



Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G
Pinnacle Country Club | Rogers, Arkansas | Sept. 27-29, 2024

Thursday Pre-Tournament Notes
September 26, 2024

NOTABLE PLAYERS IN THE WALMART NW ARKANSAS CHAMPIONSHIP PRESENTED BY P&G

Lilia Vu (Rolex Rankings No. 2)

- Vu is making her third start at this event
 - In her first appearance in 2019, she missed the cut
 - In 2022, she finished T16 after opening with two rounds of 65
- She is making her first start since halving her match at the Solheim Cup to help the U.S. Team win
 - Vu is one of seven U.S. Team members that are in the field this week
 - Vu went 1-2-1 at the 2024 Solheim Cup
- This is Vu's 14th start of the 2024 season
 - She took about two months off after the Ford Championship presented by KCC due to a back injury
 - In her first start back, she won the Meijer LPGA Classic for Simply Give
 - In her last regular season event, she finished T2 (AIG Women's Open)
 - Vu is ranked No. 8 in the Race to the CME Globe
 - According to KPMG Performance Insights, in six stroke play starts since her return from injury, Vu has finished either first or second three times, with two runner-up finishes coming in major championships

Lilia Vu On LPGA tour Since Return from Injury	
Starts	6
Won or runner-up	3
Scoring average	70.46
SG Total per round	+2.43
SG Putting per round	+1.16

- Vu is in her fifth season on the LPGA Tour
 - She has five career victories including two major championships (2023 Chevron Championship, 2023 AIGWO)
 - She is a two-time member of the U.S. Solheim Cup Team (2023, 2024)
 - In 2023, she earned Rolex Player of the Year honors after winning four times that season and the Rolex ANNIKA Major Award
 - She represented the U.S. at the 2024 Paris Olympics
- In 2021, she played predominantly on the Epson Tour and recorded 10 top-10 finishes
 - She finished first in the Race for the Card, regaining LPGA Tour status for 2022
- She played collegiately at UCLA

Haeran Ryu (Rolex Rankings No. 9)

- Ryu is the defending champion this week at the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G
 - Last year, she became a Rolex First-Time Winner with her three-shot victory over **Linnea Strom**
 - Ryu was one of a record-breaking 12 Rolex First-Time Winners in one season on the LPGA Tour
 - She was one of two players to officially become a Rolex First-Time Winner at the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship including **Nasa Hataoka**
 - She held the 36-hole lead last year
 - According to KPMG Performance Insights, her ball-striking ranked second in the field at Pinnacle Country Club in strokes gained off the tee and approach

Haeran Ryu Strokes Gained 2023 Walmart NW Arkansas Championship		
	Per Round	Rank
Off the Tee	+1.01	2nd
Approach	+2.39	2nd
Around the Green	-0.28	105th
Putting	+1.36	14th

- Her win propelled her into the lead and eventual clinching of the 2023 Louise Suggs Rolex Rookie of the Year award
- This is Ryu's 21st start of the 2024 LPGA Tour season
 - She has recorded a win and nine additional top-10 finishes
 - She claimed her second career victory at the inaugural FM Championship
 - Last week, she finished solo third at the Kroger Queen City Championship presented by P&G
 - Ryu gained well over 10 strokes from tee to green at TPC Rivers Bend, and it is the fifth time she has reached that mark in a single event this season. That is tied with tee to green savant Minee Lee for the most of any player on the LPGA Tour in 2024 according to KPMG Performance Insights:

Haeran Ryu – 10+ SG Tee to Green LPGA Tour – This Season		
	SG	Finish
The Chevron Championship	+14.9	5th
CPKC Women's Open	+13.6	T3
Dana Open	+13.6	2nd
Kroger Queen City Championship	+13.3	3rd
FM Championship	+10.7	Won

