

The iconic Sentryworld golf course has hosted 2 prestigious women's golf events, with a Playing the course with Jan Stevenson and Betsy King joining fellow professional golfers to open the course.

## Sentryworld

First time the US Girls' Junior Championship was hosted at a Wisconsin golf course

- Event welcomed 156 of the best female amateur golfers, under the age of 19, in the world
- Lei Ye, 18 year old golf from People's Republic of China, won the 71st UW Girls' Junior Golf Championship. Lei Ye defeated Jillian Bourdage, 17, of Tamarac, FL

SPJ July 29, 2019

SPJ, July 19, 2019

## Ye tops Bourdage to win USGA event

Mike Sherry  
Stevens Point Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

STEVENS POINT — It took a sensational two-putt from 50 feet on the final hole for Lei Ye to finally put away Jillian Bourdage on Saturday and win the U.S. Girls Junior Championship at SentryWorld. Ye closed the match when she rolled in a 3-foot putt for par just after Bourdage had missed a 5-footer for birdie that would have sent the match to extra holes.

"This tournament is the ultimate achievement of junior golf, so yeah, it's been a perfect ending," said the 18-year-old Ye, who was born in Shanghai, China, lives in Bradenton, Florida, and will attend college in the fall at Stanford University.

With the win, Ye earned an exemption into the 2020 U.S. Women's Open at Champions Golf Club in Houston, as well as an invitation to the Augusta National Women's Amateur next April. Both finalists earned an exemption into next month's U.S. Women's Amateur at Old Waverly Golf Club in West Point, Mississippi.

Ye, who came to the United States three years ago, is the first player from



Lei Ye, right, and caddie Rose Zhang celebrate after Le made par on the 36th hole (No. 18) to win the title at the U.S. Girls Junior Championship on Saturday at SentryWorld in Stevens Point. COURTESY OF STEVEN GIBBONS/USGA

China to win the U.S. Girls Junior Championship.

"China is definitely a growing player in the game, and I think winning this is definitely a huge achievement for us, and I know that it will inspire other juniors back home to work harder to play

better," Ye said. "So I think being able to help grow the game back home, that's really cool."

The 17-year-old Bourdage was the last player with Wisconsin ties in the

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## USGA tourney at SentryWorld to attract hundreds of visitors



Hole Seven at SentryWorld in Stevens Point. The U.S. Girls' Junior Championship will be held July 22-27 at SentryWorld. COURTESY OF SENTRYWORLD

## Golfers and guests are coming to town

Caitlin Shuda Stevens Point Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

STEVENS POINT — Hotels, restaurants and other local businesses are getting ready for hundreds of golfers, their families and friends, and spectators to arrive in central Wisconsin.

The U.S. Girls Junior Championships will be held July 22-27 at SentryWorld. It's the first time the United States Golf Association event will be hosted in Wisconsin since the tournament began in 1945.

There are 156 players in the competition, plus coaches, scouts and spectators who will be traveling to Stevens Point, said Katie Kremer, SentryWorld's LPGA golf professional and U.S. Girls' Junior Championship host committee chairwoman. The competition is coming from 32 states and 12 countries, so for many this is not just their first trip to Stevens Point, but also to Wisconsin, Kremer said.

Julia Pine, the senior manager of women's championship communications at the USGA, said more than 400 volunteers and dozens of USGA staff and rules officials also make the trip for the championships. The event itself is the most prominent junior golf tournament in the country, so it hosts many college coaches who are looking for future talent to fill their teams. Pine said.

The championship is free and open to the public, as the USGA doesn't have an estimate of how many spectators will attend.

"The goal of event organizers and city leaders is to give everyone a great first impression of SentryWorld and central Wisconsin," Kremer said. "This has been a true team effort to make sure this is a successful event," she said. "The city of Stevens Point, the Stevens Point Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, ActiveX, local radio, television and newspapers have been involved and incredibly helpful in helping with the planning and execution of important pieces of the championships. The event itself is the most prominent junior golf tournament in the country, so it hosts many college coaches who are looking for future talent to fill their teams. Pine said.

"True team effort" needed to make golf tournament a success

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## Golf

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field. The match that gave up to Matthews and she has other family and friends living in Wisconsin, including Appleton.

She said she felt good over her battle putt on the 36th hole, but it trailed off to the left of the cup just at the end.

"I think I just under-rod it, but I felt really good when I rolled over the ball and my aim looked great from where I was standing," Bourdage said. "I just gave it my best shot, but that's golf sometimes. They don't roll back."

Although she didn't win, Bourdage said playing in front of family and friends from Wisconsin made the championship one she will never forget.

"The money is much to me, and my family has been so supportive," she said. "They've been cheering me on all day and encouraging me, even though I had a rough start, but it's just nice that they're always by my side, and it's amazing to be here and get to spend time with them, too."

Ye was 3-up through 18 holes against Bourdage, who had not made it to 18 holes of match play leading into Saturday.

