



PRESENTED BY

**Black Desert Championship presented by Greater Zion**

Black Desert Resort | Ivins, Utah | May 1-4, 2025

Tuesday Pre-Tournament Notes

April 29, 2025

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QUICK LINKS

[Interview Transcripts](#)
[LPGA Tour Online Media Center](#)
[Tournament Website](#)
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SOCIAL MEDIA

LPGA Tour: @LPGA, @LPGAMedia (X), @lpga_tour
(Instagram, TikTok)
Tournament: @BDChampionship (X),
@blackdesertchampionship (Instagram)

MEDIA AVAILABILITY SCHEDULE

(Zoom link available upon request; all times are local and subject to change)

Wednesday, April 3012:00 p.m. – **Nataliya Guseva**, 2023 Black Desert Championship winner on the Epson TourAfter pro-am (Approx. 12:30 p.m. MT) – **Charley Hull**, Black Desert Ambassador, Rolex Rankings No. 14After pro-am (Approx. 3:45 p.m. MT) – **Ali Mulhall**, Black Desert Ambassador, sponsor invite**NOTABLE PLAYERS IN THE FIELD**

- World No. 4 [Ruoning Yin](#)
 - Seventh start of the 2025 season
 - Five cuts made
 - Last time out, she finished T2 at The Chevron Championship, her best finish of the season
 - Has just one top-10 in 2025
 - According to KPMG Performance Insights, no one in Houston last week was better with their approach play than Yin, who averaged nearly 2.75 strokes gained per round during her runner-up finish at The Chevron, over three-quarters of a stroke better than any other player to make the cut:

SG Approach Leaders The Chevron Championship	
	SG Approach
Ruoning Yin	2.74
Esther Henseleit	1.97
Ariya Jutanugarn	1.84
Jin Young Ko	1.40
Carlota Ciganda	1.33
Albane Valenzuela	1.33

- Career: Five wins, 18 top 10s, \$6.4 million Official Career earnings
 - Won three times in 2024 and twice in 2023 including a major championship at the KPMG Women's PGA Championship
 - Represented the People's Republic of China at the 2024 Paris Olympics (T10)
 - Competed on Team China at the 2023 Hanwha LIFEPLUS International Crown
- World No. 5 [Lilia Vu](#)
 - Sixth start of 2025 season
 - Four cuts made
 - One top-5 finish, runner-up at the Ford Championship presented by Wild Horse Pass
 - According to KPMG Performance Insights, Vu is gaining nearly twice as many strokes putting per round this season than she did in 2024, when she was ranked in the top-15 on Tour in that metric:

Lilia Vu Strokes Gained Putting – Last 3 Seasons		
	Per Round	LPGA Rank
2023	+0.86	10th
2024	+0.62	15th
2025	+1.20	6th

- Career: Five wins, 20 top 10s, \$6.8 million Official Career earnings
 - One win in 2024, four wins in 2023
 - 2023 Rolex Player of the Year, Rolex ANNIKA Major Award
 - Two-time major champion
 - 2024 Olympian
- Played collegiate golf at UCLA
 - Awarded 2018 PING WGCA Player of the Year, Pac-1 Conference Golfer of the Year and was a three-time WGCA First Team All-American and All-Pac 12 performer
 - Ranked first on the all-time UCLA career victory list, with eight individual titles
- World No. 13 [Mao Saigo](#)
 - Ninth start of the 2025 season
 - In her last start, she earned her first career victory at The Chevron Championship
 - Has missed just one cut all season

- She has two additional top-10 finishes, T5 at Blue Bay LPGA and T9 at T-Mobile Match Play presented by MGM Rewards
- According to KPMG Performance Insights, improved putting has been a consistent theme for Saigo this year, who is averaging nearly a full stroke gained per round on the greens so far in 2025:

Mao Saigo Strokes Gained Putting LPGA Tour – Last 2 Seasons		
	SG Putting	Rank
2024	+0.30	45th
2025	+0.95	10th

- Career: One win, 10 top 10 finishes, \$3 million in Official Career earnings
 - 2024 Louise Suggs Rolex Rookie of the Year
 - Major champion
- Has competed on the JLPGA since 2020
 - Won five times in 2022 and once in 2023
- World No. 14 [Charley Hull](#)
 - Sixth start of 2025
 - Has made three cuts
 - Missed the cut in the first major championship of the season, The Chevron Championship
 - Has one top-10 finish at the HSBC Women's World Championship (T4)
 - According to KPMG Performance Insights, through her first four stroke play starts this season, Hull has cut her bogey avoidance rate by nearly 5% from last season and has matched the number of bogey-free rounds she had across all of 2024 on the LPGA Tour:

Charley Hull Bogey Avoidance LPGA Tour – Last 2 Seasons		
	2024	2025
Bogey avoidance	14.3%	9.9%
Bogey-free rounds	3	3

- Career: Two wins, 39 top-10 finishes, \$9 million in Official Career earnings
 - Seven-time European Solheim Cup Team Member
 - Two-time International Crown participant representing England
 - Two-time Olympian (2016, 2024)

NOTABLE TOURNAMENT INFO

- This is the first edition of the Black Desert Championship presented by Greater Zion
- The last time that the LPGA Tour hosted a tournament in Utah was the 1964 Riverside Ladies Open
 - Clifford Ann Creed won the event with a four-day total of 286 and earned \$1,350
 - Judy Rankin (formerly Judy Torluemke) withdrew from the event after the second round
 - The event had 35 participants and there was not a cut

