SunSentinel

Liu, Angulo Minarro qualify for U.S. Women's Open

Mika Liu, who advanced with a 36-hole total of 7-under-par 137, watches her tee shot Monday during the U.S. Women's Open Championship sectional qualifier at Quail Ridge Country Club. (Steve Waters / Staff)

By **Steve Waters · Contact Reporter**
Sun Sentinel

SHARE THIS

Liu and Angulo Minarro qualify for U.S. Women's Open at Quail Ridge

MAY 23, 2016, 9:27 PM | BOYNTON BEACH

Mika Liu and Sandra Angulo Minarro started off strong and finished stronger to earn berths in the U.S. Women's Open Championship.

Both golfers shot 7-under-par 137 totals in Monday's 36-hole sectional qualifier at Quail Ridge Country Club to advance to the Open, which is July 7-10 at CordeValle in San Martin, Calif.

Liu, 17, an amateur from Beverly Hills, Calif., who attends school at the IMG Academy in Bradenton, shot 69-68.
Angulo Minarro, 27, a Symetra Tour pro from Mexico who lives in Port St. Lucie, shot 70-67.
LPGA Tour member Jaclyn Jansen of Effingham, Ill., had the lowest score of the 59 players who teed off in the morning round with a 67. She shot 71 in the afternoon round to earn the first alternate spot at 138.

Amateur Maria Hoyos of Colombia shot 72-67 to earn the second alternate spot.

Angulo Minarro was thrilled to qualify for the Open. Especially after missing the cut Friday in her most recent Symetra event in Atlanta.

"This was my best tournament round of the year," she said of her 5-under 67. "I have never played in an LPGA tournament, so playing in the U.S. Open as my first tournament is amazing."

Angulo Minarro, who played college golf at Campbell University in North Carolina, started the year playing on the Suncoast Tour and made enough money on the Symetra Tour, which is a steppingstone to the LPGA Tour much like the Web.com Tour is for the PGA Tour, to earn status. She said her mental game was not as sharp as she'd like in her pro tournaments.

She drove home Saturday and took Sunday off, which she said helped her play Monday.

"I felt like I was playing good," Angulo Minarro said. "I feel like the best part of my game today was the mental part.

"I hit a lot of fairways, a lot of greens. I had a lot of opportunities. At the end I made some great up-and-downs."

Liu is also looking forward to her first Open. She has had success in USGA events, having won last year's inaugural U.S. Women's Amateur Four-Ball with partner Rinko Mitsunaga.

A two-time finalist in the Ione D. Jones/Doherty Women's Amateur Championship at Fort Lauderdale's Coral Ridge Country Club, Liu said her next event is as a member of the United States team against a team from Great Britain and Ireland in the Curtis Cup June 10-12 in Ireland.

"Everything was good for me today. I had good drives, good putts," said Liu, who was in a threesome with Jansen and Australian Stacey Keating, who shot 72-69. "I knew I was in a very good group and they kept my momentum up."

SunSentinel

Two of the top South Florida players Monday were Marisa Messana of Fort Lauderdale and Taylor Roberts of Boca Raton.

Messana, who just finished her sophomore season at Clemson, shot 73-70 to tie for 10th place. Roberts, 14, a home-schooled eighth-grader, tied for 14th at 74-73.

"I struggled in my last tournament, so that was kind of discouraging," said Messana, who played Monday with a brand-new Scotty Cameron putter. "It was definitely a solid two rounds. I really enjoyed the tournament."

Messana, who played high school golf for American Heritage Plantation, has an internship in sales this summer at The Reserve, a golf community near Clemson.

When she's not working, she will work on her game in preparation for a qualifier for the U.S. Women's Amateur, which she played in last year.

"I'm just trying to get a little better every day," Messana said.

Roberts was playing in her first Open qualifier and she was pleased with her performance on Quail Ridge's 6,424-yard South Course, which was 600 yards longer than the courses she plays in her junior events.

"It was a good experience," she said. "I was nervous on the first tee and I made a bogey, but I came back with a birdie on the second hole."

Her short game was solid and Roberts said she hit her 4-wood particularly well.
"When I needed to hit a good shot with it," she said, "I did."

swaters@tribpub.com or Twitter @WatersOutdoors

Copyright © 2016, Sun Sentinel

This article is related to: Golf, LPGA Tour, LPGA, PGA Tour, U.S. Open (golf)