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After Bourdage reacts after missing her birdie putt on the 36th hole during the first round at the U.S. Girls Junior Championship on Saturday at SentryWorld in Stevens Point. STEVEN GIBBONS/USGA

over-put during the week, made a mess of it again in the afternoon and conceded at Ye went 1-up through 18 holes leading into the final hole, No. 18. "We've lost three rounds the number shot and right of the hole and the made bogey, while Bourdage hit a 4-iron on the 17th hole to about 25 feet and made par to even the match with the hole to play.

Both players put their heads into the fairway on No. 17, but Bourdage's pinching wedge from 12 yards was pulled left of the green and held up in the thick

grass. Ye's gap wedge from 105 yards stopped about 6 feet from the pin, and she made the birdie putt to go up heading to the final hole.

"I saw her hit it left, and I thought I might have gone to the water," Ye said. "I don't change too much from how I was going, so I approach that shot as if it was 45 yards, which is a wedge shot, which I have been hitting well this week."

Ye's shot on 18 missed the fairway to the left while Bourdage found the right side of the fairway. Bourdage went

first and stuck her second shot, an 8-iron from 130 yards, to 5 feet before Ye pulled her, pinching, wedge from 124 feet from the hole.

Ye's third putt ended shallowly down the hill, broke left and stopped 3 feet before the hole. Bourdage was next with her birdie chance to even the match, and she dropped to her knees after it ran past the hole.

"Nevering she had been putting so well this week, I was trying to make that 20-footer," Ye said. "You know, losing it's not impossible. I've made like 50-footers before, you know? Yeah, losing it's a bit of a miracle there. I get pretty close. I guess it's a pretty good one. I guess I was a bit of a dreamer on 18, but that match with that 5-footer."

Bourdage, who lives in Tamarac, Florida, and has committed to play in college at Ohio State starting in 2020, entered the week ranked No. 638 in the World Amateur Golf Rankings. Ye entered the week ranked 46th.

"I've definitely made a lot of mistakes through in my game this week, and hopefully I can carry them forward into more future tournaments, so I'm very confident about that," Bourdage said. "I've had a great learning experience, for sure. And now I know that I can definitely play against a lot of the big dogs out here. That's going to be a good confidence booster for me."

Contact Mike Sherry at (920) 996-7244 or msherry@stevenspointjournal.com. Follow him on Twitter @MikeSherry1.

## Tournament

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filling up quickly with several other events in the area and other weekend events for central Wisconsin. The USGA also expects a large crowd of spectators and fans at the event, which will be held at the Stevens Point Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, local radio, television and newspapers have been involved and incredibly helpful in helping with the planning and execution of important pieces of the championships. The event itself is the most prominent junior golf tournament in the country, so it hosts many college coaches who are looking for future talent to fill their teams. Pine said.

The championship is free and open to the public, as the USGA doesn't have an estimate of how many spectators will attend.

"The goal of event organizers and city leaders is to give everyone a great first impression of SentryWorld and central Wisconsin," Kremer said. "This has been a true team effort to make sure this is a successful event," she said. "The city of Stevens Point, the Stevens Point Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, ActiveX, local radio, television and newspapers have been involved and incredibly helpful in helping with the planning and execution of important pieces of the championships. The event itself is the most prominent junior golf tournament in the country, so it hosts many college coaches who are looking for future talent to fill their teams. Pine said.

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the 16th hole at SentryWorld's course is known as the Flower Hole. It has 30,000 flowers at the site, which is a mix of wildflowers and flowers that are planted by the Stevens Point Area Convention & Visitors Bureau.

coaches along with an information booth on the event grounds throughout the championship week, said Kremer.

Businesses, residents urged to help welcome golfers

SentryWorld has its own restaurants on site like PJ and Moe, and Kremer said the public is invited to dine at both restaurants during the tournament. The PJ team has been training staff for what to expect and has created some special menu items ahead of the event.

Hannah Klein is the outreach coordinator for the Stevens Point Area CVB and is in charge of hospitality for USGA golfers, coaches and families. There are a few residents and business owners on the island of the championship event to help welcome guests to the area and help them.

Klein suggests business owners put a message on their signage welcoming the golfers and other visitors. Discounts for golfers and their families with an event badge can help draw in new customers and clients during the championship week, too.

Business owners should also prepare for busy event days. The championship is about a full week long, so businesses should be properly staffed to accommodate more people, Klein said.

Golfers also suggested that residents attend the free championship event to support the golfers and make visitors feel welcome.

U.S. Girls' Junior Championships event details

The tournament features female amateur golfers who are ranked in the top 100 in the U.S. Girls' Junior Golf Championship. The tournament is held at the Stevens Point Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, local radio, television and newspapers have been involved and incredibly helpful in helping with the planning and execution of important pieces of the championships. The event itself is the most prominent junior golf tournament in the country, so it hosts many college coaches who are looking for future talent to fill their teams. Pine said.