- Two previous Epson Tour events took place in Utah within the last two seasons:
 - 2023 Black Desert Resort Championship won by **Nataliya Guseva** in Salt Lake City
 - Players that competed in 2023 and now in this week's field:
 - Copper Rock Championship from 2021 to present in Hurricane, Utah
 - Former winners: **Bailey Tardy** (2021), **Dottie Ardina** (2022), **Savannah (Carlson) Vilaubi** (2023) **Fiona Xu** (2024)
- There are two sponsor invites: [Christine Wang](#) and **Ali Mulhall**
 - Wang is currently playing on the Epson Tour
 - Graduated from the University of South California in 2024
 - Started to play on the Epson Tour following graduation
 - Made three cuts in nine starts in 2024
 - Played in last week's IOA Championship after getting into the field 15 minutes before her tee time as the first reserve
 - Mulhall is 19 years old from Utah
 - This is her first start on the LPGA Tour
 - Played in the 2023 Black Desert Championship on the Epson Tour as an amateur
 - Participated in the LPGA Q-Series, Pre-Qualifying Stage as an amateur
 - Played in the Monday qualifier at the 2025 Ford Championship presented by Wild Horse Pass
 - Won the 2021 Drive, Chip and Putt Championship
- There are two players that Monday qualified: [Mina Kreiter](#) and [Sophia Popov](#)
 - Kreiter shot three-under on Monday
 - This will be her first LPGA Tour start in 2025 and first since the LOTTE Championship in November
 - This was her fourth Monday qualifier she has played in this season
 - Has made three starts on the Epson Tour in 2025
 - Formerly played under the name, Mina Harigae
 - Popov shot one-under par in the qualifier and made a birdie on the second playoff hole against two competitors to earn a spot in the field
 - Played in one of the first pairings on Monday
 - Played in the three-way playoff nearly three hours after she finished her round
 - Finished T30 at last week's The Chevron Championship

KPMG PERFORMANCE INSIGHT OF THE WEEK

Top finishers on the LPGA Tour are leaning a bit more on performance off the tee and around the green than a season ago. Top-5 finishers in LPGA tour events this year are getting 17.2% of their strokes gained from shots off the tee, up from a year ago (15.0%). Around the green, the rate is currently near 10%, when it was 7.6% in 2024.

Percentage of Strokes Gained Total By Top-5 Finishers – Last 2 LPGA Seasons		
	2024	2025
Off the Tee	15.0%	17.2%
Approach Green	38.9%	36.4%

Around Green	7.6%	9.8%
Putting	38.5%	36.6%

SEASON-LONG INITIATIVES

Race to CME Globe

The Race to the CME Globe is a season-long points competition with LPGA Tour Members accumulating points in every official LPGA Tour 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, highlighted by a \$4 million winner's check, which is the largest winner's prize in the history of women's golf.

- 1st: [Hyo Joo Kim](#) leads with 1,013.125 points
 - Kim was a part of the five-way playoff for The Chevron Championship
 - Won the 2025 Ford Championship presented by Wild Horse Pass and has three additional top-10 finishes
- 2nd: [Jeeno Thitikul](#) has 978.450 points
 - Has five top-10 finishes through first seven events of the season
- 3rd: [Angel Yin](#) has 975.800 points
 - Won the Honda LPGA Thailand and two additional top-10 finishes
- Following her win at The Chevron Championship, [Mao Saigo](#) leaped 21 spots to No. 4 in the Race to the CME Globe. After finishing T2 from falling to Saigo in the playoff, each player moved up in the standings:
 - [Ariya Jutangarn](#) moved up 15 spots to No. 14
 - [Lindy Duncan](#) moved up 22 spots to No. 18
 - [Ruoning Yin](#) moved up 38 spots to No. 24
 - [Hyo Joo Kim](#) moved up six spots to No. 1
- Other notable moves after The Chevron Championship:
 - [Lexi Thompson](#) jumped from No. 75 to No. 55 after finishing T14
 - [Yan Liu](#) moved from No. 99 to No. 58 after finishing T9
 - [Emily Kristine Pedersen](#) moved from No. 97 to No. 75 after finishing T24
 - [In Gee Chun](#) moved from No. 122 to No. 84 after finishing T18

Aon Risk Reward Challenge: No. 13 at Black Desert Resort

The Aon Risk Reward Challenge is a unique, season-long competition on 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 Aon Risk Reward Challenge hole, with the winners having the best average score to par at the end of the regular season. The winner will take home the Aon trophy and a \$1 Million prize.

- There are currently nine players tied for first place at -1.000 score to par following the first major championship of the season, The Chevron Championship:
 - Amy Yang, Nelly Korda, Elizabeth Szokol, Sarah Schmelzel, Jeeno Thitikul, A Lim Kim, Xiaowen Yin, Madison Young, Ana Belac
- No. 13: an excellent risk reward challenge with a beautiful Snow Canyon serving as the backdrop

- Water protects the left side of the fairway
- A creek runs across the fairway
- Bunkers and lava rock surround a multi-layered green
- A wide fairway means longer players will certainly be offered the decision to go for the green in two
- A creek cuts across the landing zone, forcing players to consider how close they want to play to the water
- The expected reward is 0.73 strokes gained on the field
- More information on No. 13 from this week's fact sheet is available [here](#)

CME Group Cares Challenge

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 2025, 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.

- There have been two hole-in-ones so far in the 2025 season
 - [Madelene Sagstrom](#) made the first hole-in-one of the season during the first round of the JM Eagle LA Championship
 - Mary Liu made the second hole-in-one in the final round of the JM Eagle LA Championship
- The total for 2025 is now \$40,000 donated toward St. Jude Children's Research Hospital
- In 2024: 29 aces counted towards the challenge, \$580,000 raised