- She has accumulated \$3.2 million in season earnings, which is nearly 56% of her career earnings (\$3.9 million)
- Ryu was an LPGA Tour rookie last year
 - She made 22 of 25 cuts in her first year, and earned \$1,555,010 in season earnings
 - She earned medalist honors at LPGA Final Qualifying in 2022 to earn LPGA Tour Membership, and was the third player from the Republic of Korea to do so
- Prior to joining the LPGA Tour, Ryu had competed in six LPGA Tour events and predominantly played on the KLPGA Tour

Jeeno Thitikul (Rolex Rankings No. 12)

- Thitikul is making her third start at this event
 - She is the 2022 champion of the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G; she outlasted Danielle Kang with a birdie on the second playoff hole
 - In 2022, she tied the 18-hole tournament scoring record that was set by So Yeon Ryu in 2017
 - Last year, she finished T48 in her title defense
- This is Thitikul's 13th start of the 2024 season
 - She won the Dow Championship this year alongside partner **Ruoning Yin**
 - She has six additional top-10 finishes including in her last two starts; Kroger Queen City Championship presented by P&G (2nd) and FM Championship (T4)
 - Thitikul made her first start of the year at The Chevron Championship due to injury
 - She is currently ranked No. 7 in the Race for the CME Globe; [Making Moves: Jeeno Thitikul on the rise](#)
 - According to KPMG Performance Insights, she is one of three players this season to rank inside the top 20 in both strokes gained tee to green and putting alongside **Ayaka Furue** and **Lauren Coughlin**

Top 20 in SG Tee to Green & Putting LPGA Tour – This Season
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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 - @NWACHampionship (X, Instagram)

TV/STREAMING TIMES (All times EST; Streaming available on NBCSports.com and the NBC Sports App)

Friday, Sept. 27: 4:30-7:30 p.m. (Streaming Live)
Saturday, Sept. 28: 2-5 p.m. (Golf Channel, Live); 8-10 p.m. (Golf Channel, Encore)
Sunday, Sept. 29: 2-5 p.m. (Golf Channel, Live)

	Tee to Green	Putting
Ayaka Furue	15th	9th
Jeeno Thitikul	12th	13th
Lauren Coughlin	16th	15th

- Thitikul is in her third year on the LPGA Tour
 - She has three career victories since the beginning of 2022
 - She was the 2023 Vare Trophy awardee, recording the lowest scoring average of any player on the LPGA Tour that season
 - Since the beginning of 2022, she has been a top-10 machine on the LPGA Tour, recording her 36th finish over that span with her runner-up finish last week in Maineville. According to KPMG Performance Insights:

Most Top 10 Finishes LPGA Tour Since Beginning of 2022	
Jeeno Thitikul	36
Nelly Korda	26
Lydia Ko	23
Ayaka Furue	22
Celine Boutier	21

- She earned LPGA Tour Membership after finishing third at LPGA Final Qualifying in 2021
- Thitikul is a four-time Ladies European Tour winner
 - In 2017, she earned Rookie and Player of the Year honors, and finished first in the LET Order of Merit

Lauren Coughlin (Rolex Rankings No. 15)

- Coughlin is making her sixth start at the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G this week
 - She missed the cut in three of her previous five appearances
 - Her best finish was T21 in 2022 when she opened with a 64
- She is making her first LPGA Tour start since the Solheim Cup victory
 - Coughlin was a Solheim Cup rookie this year
 - She was one of four players to go undefeated all week, finishing 3-0-1
 - She is one of seven U.S. Team members in the field this week
- This is Coughlin's 22nd start of the 2024 season
 - She earned her first two career victories this season at the CPKC Women's Open and ISPS Handa Women's Scottish Open
 - Coughlin has an additional six top-10 finishes
 - In her last Tour start at the FM Championship, she finished T10
 - She has earned \$1.9 million in 2024 season earnings, which is almost 68% of her career earnings (\$2.8 million)
 - According to KPMG Performance Insights, Coughlin has turned her putting from a weakness to a strength in 2024

Lauren Coughlin Putting Ranks This Season		
		Rank
Makes of 10+ feet per round	2.15	5th
Putting 10 to 20 feet	29.9%	T6
Strokes gained putting	+0.70	15th

