



Walmart NW ARKANSAS CHAMPIONSHIP

PRESENTED BY *P&G*

Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G
Pinnacle Country Club | Rogers, Arkansas | Sept. 19-21, 2025

First-Round Notes

September 19, 2025

LPGA ON-SITE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

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Course Setup: 36-35 – 71; 6,285 yards

Scoring Average: R1: 68.783

Weather: Dry conditions through the afternoon with mostly sunny skies. Cooler morning temperatures with highs in the low 80 to mid 80s. The wind will remain light and average 4-8 mph.

Race to CME Globe Points: 500 (winner)

Purse: \$3 million USD (winner's prize, \$450,000)

TV/Streaming Times: [How to Watch](#)

QUICK LINKS

[Interview Transcripts](#)

[LPGA Tour Online Media Center \(OMC\)](#)

[Tournament Website](#)

[How to Watch](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA

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

Tournament: @NWACHampionship (X, Instagram)

LEADERBOARD

	Player	To par	Score
T1	Sarah Schmelzel	-8	63
T3	Minami Katsu	-8	63
T3	Six Players	-7	64

COMPETITION HIGHLIGHTS

- T1: **Sarah Schmelzel** and **Minami Katsu** both carded rounds of 63 in the first round
 - Schmelzel made seven birdies, one bogey, and one eagle in R1
 - Finished her round 6-under through her last five holes
 - Went birdie-birdie-birdie-birdie-eagle
 - Her 24 putts were the fewest during R1
 - This is her lowest round of the season
 - It is also her lowest round ever at this event
 - Her second 18-hole lead/co-lead in her LPGA Tour career
 - Finished T8 at the 2024 HSBC Women's Championship after leading in R1

- Katsu was bogey-free and made eight birdies during her first round
 - She hit 12/13 fairways and 16/18 greens in regulation in R1
 - Made back-to-back birdies three times
 - This is her lowest round of the season
 - Carded a 65 in the third round of the AIG Women's Open
 - It is also her lowest round ever at this event
 - Her eight birdies were tied for the fourth most among the field
 - This is her first career 18-hole lead/co-lead
- T3: Six players are tied for third
 - **Carlota Ciganda** went bogey-free with seven birdies in her opening round
 - 64 is her lowest 18-hole score of the 2025 season
 - It is her best start to a tournament since her win at the Meijer LPGA Classic for Simply Give
 - **Nasa Hataoka** shot her lowest 18-hole first-round score of the season
 - Her 64 is her lowest 18-hole score since the final round of the JM Eagle LA Championship presented by Plastpro
 - **Alison Lee** recorded one eagle, six birdies and a bogey in her opening round
 - It is her best 18-hole score since returning from maternity leave
 - Lee is making just her second start of the 2025 season
 - She first returned to golf at the Houston Aramco Championship on the Ladies European Tour
 - **Leona Maguire** went bogey-free with seven birdies
 - She hit all 13 fairways, one of 18 players to do so
 - 64 is her lowest 18-hole score of the 2025 season
 - 64 is her lowest 18-hole score since the final round of the 2023 Meijer LPGA Classic for Simply Give
 - **Somi Lee** also went bogey-free
 - She had her first opening round in the 60s since The Amundi Evian Championship
 - Her 64 is her lowest 18-hole score of the 2025 season
 - **Lilia Vu** recorded her best opening round score since the JM Eagle LA Championship presented by Plastpro
 - She went bogey-free with seven birdies
 - Her first bogey-free round since the second round of the Ford Championship
- Defending champion **Jasmine Suwannapura** finished 2-over on the day
 - She had three bogeys and a birdie
- 20 players went bogey-free in the first round of play
- **Ssu-Chia Cheng** withdrew prior to her first round due to injury
- **Wichanee Meechai** and **Mi Hyang Lee** withdrew during their first round due to injury

A LOOK AT THE LEADERS

CATEGORY	Sarah Schmelzel	Minami Katsu
2025 Race to CME Globe Rank	44	38
2025 LPGA Tour Wins	0	0
2025 LPGA Tour Top 10s	3	4
2025 Official Season Earnings	\$828,381	\$1,174,984
Career LPGA Tour Wins	0	0
Career Official LPGA Tour Top 10s	18	8
Career Official Money	\$3,534,139	\$2,104,077

ABOUT THE LEADER**Rolex Rankings No. 61 Sarah Schmelzel**

- Sixth start at this event
 - 2023 – T10, 2022 – MC, 2021 – MC, 2020 – T66, 2019 – MC
- 2025: 16 cuts made in 19 starts with three top-10 finishes
 - Has a season-best finish of T5 at the Blue Bay LPGA
 - She also finished fifth at the Dow Championship with partner Albane Valenzuela
 - Missed the cut at the FM Championship her last time out
- Career: 18 career top 10s with \$3.5 million in official career earnings
 - Was a member of the winning 2024 U.S. Solheim Cup team
 - Has a career-best finish of runner-up at the 2024 Blue Bay LPGA
 - Finished third at the inaugural LPGA Q-Series to earn Priority List Category 14 status for the 2019 season
 - Competed on the Epson Tour as well recording seven top-10 finishes in 2018

