

ROUND 1 QUICK QUOTES
December 12, 2025



ROSE ZHANG
MICHAEL KIM

Q. Joined now by Rose and Michael after their first round here at the Grant Thornton Invitational. Kind of take us through the day. What was working so well?

MICHAEL KIM: Felt like we ham-and-egged it really nice. I had a couple good tee shots, Rose hit a couple good tee shots when each weren't in the best spots, and we rolled in a few putts and a couple eagles is always a good bonus.

Q. Yeah, first time playing together, right, at this event?

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah.

MICHAEL KIM: Yeah.

Q. What was it like kind of getting to learn each other's games, your personalities and all that throughout this week so far?

ROSE ZHANG: It was honestly really cool. I think right off the bat we had a good Tuesday practice round and we just, we had a good time out there. Just hit a couple shots, got to see each other hit a little bit.

But we didn't really put too much pressure on each other or ourselves. I feel like that's what you want in a team competition, especially when you're with someone for the first time. So we all had just a really good time. And his coach Sean was also out there just talking a lot.

Q. I know you guys said you ham-and-egged it out there. How do you guys complement each other's game?

MICHAEL KIM: Well, Rose hits it down the middle of the fairway every time. I just tried to hit as far as I could, yeah, depending on the tee box. Sometimes I have a little bit of a length advantage so I tried to help out there where I could. You know, we both played really well today.

ROSE ZHANG: I think he did more than just help out, yeah.

Q. How did this partnership come to be?

MICHAEL KIM: Wish we had a cool story, but the tournament kind of said, how about you



guys together? I think we said that's great.

ROSE ZHANG: Yeah.

Q. How do your personalities kind of mimic each other? I feel like you two are both pretty calm, cool and collected out there.

ROSE ZHANG: We're pretty chill on and off the golf course. I feel like if we have a bad shot or whatever, we may make some just snarky comments, but other than that I think we usually keep cool. I think that helps a lot because our emotions aren't too high or too low and that helps a lot when we're playing the same holes, are complimenting each other with different shots.

Q. I saw the putt there at the last that Rose made. You had a pretty good reaction. How much fun is it for you two to just root each other on out there in this kind of format?

MICHAEL KIM: Yeah, I feel like I had the best view the entire day. The last few holes, she holed a bunch of really nice putts. On 18 she said, you know, I've seen this putt, this putt doesn't break as much as it looks, and I said OK. Sure enough, she holed it right in the middle.

Q. For you guys going into tomorrow, obviously a really strong start, alternate shot's a little bit tricky. How do you make adjustments when you're going to be playing a different golf ball than you typically play and what goes into that strategy for the pair of you out there trying to keep capitalizing like you did today?

ROSE ZHANG: I think the biggest thing is obviously we want to play our own styles of golf, but I feel like Michael and I have a pretty similar way of how we see shots, of how we hit into greens.

So, honestly, we don't want to deviate too much from what we know, but at the same time it's just being mindful of like where the other person's going to be, where the other person's going to end up. And we'll have conversations about who's going to tee off first and whatnot.

Q. Do you all have a team name that you all can share or any inklings of a team name as you've gotten off to a really good start here today?

MICHAEL KIM: Our name, our team name is the Golden Cardinal, kind of off our schools, and we even have a mascot, Smokey the Bear.

ROSE ZHANG: Yep.

Q. Why?



ROSE ZHANG: It's the Boy Scouts bear that you see on like those pictures in California. It was our caddies, not us, but it's OK. We don't mind Smokey the Bear.

