

Circling Raven Championship

Circling Raven Golf Club | Worley, Idaho | August 27-29

Pre-Tournament Notes

August 26, 2021

Course Setup: 36-36—72; 6,588 yards

Quick Links:

- [Leaderboard](#)
- [Online Media Center](#) (groupings, statistics, hole locations, photos, etc.)

LILIA VU CLINCHES HER SPOT IN THE RACE FOR THE CARD TOP-10

Two weeks ago, Lilia Vu claimed her third win of 2021, which brought her season earnings to \$140,607. With only five events left this year on the Symetra Tour and after a good deal of number crunching, it's official: Vu has clinched a spot in the top-10 on the Symetra Tour money list. There's no way she can fall out. The California native will graduate onto the LPGA Tour as a 2022 Member.

"We did it. I don't know what to say. I came a long way from the past two years. From almost quitting golf to being here," said Vu. "I honestly don't know how it happened so fast."

After her second win at the Twin Bridges Championship, Vu shared a story that resonated with everyone who has struggled in their careers, in or out of golf. When she was a 2019 rookie on the LPGA Tour, filled with confidence and promise, she made one cut all year, the LOTTE Championship, where the \$3,830 check barely covered the cost of her week in Hawaii. Dejected and beaten by a game that can be unrelenting, Vu thought about putting the clubs away and going to law school, a dream most parents would welcome. But Vu's mother, Yvonne Du, was not like most parents. In the kindest way possible, Yvonne told Lilia, "No honey, you are good enough. You need to pull yourself out of this."

There's nothing more motivating than your mom telling you to cowboy up and fight your way out of your funk.

"My mom has been there for me the whole time, even when I thought about quitting golf," Vu said. "She has encouraged me to do my best and always thought I belonged on the LPGA Tour. I am excited for next year."

Vu found her first win at the Garden City Charity Classic and has not missed a cut all year. Her last five starts have been: T4, T3, Win, T2, Win. Last week, she donned an LPGA hoodie and was photographed with a bottle of champagne as she celebrated.

But despite having already locked up her spot on the LPGA for next year, Vu is not resting. She's out at the Circling Raven Championship hoping to ride the momentum as long as it lasts. As an added bonus, she loves the golf course.

"I think it's really pretty and actually exceeded my expectations," Vu said. "The front nine is definitely different than the back nine. It's way more open and links style, while the front is tree lined. But I really like the back nine so far."

As for her goals, she said, "I know I sound repetitive (but I'm going to) continue doing what I have done, do my best and try to have fun."

That formula has worked so far. No reason to change it now.

SYMETRA TOUR MEMBERS EXCITED FOR NEW EVENT IN IDAHO

The first edition of the Circling Raven Championship starts tomorrow and many Symetra Tour Members will be teeing it up for their first time in Idaho, but two players call the Gem State home. Traveling a few hours north of where she grew up, **Gabby Lemieux** (Caldwell, Idaho) has been anxiously waiting for the tournament to come around.

"Honestly it's the best feeling in the planet. In college (my family) never really got to come out because I wasn't in the Idaho area. So the fact that we have a professional event in Idaho this year is absolutely fantastic because friends and family can actually come out and watch," said Lemieux. "I played the course in 2019 and it was just for fun though, so this is a whole different experience. The tee shots are probably much harder than what we have seen all year, so you must put it in the right position to score. Overall, the course is in great shape, and I think a lot of the girls will be looking forward to this weekend."

Last year, Lemieux shared [her #DriveOn story](#) as one of the only Native Americans to compete on the LPGA or Symetra Tour. She is a member of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation. While feeling the support and love from hosts like the Coeur d'Alene tribes, she remembers that competing on Tour is a story that is bigger than just her. Lemieux has taken on a role she believes deeply in being a role model for those around her.

"Having the event here in Coeur d'Alene and have part of a tribe and my tribe come together to celebrate this special place is an incredible opportunity," said Lemieux. "I think that (being a role model) is probably the most important part of the game of golf. I see kids come out here and so many players out here will give them a golf ball or a glove or a hat

and players out here think about that. It's important for us to do that to keep growing the game of women's golf.

A few more miles from where she was raised - 4,823 to be exact - is **Sophie Hausmann** (Nottuln, Germany). The University of Idaho alumna will be competing in her second home this week, after coming to the States to compete collegiately starting in 2015. During her time with the Vandals, she was a two-time Big Sky Conference Player of the Year, a four-time All-Big Sky First-Team selection and a two-time medalist.

