USGA Media Center

LIBERTY CORNER, N.J., and ST. ANDREWS, Scotland (Oct. 7, 2020) – Rose Zhang, of Irvine, Calif., has won the Mark H. McCormack Medal as the leading female player in the 2020 World Amateur Golf Ranking® / WAGR®.

The McCormack Medal winner receives exemptions into the 2021 U.S. Women's Open at The Olympic Club as well as the 2021 AIG Women's Open at Carnoustie.

Zhang, 17, edged out Yu-Chiang Hou, of Chinese Taipei, as the No. 1 player in the WAGR thanks to incredible performances in the return to golf after disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Zhang recovered from a pre-championship wrist injury to go on to win the 120th U.S. Women's Amateur Championship at Woodmont Country Club in Rockville, Md., in August, defeating defending champion Gabriela Ruffels in 38 holes, the second-longest final match in championship history.

Two weeks later, she emerged victorious in the Rolex Girls Junior Championship at Dalhousie Golf Club, setting a course record with a first-round 64 on the way to a 15-under-par total of 273, six shots ahead of her closest rival.

Zhang earned low-amateur honors at the ANA Inspiration last month, finishing in a tie for 11th place at the major championship. Her final total of 280 was the lowest 72-hole score ever by an amateur, beating the previous best of 281 by Caroline Keggi in 1988 and Michelle Wie in 2004.

The result moved Zhang ahead of Hou in the WAGR standings for the first time this year. She becomes the third consecutive American winner of the women's McCormack Medal following Jennifer Kupcho (2018) and Andrea Lee (2019).

In 2019, Zhang won the Toyota Junior World Cup, Swinging Skirts AJGA Invitational and Rolex Tournament of Champions and represented the United States of America in the Junior Solheim Cup at Gleneagles and the Pan-American Games.

"To win the McCormack Medal and join a list of such prestigious winners is such an incredible accomplishment and blessing," said Zhang. "Over the past couple months, I've really persevered to better myself in all aspects of my golf game and physical condition. Receiving this award is continued validation that hard work pays off and it motivates me to continue this journey. It reignites my passion and love for this amazing sport."

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.

"On behalf of our entire organization, we want to congratulate Rose for earning this prestigious honor," said John Bodenhamer, senior managing director, Championships, for the USGA. "Her victory this summer at the U.S. Women's Amateur represents one of the most exciting finishes in championship history, and we were treated all week to the poise, fortitude, and talent that Rose brings to championship golf. Coupled with her play over the last year, it's no surprise she has put herself in position for this award. We can't wait to see where her career goes from here."

Professor Steve Otto, Chief Technology Officer at The R&A, said, "We would like to congratulate Rose on this tremendous achievement which is the culmination of a hugely impressive run of results that includes winning the U.S. Women's Amateur Championship in August. Her performances show that she is a worthy winner of the McCormack Medal and we will continue to follow her career with great interest. We look forward to welcoming her to Carnoustie for the AIG Women's Open next year."

The World Amateur Golf Ranking, which is supported by Rolex, was established in 2007 when the men's ranking was launched. The men's ranking encompasses more than 2,800 counting events, ranking 6,777 players from 106 countries. The women's ranking was launched in 2011 and has a calendar of around 2,000 counting events with more than 3,375 ranked players from 78 countries.

About WAGR®

The World Amateur Golf Ranking® / WAGR®, which comprises a women's ranking and a men's ranking for elite amateur players, is offered by The R&A and the USGA as a global service to golf. Through incorporation and assessment worldwide of both amateur and professional events, WAGR encourages the international development of the competitive game. The ranking endeavors to be the most comprehensive and accurate ranking in golf by effectively comparing players from around the world who may never directly compete against one another. It is available to national federations and organizers of amateur and professional events and tours as a criterion for tournament field selection and for purposes of exemptions, national team selection, and orders of merit.

About The Mark H. McCormack Medal

The award is named after Mark H. McCormack, the late founder of sports marketing company IMG and an avid supporter of amateur golf. The Mark H. McCormack Medal is awarded to the player ranked number one in the World Amateur Golf Ranking® / WAGR® after the U.S. Women's Amateur Championship or the European Ladies' Amateur Championship, whichever concludes last. Established in 2007, the same award goes to the player leading the men's ranking after the European Amateur Championship or U.S. Amateur Championship, whichever concludes last.

Previous Winners

Men: 2019 Cole Hammer (USA), 2018 Braden Thornberry (USA), 2017 Joaquin Niemann (Chile), 2016 Maverick McNealy (USA), 2015 Jon Rahm (ESP), 2014 Oliver Schniederjans (USA), 2013 Matthew Fitzpatrick (ENG), 2012 Chris Williams (USA), 2011 Patrick Cantlay (USA), 2010 Peter Uihlein (USA), 2009 Nick Taylor (CAN), 2008 Danny Lee (NZL), 2007 Colt Knost (USA).

Women: 2019 Andrea Lee (USA), 2018 Jennifer Kupcho (USA), 2017, 2016, 2015 Leona Maguire (IRE), 2014 Minjee Lee (AUS), 2013, 2012, 2011 Lydia Ko (NZL).

About The R&A

Based in St Andrews, The R&A runs The Open, elite amateur events, international matches and rankings. Together The R&A and the USGA govern the sport of golf worldwide, operating in separate jurisdictions but sharing a commitment to a single code for the Rules of Golf, Rules of Amateur Status and Equipment Standards. The R&A, through R&A Rules Ltd, governs the sport worldwide, outside of the United States and Mexico, on behalf of over 36 million golfers in 143 countries and with the consent of 158 organisations from amateur and professional golf,

The R&A is committed to working for golf and supports the growth of the sport internationally and the development and management of sustainable golf facilities.

For more information visit www.randa.org

About the USGA

The USGA is a nonprofit organization that celebrates, serves and advances the game of golf. Founded in 1894, we conduct many of golf's premier professional and amateur championships, including the U.S. Open and U.S. Women's Open. With The R&A, we govern the sport via a global set of playing, equipment, handicapping and amateur status rules. The USGA campus in Liberty Corner, New Jersey, is home to the Association's Research and Test Center, where science and innovation are fueling a healthy and sustainable game for the future. The campus is also home to the USGA Golf Museum, where we honor the game by curating the world's most comprehensive archive of golf artifacts. To learn more, visit usga.org.

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