



World's Top-Ranked Amateur Lydia Ko and Razorbacks' Gaby Lopez Added to Walmart NW Arkansas Championship Field

Eighteen of the top 20 in the Rolex World Rankings scheduled to compete

ROGERS, AR (MAY 20, 2013) – The world's top-ranked amateur Lydia Ko and the University of Arkansas freshman Gaby Lopez were added to the Walmart NW Arkansas Championship field of competitors today as official sponsor exemptions into the LPGA Tour event being held at Pinnacle Country Club in Rogers, June 17- June 23.

“We are delighted to invite Gaby and Lydia to play in the event as our sponsor's exemptions,” said Gisel Ruiz, chief operations officer, Walmart U.S. “Walmart is committed to empowering women, and we hope that providing this opportunity will help them to grow in their careers and to be successful if and when they join the professional ranks. We are also proud that the tournament can continue to support the Razorbacks golf team, which is producing outstanding student-athletes.”

The 16-year-old Ko resides in Auckland, New Zealand but is regularly competing in professional tour events and most recently took home low amateur honors at the Kraft Nabisco Championship—the third time in the last three majors she has accomplished that feat. Last year, she became the youngest person ever to win an LPGA Tour event, winning the CN Canadian Women's Open at the age of 15 years and four months.

“We have been very impressed by Lydia and Gaby and we're thrilled to have them play in the tournament this year,” said Tournament Director Harry Hardy. “Lydia has already won a professional event and turned in several impressive finishes in her young career while Gaby has continued the tradition of great Razorback golfers in only her first college season. Giving these amateurs a chance to prove themselves on the biggest stage is great, not only for the players, but for the fans and the community as well.”

Lopez, a freshman at the University of Arkansas was most recently named to the All-SEC Second-Team and the SEC All-Freshman team after collecting four top-five finishes this season. She became the first Razorback in program history to earn the Southeastern Conference Freshman Women's Golfer of the Week honors earlier this year after tying a program record for lowest single day score, a 66 at the Westbrook Invitational.

“Having the opportunity to play in the Northwest Arkansas LPGA Tour event against so many accomplished professionals is an honor,” said Lopez. “Being invited this year is beyond words, I can't wait to play in front of the crowds at 17 and hear them Call the Hogs.”

Lopez and Ko will be competing against a stellar tournament field including defending champion Ai Miyazato, 2012 Player of the Year Stacy Lewis and two-time winner Yani Tseng. Eighteen of the top 20 in the Rolex World Rankings are also scheduled to compete. The entire field will be looking to play well leading into the U.S. Women's Open being held the week after in Southampton, NY. With a \$2 million purse and \$300,000 going to the NW Arkansas champion, the two-week swing will feature \$5.25 million in available prize money.



To continue the growing tradition of a family-friendly atmosphere, ticket prices for this year have been reduced, and children 17 and under will continue to be admitted free with a ticketed adult. Daily tickets are now \$15, valid any one day Friday, June 21 – Sunday, June 23. Weekly ground passes, valid all week, can be purchased for \$30. Volunteers are also still needed, to register visit nwachampionship.com.

RESOURCES:

For more tournament information visit www.nwachampionship.com

[Facebook.com/NWACHampionship](https://www.facebook.com/NWACHampionship)

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SHARE: Razorback [@gabylopezbutron](https://twitter.com/gabylopezbutron) and No. 1 ranked amateur [@Lko424](https://twitter.com/Lko424) to play in Rogers in June.

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About the LPGA (Ladies Professional Golf Association)

The LPGA is the world's leading professional golf organization for women. Founded in 1950, the association celebrates a diverse and storied membership with more than 1,700 members representing 29 different countries.

With a Vision to inspire, empower, educate and entertain by showcasing the very best of women's golf, LPGA Tour Professionals compete across the globe, while dedicated LPGA Teaching and Club Professionals (T&CP) directly impact the game through teaching, coaching and management. The Symetra Tour consistently produces a pipeline of talent ready for the world stage. The LPGA is headquartered in Daytona Beach, Florida. Follow the LPGA on its television home, Golf Channel, and on the web via: www.LPGA.com, www.facebook.com/lpga.official, www.twitter.com/lpga, and www.youtube.com/lpgavideo



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