

## WOMEN'S INDIAN OPEN

# Rhodes, Tan take different routes to prepare; Indians bank on familiarity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
n Gurugram

Mimi Rhodes decided to skip the Pro-Am on Wednesday to soak in the Indian culture and atmosphere ahead of the 2025 Hero Women's Indian Open.

Around the same time, Singaporean Shannon Tan, her closest rival in the race for the Ladies European Tour Order of Merit, was playing the Pro-Am and trying to discover how the course conditions had changed since 2024, when she came within one shot of winning the title.

Meanwhile, many of the top Indians, who spend most of their time outside India while being on the Tour, were trying to size up the course they had played at the 2024 edition of

HWIO. The Pro-Am also saw a World Top-30 star, Aaron Rai, who is here this week to be with his wife Gaurika Bishnoi, who has a fine record at the HWIO with three Top-10s in the past.

Clearly, the event brings out the best in her and now with her acclaimed golfer husband next to her, Gaurika will hope to scale new heights. Aaron and Gaurika played the Pro-Am with Pawan Munjal, executive chairman, Hero MotoCorp, and Pankaj Dinodia.

The Pro-Am also saw former India cricket captain, Kapil Dev in action alongside pro Ridhima Dilawari, Abhimanyu Munjal and Mahavir Singhvi.

A heavy downpour on Tuesday evening left the rain-



battered course soft, but the staff at the DLF Golf and Country Club, who have time and again come in for heavy praise, once again rose to the situation. They ensured the morning Pro-Am started right on time at the crack of dawn.

Diksha Dagar, who hopes to go better than her best at

this event — which was third place in 2023 — was focused, as was Tvesa Malik, whose parents live a stone's throw from here.

Accompanied by her husband, Ajeetesh Sandhu, himself a top Indian pro golfer, Tvesa was dividing her time between practice

and telling her LET friends where to go for shopping and an Indian dinner.

"It is fun to share the culture of India with my friends," said Tvesa. "They show their cities when we play abroad and the LET is a happy family, which is visiting India this week."

Pranavi Urs, who is just about returning from her injury earlier in the season, is hoping to build on her recent Top-5 finish in France.

Avani Prashanth, Gaurika Bishnoi, Hitaashee Bakshi and Jasmine Shekar, among others were willing to share pro secrets, even as they kept an eye on how the course was playing with so much rain.

The good part was that there was no rain after last

evening and the course was drying thanks to some of the latest equipment that DLF has. Trying to experience all the places she is getting to visit in her rookie season, the 23-year-old Rhodes, winner of three titles this season, said, "I have a lot of excitement especially playing in a new country."

"But I still have to make the same preparation and make sure that I'm focused and getting in my practice and also spending time in Delhi adventuring around."

"I need to make sure I'm staying in the right mindset and practicing and getting ready for the tournament. It's exciting to be here in a new culture and experience something out of my comfort zone."