

PRE-TOURNAMENT PRESS CONFERENCE
December 7, 2023



ROSE ZHANG
SAHITH THEEGALA

Q. Rose, Sahith, welcome to the Grant Thornton Invitational. Who approached whom about this pairing first? We want to know how this pairing came about.

SAHITH THEEGALA: I guess I'll answer that. Me and Rose have had the same trainer. I think she's worked with him longer. I've worked with him six and a half years or something. I'd always -- I heard of Rose when she was pretty young because she was really good for a young age, and I'd see her come into the gym, and I was always like impressed by how humble she would be. But also I kept track of her college career and everything, and I'm like, all right, I need to find a way to get her out to play with me this year. When I found out this was going to be a mixed event.

We have a text thread that our trainer started it was either January or February where it was like, hey, Rose, you're going to play with Sahith this year, and then Rose was like, well, I've got to turn pro first. So yeah, I like casually brought it up. Kind of like not really jokingly but kind of jokingly.

She just turned pro and killed it right away, and I was like, am I good enough to still be your partner?

ROSE ZHANG: No, it's the opposite.

SAHITH THEEGALA: I don't even know when it was officially official. Just like kind of happened.

Q. Rose, how excited are you to play in this event? I want to ask how often have you played alongside any PGA TOUR players or guys in general? How are you excited to see your game shape up?

ROSE ZHANG: Super exciting. This week is really special for not only me but everyone in this event.

I don't get to play with PGA TOUR players often, so being able to play with Sahith, and from afar you always watch these players on TV, and you always admire their games, how far they hit it, how precise they are, how creative they are with their shots. It's just kind of cool to just be inside the ropes to see that, let alone teaming up.

Yeah, it's going to be a fun ride. I'm excited for this week. I'm sure everyone will have a great time.

Q. Speaking of everybody having a great time, what do you think the fans will take from this experience of seeing the men and women play together, and how will that maybe grow the game?



SAHITH THEEGALA: Yeah, I think even last year I know just seeing Nelly playing, there was a lot of people, oh, I didn't realize how far Lexi hits it or how good Nelly's iron game is and stuff like that. I think it'll be a nice kind of extra showcase to show how insanely talented LPGA players are. They're the best players in the world. They stack up to the TOUR guys if not better than the TOUR guys in a lot of areas.

I think it's just exciting to see a team event come to fruition. It'll be very interesting because it's kind of two -- I'd say a little bit kind of different games kind of meshed together, and you see a combination of that and the strategy and everything is going to be kind of interesting, too.

It's going to be a lot of fun to watch. Hopefully it brings -- I know viewership for golf in general has been up, but if it brings even more to the ladies' side.

Q. Rose, what is the strategy he just mentioned?

ROSE ZHANG: Strategy? Our strategy is to hit fairways and hit greens, make putts, and if we're not hitting fairways and greens, we'll make up-and-downs. Easy.

Q. How do your games complement each other? Where are the shots that you might pick up versus he might pick out there?

ROSE ZHANG: I think in general, his short game and putting is just impeccable. No matter where I might put it -- no sorries, though. But we'll be able to able to balance each other out. We'll all have a good mindset going into every single hole, and just (indiscernible).

Q. Have you thought at all about a team name, any discussions there?

ROSE ZHANG: We've been coming up with a lot of team names, but they became hashtags, and they also were really long names, so it's almost like inside jokes. We don't necessarily have one yet.

SAHITH THEEGALA: We'll just say it's secret.

ROSE ZHANG: We'll just say it's like five or six.