Rolex Rankings No. 54 Minami Katsu

- Third start at Pinnacle Country Club
 - 2024 – T37, 2023 – T34
- 2025: 18 cuts made in 26 starts with two top 10s
 - Runner-up at the AIG Women's Open earlier this season, her best finish of 2025
 - Has not missed the cut since the Dow Championship
- Career: Eight top 10s with \$2.1 million in official career earnings
 - Finished 5th at the LPGA Q-Series and earned LPGA Membership for the 2023 season
 - Eight-time winner on the JLPGA, including two major championships
 - Became the youngest winner in JLPGA Tour history at the 2014 KKT Cup Vantelin Ladies Open at age 15

Tournament Scoring Records:

18 holes – 60, Lucy Li (R3, 2024)

36 holes – 126, Anna Nordqvist (2020) and So Yeon Ryu (2017)

54 holes – 192, Nasa Hataoka (2018)

QUOTABLE

Sarah Schmelzel (T1, -8) on closing her round with four birdies and an eagle

"Yeah, I think on like -- when you get to 14, 15, 17, and 18, you should at least have looks on all those because you have pretty short clubs in. Like I had a wedge into two of them and 9-iron and then hitting that in two. I mean, you're hoping you can finish that well. I told my caddie I think walking to the green on 14, I need to start making some birdies or else I'm going to get lapped out here today. It was just a few good wedge shots and then I made a longer one on I guess it was 17; then just hit it really close on 18, which was nice to end that way."

Minami Katsu (T1, -8) on her round today

"Yeah, overall I think it was a perfect round. I was trying to aim for 100% on fairway keeping. Missed that on 18 so that's a little disappointing. Felt like today was a really good round."

Carlota Ciganda (T3, -7) on her bogey-free round

"Yeah, very happy with the round. Seven birdies, no bogeys. I think when you have a bogey-free round it's always very positive day. Yeah, played very solid overall. Hit lots of greens lots of birdie chances. Hit it pretty close. Made a couple good putts. Yeah, excited for tomorrow."

Alison Lee (T3, -7) on having a good round after the last two weeks

"Yeah, it feels so good. I mean, coming into these three weeks I feel like I did as much as I could to prep, and the last two weeks did feel a bit disappointing because I felt like my game was in a really good place. Obviously you just never know until you tee it up. Yeah, I feel like I learned so much and knew what I needed to work on, what I needed to do well this week. Thankfully the greens were soft, so you had to be really good hitting your numbers. I had quite a few holes where it was spinning back quite a bit because it was soft. Felt like I adjusted really well. Happy with my round. Yeah, I know we have two days left, but it's such a good start for me and it's a good feeling to see my hard work pay off and see it's all been worth it."

Leona Maguire (T3, -7) on going bogey-free today

"Yeah, feel like my game has been in good shape for the past couple months. It's nice to start off with a low one here. It's sort of make a lot of birdies or get left behind. I think the goal the next few weeks was to start hitting more greens. So far so good on that one. Just coming off two weeks at home which has been really nice to rest, recharge, and get ready for the last stretch. It's nice to kick off with a low one after that break."

Lilia Vu (T3, -7) on getting a bogey-free round under her belt

"Yeah, it feels really good. I haven't been had this position in a long, long time. I feel like I've kind of gone down a different route in my golf game and trying to get body first. I was talking with my mental coach, and the only goal today was to try my best on the shot in front of me and not to get ahead of myself; I think I did that really well. Just gave it my all on each shot and turned out pretty nicely."

Stacy Lewis (T45, -3) on the emotions on the first tee today

"It was actually -- I had to catch myself a little bit. When I walked on that tee everybody kind started cheering for me and going crazy. I had to go hide in the tent for a second. Just had to get the first hole over with. I was actually pretty nervous starting the day which hadn't been like that in while here. Once I got off the first hole I felt a lot more comfortable. It was a lot of fun. The shots I hit there on 15 and 18, I thought I was making a one and then I thought he was making a three, so it was pretty cool."

Nelly Korda (T66, -2) on Stacy Lewis and getting to play with her these next two days

"Yeah, honestly ever since my rookie year she's someone that has done so much for American women's golf and women's golf in general. Getting to know her through Solheim Cup, her captaincy, has been so so fun. Getting to share this round with her the next two days has been incredible. But at the end of the day she's someone that I looked up to. She's such great role model. And I wish her all the best in her next chapter in her life."

ON LPGA.COM

Muni He Fires Lowest Round Since 2023 in Arkansas with PGA Tour's Norman Xiong on Bag

Featured Groups: 2025 Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G

Look Back at All 13 of Stacy Lewis' LPGA Tour Victories

Lilia Vu Fires First Round in the 60s Since April on Friday at Walmart NW Arkansas Championship

Sarah Schmelzel First Round Interview | 2025 Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G

Nelly Korda First Round Golf Channel | 2025 Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G

Leona Maguire First Round Interview | 2025 Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G

Minami Katsu First Round Interview | 2025 Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G

SOCIAL SNAPSHOT

World No. 2 Nelly Korda's thoughts on Stacy Lewis' impact on women's golf 🌟

Another one that was just so close for Stacy Lewis 🙄

Alison Lee with an eagle to finish off her incredible round 🦅

Miranda Wang for SIX straight birdies 😁

Stacy Lewis is keeping things exciting out here 🤖

LPGA Mom Alison Lee is back and hasn't missed a beat! 🤖

Chisato Iwai with another one 🎯

And another birdie from Nelly Korda 🦅

Jin Hee Im with a birdie to get her to -2 as she starts her round 🙄

Minami must have ice running through her veins 🧊

Off to a hot start here at the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship presented by P&G 🦅