive On Championship, she shot a seven-under 65 in her third round
 - She has had 128 starts on the LPGA Tour with one win and nine top-10 finishes
- Five players ended the first round tied at T4
 - **Lucy Li** had five birdies and a bogey in her first round
 - The LPGA Tour sophomore missed the cut at this event last season in her first official start on Tour
 - **Sei Young Kim** ended with five birdies and a bogey
 - Kim is making her third start at this tournament
 - She has not missed the cut in her two previous starts

- She finished T23 last year, her best finish
- **Chanettee Wannasaen** recorded six birdies and a double bogey on No. 16
 - Wannasaen is making her second start of the season after finishing T32 at the Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions
- 2024 LPGA Tour Rookie **Minji Kang** is making her first LPGA Tour start ever
 - She earned her card through the Epson Tour's Race for the Card
 - She is one of four rookies in the field making their first starts on the LPGA Tour
 - Kang shot the lowest round of the 15 LPGA Tour Rookies in the field
- Major Champion **Ruoning Yin** ended her first round bogey-free with four birdies
 - She was one of five players to go bogey-free
- Defending champion **Celine Boutier** finished at one-under par
 - In 2023, she set the 72-hole scoring record with **Georgia Hall**, who she ultimately beat in a playoff for the title
 - Boutier won four times during her 2023 season including a major, The Amundi Evian Championship
 - Her 2023 LPGA Drive On Championship title was the first of those four wins
 - She tied with **Lilia Vu** for most wins on the LPGA Tour in 2023
 - To hear her pre-tournament press conference, click [here](#)
- 2022 champion **Leona Maguire** finished T73 at 2-over, while 2020 champion **Ally Ewing** finished T42 at even par
- Former LPGA Drive On Championship winners **Ally Ewing** and **Leona Maguire** finished with a 71 and X, respectively
 - Ewing won the Oct. 2020 edition of the event at Reynolds Lake Oconee (Great Waters Course) in Greensboro, Ga.
 - Maguire won at Crown Colony Golf & Country Club in Fort Myers, Fla., in 2022
 - She set the 54-hole scoring record and tied for the 36-hole scoring record alongside **Marina Alex** that year
- Sponsor invites **Mariajo Uribe** and **Laney Frye (a)** finished T42 and T100, respectively
 - LPGA Tour veteran Uribe is a two-time Olympian playing for Colombia (2016, 2020)
 - Uribe had three birdies, a bogey and a double bogey on Thursday
- Monday qualifiers **Becca Huffer** and **Yu-Sang Hou** finished their opening rounds T86 and T115, respectively
- **Jennifer Song** withdrew after round one due to injury

QUOTABLE

Marina Alex on being an on-course reporter after her round on Thursday

"I think it's going to be a really cool opportunity to walk with Tom and call some shots. Obviously be helpful that I was out there this morning. I'm a little nervous, but I'm excited. You never know what the future holds, and it'll be a really great just kind of glimpse into that side of the industry and the world. Maybe it's something I like. We'll see. Hopefully they like me."

Xiyu Lin on her engagement and balancing her life on and off the course

"I think this year I feel really special. I mean, even this week, still not very used to it yet. People just keep like congratulating me about the engagement. I'm little shy. But I think overall, this year obviously going to be very exciting. I think as a golfer, there is lots of big events coming up, including Olympics. As a person, I also like really look forward to the next step. I really hope I can balance it well and do well on both sides."

Auston Kim on her calm attitude

"It's not natural. It's a lot of work also, a lot of good internal dialog with myself, keeping myself calm, acknowledging what's happening. If a bad shot happens, like I know that I want to be the best that I can, and if a bad shot happens it's totally okay. It's up to the next one. I know that's a bit of a cliché, but it really works. I feel like I got a really good thing going."

ON LPGA.COM

[Epson Tour Graduate Auston Kim Cards 68 in First Round as a 2024 LPGA Tour Rookie](#)

[Hollis Stacy Hits Ceremonial First Tee Shot at LPGA Drive On Championship](#)

[Minji Kang Tees It Up for the First Time on LPGA Tour](#)

IN THE NEWS

[Dr. Beverly Harrison Honored with 2024 Sandy Labauve Spirit Award](#)

[AIG Women's Open Qualifying Venues Confirmed](#)

[Lexi Thompson, Rose Zhang to Participate in "CapitalOne's The Match" Alongside Max Homa, Rory McIlroy](#)

[Tumi Named Official Luggage of the PGA Tour and LPGA Tour](#)

[Rhone Named Official On-Course Apparel Partner of the LPGA Tour and Epson Tour](#)

SOCIAL SNAPSHOT

[Strokes Gained Off the Tee by KPMG](#)

[Marina Alex Steps in as an On-Course Reporter on Thursday](#)

[Emma Talley Joins Hope Barnett to Co-Host LPGA Now](#)

TOURNAMENT SCORING RECORDS

18 holes: 63, Celine Borge (R3, 2023), Amy Yang (R3, 2023), Ariya Jutanugarn (R3, 2023), Xiyu Lin (R3, 2022) and Aditi Ashok (R3, 2022)

36 holes: Marina Alex (2022) and Leona Maguire (2022)

54 holes: 198, Leona Maguire (2022)

72 holes: 268, Celine Boutier and Georgia Hall (2023)

TOURNAMENT HISTORY

2023: Played at Superstition Mountain Golf and Country Club, Prospector Course in Gold Canyon, Ariz.

2022: Played at Crown Colony Golf & Country Club in Fort Myers, Fla.

2021: Played at Golden Ocala Golf & Equestrian Club in Ocala, Fla.

Oct. 2020: Played at Reynolds Lake Oconee (Great Waters Course) in Greensboro, Ga.

Aug. 2020: Played at Inverness Club in Toledo, Ohio