

editor's
letter

BY
BENNY TEO

Asia's leading female golf tournament, the HSBC World Women's Championship (HWWC) is returning next week and the field is as strong as ever. With Michelle Wie returning to defend her crown, Swing talks to Australian ace Minjee Lee on what it takes to win this US\$1.5 million event billed as 'Asia's Major'.



Minjee Lee (left) hopes to be in tip-top shape for 'Asia's Major' in Singapore.

AUSSIE FLAG FLYING HIGH

SWING: Before last season's HWWC, you've set a goal to be within the top 6 in the world in the year ahead and did it, finishing second on the LPGA's Money List as well as scoring average. Looking back, how did you think you've fared and what do you hope to achieve this year?

ML: My biggest goal last year was to try to get into the Top 10 of the Rolex rankings so I think I managed to do pretty well there and I had a really great season. Came out with one win on the European Tour and one on the LPGA, and a whole lot of Top 10s. I feel like I've met those goals pretty well because I really did put a lot of work into all aspects of my game and continued to do so.

As for 2019, I've set more statistical goals, not result goals because my ranking's already inside the Top 10; obviously world No.1 is there.

But I think if I get most of my statistical goals, I'll be pretty close to getting there.

Karrie Webb won in Singapore in 2011 — the last Australian to do so. What's the state of

Australian golf now?

I think every year it's been growing and growing. I know there's a lot of new initiatives and obviously the 'My Golf' programme; things that will make women and girls and everybody in Australia try golf and get into the game.

I think it's grown so much in the last — I don't know how many — years and I think it will continue to do so, I guess we're going in the right direction.

Going back to the Rolex rankings, how hard is it to get to world number one?

It's so hard to win out here and even just being in contention every week is getting tougher and tougher. The girls are coming out stronger and stronger.

The depth of the field, I think, is in its peak and it will continue to get harder and harder, so I think it elevates the Tour. So it's great how that is happening.

Do you think it's possible to see a player as dominant as Karrie, Annika, Lorena anymore?

Obviously times have changed and I

HSBC WOMEN'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Date: Feb 28–Mar 3, 2019
Course: Sentosa Golf Club — Tanjong Course
Purse: US\$1,500,000
Ticketing:
www.hsbcgolf.com/womens/buy-tickets-online

guess it's a little bit different because of technology, and working out — things like that probably weren't as big when they were in their prime.

So many things now come into factor like length and how good your short game is.

I'm sure they were amazing; they've had amazing careers but now I think it's sort of changed a little bit.

How do you feel as you get ready to head to Singapore this coming week?

These couple of weeks have been sort of trying to get myself back into playing competitively. I've had quite

a few weeks off so hopefully, by the time I get to Singapore, I'll be in tip top shape.

Have you given your brother Min Woo (who recently turned professional and played at the Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship), any tips as he starts out on his professional career?

Not too many tips. He doesn't really ask me that many questions. He's really competitive so sometimes I just tell him to soak it all in and having one bad week is not the end of the world. Just stay patient and persistent and you'll do really well.

What's your favourite Major?

The US Open. Since I was little, it's always been my dream to win that, so US Open has been a really special Major to me.

How important is it to you to get a Major win?

Obviously everyone wants to win a Major and it'll mean the world. I think that's sort of the next goal that I'm going towards, so it'll be really special to me.

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