Hausmann has a potential advantage heading into the weekend, having seen Circling Raven Golf Club ahead of this week. Her team played here a handful of times for team outings.

"I played only an hour south of here in Moscow, so I have been to the northern parts of Idaho quite a bit. We had a team retreat here at the lake and my coach had us play a few events here so it's kind of nice after being on the road all season to go to a place where you know people and know where things are and feel like you are home again," said Hausmann.

"When we played team retreats here it was always the beginning of the year and we were all trying to get to know each other as a team. I remember the good stuff because we would try to shoot low scores. I remember some pretty views with the open holes as well, but it can get windy in the morning or afternoon so the course can really play different and I don't think you can take a home course advantage here, but it's nice to know what to expect.

ENEROTH AND STEHPENS COMPETING ON SPONSOR EXEMPTIONS

Each tournament has the opportunity to invite competitors who may have not otherwise had a chance for the experience of a Symetra Tour event. This year, the Circling Raven Championship awarded the winner of the Notah Begay III National Championship, **Allyn Song Stephens** (Houston, Texas), an invitation into this week's competition. Stephens carded a second-round 7-under 65 and final-round 3-under 69 to seal the deal.

"The first day I did not play well. It happens in golf sometimes when it clicks and I went 7-under the next day and 3-under the next and it got me my win so it was fun," said Stephens. "I didn't even realize how difficult it is to get into events like the Symetra Tour, so it's crazy and really nice (that sponsors and Tours are creating these opportunities)."

Stephens may not be accustomed to the Idaho weather just yet, but she hopes to build off her win that got her here today so she can continue to grow into the player she aspires to be.

"It's super nice, but it's very cold compared to Houston. I've never had to wear a sweater in the middle of August," said Stephens. "It's super cool seeing all the pros and I think I am the

only amateur in the field so it will be a fun week to being amongst people I want to become.”

While Stephens is an amateur and soaking in as much as she can this week, the Circling Raven Championship’s second sponsor invite finds herself on the side of a golf career. Already having competed years ago on the Cactus and Symetra Tours, **Amy Eneroth** (Spokane, Washington) will return to competitive golf and represent Kalispel Golf and Country Club.

“I grew so much from high school to college and college to playing professionally. When you have to do your own schedule, you have to talk to people, stay in host housing etc. I learned a lot about myself and about the world really (when I was on the Symetra Tour) even though we only traveled inside the US. I met girls from all over the world. I think that was the coolest part,” said Eneroth. “In high school I was kind of an introvert, I somewhat still am, but every step of the way I have grown and come out of my shell and become more social with people I don’t know. I think I have become more of a people person and learned to go with the flow without panicking and the Symetra Tour was a big part of that.”

The Washington State University alumna will be teeing off No. 10 tomorrow at 8:33 a.m. PDT at Circling Raven Golf Club.

ABOUT THE SYMETRA TOUR

The Symetra Tour is the official qualifying tour of the LPGA Tour and enters its 41st competitive season in 2021. With the support of entitlement partner Symetra, the Tour’s mission is to prepare the world’s best young women professional golfers for a successful career on the LPGA Tour. Since Symetra’s inaugural sponsorship year in 2012, the Symetra Tour has grown from 16 tournaments and \$1.7 million in prize money to \$4.0 million in prize money awarded in 2019 and 2021. With more than 600 alumnae moving on to the LPGA, former Symetra Tour players have won a total of 445 LPGA titles. Follow the Symetra Tour on the web at www.SymetraTour.com, as well as Facebook.com/Road2LPGA, Twitter.com/Road2LPGA and Instagram @road2lpga.

ABOUT SYMETRA

Symetra Life Insurance Company is a subsidiary of Symetra Financial Corporation, a diversified financial services company based in Bellevue, Washington. In business since 1957, Symetra provides employee benefits, annuities and life insurance through a national network of benefit consultants, financial institutions and independent agents and advisors. Symetra began its partnership with the Road to the LPGA in 2010 as the title sponsor of the Symetra Classic. It secured naming rights for the Symetra Tour in November 2011. In addition to its title sponsorship of the Tour, which runs through 2021, Symetra sponsors two

events on the tournament schedule—the Symetra Classic and the season-ending Symetra Tour Championship. For more information about Symetra, visit www.symetra.com

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