

Kiara Romero, of San Jose, Calif., has won the Mark H. McCormack Medal as the leading female golfer in the World Amateur Golf Ranking®/WAGR® for the second consecutive year.

Romero, 20, earned the prestigious honor after another strong season that saw her hold off Spain's Paula Martín Sampedro.

"I'm proud to win this award for a second time," said Romero, who wrapped up her junior season at the University of Oregon in the spring. "I feel like all my hard work is paying off. I think these last few years I've just been playing really well, enjoying stress-free golf and having fun out there. It's been amazing."

In June, Romero earned low-amateur honors at the U.S. Women's Open Presented by Ally, finishing tied for sixth with a 3-under-par total of 281. She edged 2026 Augusta National Women's Amateur champion Maria Jose Marin by a stroke. By virtue of her top ten finish, she is exempt into next year's championship at the Inverness Club in Toledo, Ohio.

"This year's U.S. Women's Open [at The Riviera Country Club] was a highlight for me. Playing so well and testing my game against the best players in the world was really cool, and being in California, a lot of my family were able to come and support me. It was also my first time playing in the Curtis Cup. It was a lot of fun, and I always love playing team golf."

Romero dominated at the college level, producing numerous historic records. She is the first three-time WGCA First-Team All-American in Oregon women's history (2024, 2025 and 2026). She holds the Oregon program record with six career individual tournament victories – including the Chevron Collegiate in February and the Charles Schwab Women's Collegiate Invitational in March – while achieving seven runners-up, 22 top-10 and 28 top-20 finishes overall.

Romero, who tied for fourth at the Augusta National Women's Amateur in April, has recorded Oregon's single-season record for scoring average in each of her first three seasons, including a 69.23 mark in 2025-26.

Outside of her college accolades, Romero captured her first USGA championship title in 2023 at the U.S. Girls' Junior and has now made six major championship appearances, most recently at the AIG Women's Open at Royal Lytham & St Annes. She went 3-1 in her Curtis Cup debut in the USA's win at Bel-Air Country Club in June and represented her country for the third time in the Arnold Palmer Cup earlier this year at Tralee, in the Republic of Ireland.

"On behalf of the USGA, we congratulate Kiara on earning the McCormack Medal for a second consecutive year," said John Bodenhamer, chief championships officer, USGA. "Her remarkable play at Riviera and her contributions to our victorious Curtis Cup team were a testament to the caliber of player she has become. Kiara continues to excel on the biggest stages, and we're proud to recognize another outstanding year of achievement from one of the game's rising stars."

Grant Moir, chief global golf alliance officer, R&A, said, "Kiara has again enjoyed a hugely consistent year, performing at a high level in a number of leading amateur championships and impressing in major championships alongside the world's best professionals. Winning the women's McCormack Medal for the second time in a row is an outstanding achievement, and we look forward to seeing Kiara's career continue to blossom."

Rose Zhang was the last back-to-back winner of the women's McCormack Medal after winning three years in a row from 2020-22.

The R&A and the USGA co-award the McCormack Medal annually. It is named after Mark H. McCormack, who founded sports marketing company IMG and was a great supporter of amateur golf.

The WAGR®, which is supported by Rolex, was established in 2007 when the men's ranking was launched. The men's ranking encompasses more than 4,000 counting events, ranking more than 5,000 players from 129 countries. The women's ranking was launched in 2011 and has a calendar of 3,000 counting events with more than 3,310 ranked players from 103 countries.

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