



The A-Money Club

By Alison Takamiya

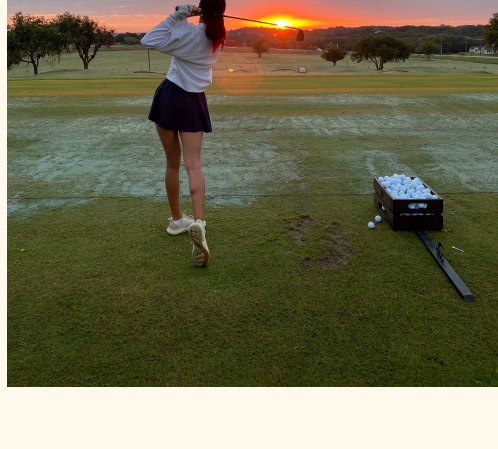
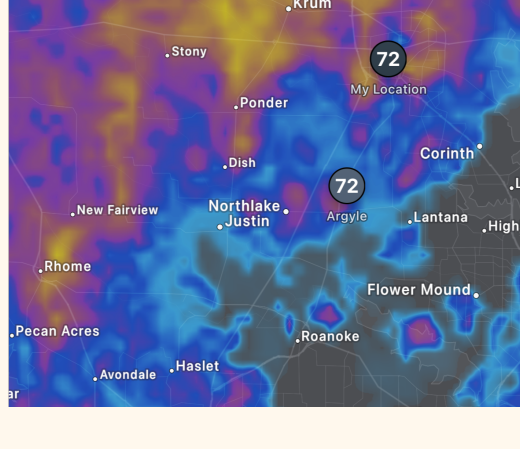
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STAGE 1: DONE

October 2025



ON THE COURSE

As per the title of this newsletter, I passed the first stage of Q-School at the end of September at Denton Country Club down in Argyle, Texas (about 40 minutes North of Dallas)! Out of 110 girls, I ended up T20 for three rounds (54 holes of stroke play) shooting 74, 72, 70 (par was 71). There was a cut after two days where the top 65 and ties moved onto the third day. And on the last day, the top 30 and ties from each qualifying site (California, Texas, and Florida) advance to the next stage — more on that below!



I got to play two practice rounds at the course, where the more you can learn about this course the better off you'll be. There were a good amount of holes where you had to be on a certain side of the fairway, otherwise you'll get blocked out by the overhanging trees. It doesn't appear that way from the tee box, but I would hit some good drives and get up to my ball only to realize I'd need to play a 10-yard fade, 25-yard draw, or a punch under the trees to give myself a decent look at birdie. Luckily, in this first stage, players and caddies ride in carts (probably for pace of play purposes and/or summer heat), but that worked out in our favor to conserve energy on a course that was pretty hilly. We played some long par 4's that were over 400 yards or forced you to carry at least 200-210 yards to get into a somewhat flat/optimal spot in the fairway. The weather conditions were another added challenge.

When we arrived in Texas, we were met with high temperatures almost in the hundreds, thunderstorms with 30 mph wind gusts, and high humidity. Those conditions make playing on a tight course with long holes feel even longer — the ground gets soggy and the ball doesn't roll out. On the first day of the tournament, I was supposed to go out at 9am, but didn't end up going out until 10:45 because they kept pushing back the starting time due to lightning in the area. The girls in the afternoon wave had to come back to finish their remaining 5-ish holes the next morning since the tee times got pushed back so much. As the days went on, the weather got drier, and temperatures and wind gusts dropped! It made playing conditions much more calm, which helped as the pressure of playing well was also on the table.

Lastly, I am now officially a glove user. Growing up, I would never use a glove and even when I tried, it didn't make much of a difference to me. However, after the second practice round, before the first day of the tournament, my hands and fingers were hurting from all the additional prep work I had been doing. Luckily, one of the two women's glove options left in the DCC pro shop fit me and I felt no pain for the rest of the tournament. It was a good 18 years without it, but for the sake of my hands' sanity, I will from now on be using a glove.

OFF THE COURSE

We got to check out some cool restaurants in downtown Denton. We got to eat pizza, pasta, ramen, and tacos! My favorite was probably the ramen, which honestly surprised me that we'd find such good Japanese food in Texas. We also got to tour a bit of the University of North Texas as we were making our way to the nearest Chic-Fil-A to our Airbnb. We checked out Buc-ee's, which I guess is a pretty popular store in the South. It was kind of like a super-convenience store with a cute beaver mascot, Buc-ee. Lastly, we got up at 3 am on Saturday morning to hop on a 7am flight to come back home to Hawaii to play the local qualifier for the LPGA Lotte Championship the day after.