- Coughlin is in her seventh year on the LPGA Tour
 - Prior to this year, her best finish on Tour was T6 at the CPKC Women's Open
 - She first earned LPGA Tour Membership in 2018 after a T7 finish at 2017 Final Qualifying
- She played collegiate golf at the University of Virginia
- Her husband, John Pond, caddies for **Gina Kim**

KPMG INSIGHT OF THE WEEK

- Over the last two years at this event, players who have finished in the top 10 have gained 51.8% of their strokes with approach play
 - That's considerably more than the Tour average this season for top-10 finishes (41.5%):

Percentage of Strokes Gained Total Top-10 Finishers – Last 2 Years at Walmart NW Arkansas Championship	
Off the Tee	6.2%
Approach	51.8%
Around the Green	4.0%
Putting	38.0%

*Average this season across all events: 41.5%

THINGS TO KNOW

- On Wednesday morning, Ally Ewing announced her retirement from professional golf following the conclusion of the 2024 season
 - See her announcement: ["I'm forever grateful! Thank you to the @lpga_tour and many many others!"](#)
 - Watch her press conference: [Ally Ewing Pre-Tournament Press Conference](#)
 - Read more about her retirement: [Ally Ewing Set to Retire from Professional Golf at End of 2024 LPGA Tour Season](#)
 - View her player profile: [Ally Ewing](#)
 - This year, Ewing has six top-10 finishes including four consecutive top-5 finishes from the U.S. Women's Open presented by Ally (T3) to the Dow Championship (2nd, alongside partner Jennifer Kupcho)
 - She is currently ranked No. 9 in the Race to the CME Globe and No. 18 in the Rolex Women's World Golf Rankings
 - This is Ewing's ninth season on the LPGA Tour
 - She has three career victories: 2020 LPGA Drive On Championship, 2021 T-Mobile Match Play presented by MGM Rewards and the 2022 Kroger Queen City Championship presented by P&G
 - She has accrued over \$6.0 million in career earnings and 25 career top-10 finishes
 - She was on four U.S. Solheim Cup Teams (2019, 2021, 2023, 2024); and was most notably named to the 2019 U.S. Team after Stacy Lewis withdrew due to injury
 - She received the Heather Wilbur Award in 2016, an award voted upon by players
 - Ewing was an LPGA Tour rookie in 2016 after finished T22 at the Final Stage of Qualifying to earn Membership
 - She also competed on the Epson Tour in 2016, posting eight top-10 finishes including four runner-up finishes
 - Ewing played collegiate golf at Mississippi State University and was a two-time First Team All-American during her time there

ON LPGA.COM

[Ally Ewing Set to Retire from Professional Golf at End of 2024 LPGA Tour Season](#)

[Making Moves: Jeeno Thitikul on the rise](#)

[Featured Groups: 2024 Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G](#)

[How to Watch the 2024 Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G](#)

[Field Breakdown: 2024 Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G](#)

[Five Things to Know about the 2024 Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G](#)

[LPGA Leaves Lasting Local Impact Following 2024 Solheim Cup](#)

LPGA VIDEOS

- Stacy Lewis Pre-Tournament Press Conference
- Maria Fassi Pre-Tournament Press Conference
- Haeran Ryu Pre-Tournament Press Conference
- Ally Ewing Pre-Tournament Press Conference
- Gaby Lopez Pre-Tournament Press Conference
- Lilia Vu Pre-Tournament Press Conference

SOCIAL SNAPSHOT

[#LPGAlookback – Danielle Kang's eagle to force a playoff in 2022](#)

[#LPGAlookback – Haeran Ryu en route to her first Tour title](#)

[Inside the LPGA Podcast: Nelly and Lydia](#)

[2022 champion Atthaya Thitikul during her practice round](#)

[Former Razorback Gaby Lopez back in NWA](#)

[LPGA Legacy Initiative launches, celebrating impact made through the 2024 Solheim Cup](#)

[Lilia Vu on Ally Ewing's career](#)

[Aon Risk Reward Leaderboard](#)