Downtown Denton - Top
Hoakalei CC (Lotte host course) - Middle
Halo Halo (local dessert) - Bottom



Photo Courtesy of Andrew Lee (@andrewlee1)



Unfortunately I didn't qualify, as the long travel day took its toll on my body. I was hoping to be able to qualify so I could represent my home state, but I still gave it my all, even though I was not in ideal physical shape. I'm looking forward to being back next year with tour status, but as always, it was a great learning experience for what life is going to look like down the road. On the bright side I'm getting to enjoy a week at home and will get to spend quality time with friends and family before heading back to Oregon!

INSIDE THE ROPES

The grass change from Oregon to Texas took some time to adjust to, and my club was just digging into the grass when I was chipping, causing me to chunk the ball or thin the ball from trying not to chunk it. The chip-master Rick reminded me to eliminate shaft lean (don't press my hands forward so much), and to practice a bunch of chips with this "new" feel on the course during my practice round. It was going well, until I'd start second-guessing myself in the tournament. On the second day, I actually brought out the Texas Wedge and started putting from up to 15 ft off the green because I would get nervous with my 58°. I hit about 4 of these way off-the-green putts, but made par on all of them, so it proved to me to just play with my game that the day brought. After that round when I made the cut at T40-something and knew I was advancing to day 3, I immediately went to the chipping green. Leading up the tournament, my chipping felt great and I was confident in that part of my game, so I knew it was just something small that I wasn't getting quite right. Dad then suggested to use my shoulders more because it looked like I was using my hands to try help the ball too much.

Tip: chips are just an extension of putts, so utilize a similar stroke with minimal hand movement (for a straight forward chip) to ensure clean consistent contact.

On the last day of the tournament, my chipping took a complete 180 from the days prior, and I even almost chipped in a couple of shots!! Having that confidence in chipping was important, so it would also take off some pressure on trying to get approach shots close.

NEXT ON THE TEE

In passing Stage 1, I can move onto Stage 2 which will secure Epson Tour status for the 2026 season. Stage 2 will be held in mid-October on two different courses in Venice, Florida (on the west coastal side of the state). We'll be going to The Plantation Golf and Country Club and playing Bobcat & Panther courses!

This time, there will be no cut, but instead four rounds of golf (72 holes of stroke play) to determine my Epson Status for next year. However, my goal is to finish in the top tier of players who will move onto Stage 3 of Q-School, which will be in Alabama at the beginning of December. I am not quite sure how Epson Status is determined, but I'm not too focused on that; I'm just going to play as best I can and see where we go from there!

The only other time I've ever played in Florida was when we (George Fox Women's Golf) won the NCAA D-III National Championship in 2023, so I'm gonna channel those good Florida vibes to fuel my game this time around!

REFLECTIONS FROM THE CLUBHOUSE

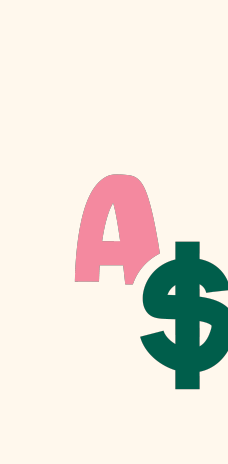
Going into the first stage, I felt confident in my preparation because I knew I truly did all I could, without tiring myself out too much. I was still definitely nervous because I wanted to do well, especially with how much it costs to play (the entry fee is \$3,000 alone!). When I played in Palm Springs last year, I put a lot of pressure on myself because I didn't want the money to go to "waste" and there was also a lot of self-doubt if I was good enough to be there. During my 5th year at GFU, where I was able to focus on a committed golf schedule, I invested a lot of time into preparing my mindset to give Q-School another go. This time around, I truly felt ready because I not only put in the hours at practice, but also in the mental preparation. When it came time to play, all I focused on was trusting myself. And even though I hit shots that I wish I could've redone, I did the best I could to accept what happened and moved on. I felt a mix of "every shot counts" (because it did) but also telling myself it was "just another day of golf" to calm myself down.

This month's shoutout goes to Dad who caddied for me for the entire week. We've been working on finding a groove that works best for my game, and I'm learning that I like someone on the bag who isn't super chatty. But thank you Dad for driving us around and for shagging balls on the chipping green. Most importantly, for giving me confidence and being one of my biggest supporters. Shoutout to Mom as well for walking along and cheering me on! I'm so lucky to have you both!!



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