



This handbag created in Lynn by Couture Planet's Michelle Kane (pictured) and Kathy Cormier went viral when Rory McIlroy's mother, Rosie, was photographed carrying the bag with her as she watched her son win the 2026 Masters. (Spenser Hasak) [Purchase this photo](#)

A Lynn Masters piece

Matteo Valente

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LYNN — Nearly 14 million people tuned into the Masters this year, its most in 11 years. It peaked at more than 20 million viewers, its most since 2013.

Millions of people tuned in to watch the final rounds of the tournament, as they got to witness Rory McIlroy winning back-to-back titles, becoming only the fourth golfer to achieve the feat. Something created and crafted here on the North Shore also got to share the spotlight — a one-of-a-kind handbag.



Couture Planet is a women-owned business located in Lynn and run by business partners and owners Kathy Cormier and Michelle Kane. Yesterday's headlines are being reimagined into something entirely unexpected: handbags. Growing from a recycling project in 2009, Couture Planet creates fashion-forward handbags and accessories from 100% post-consumer newspapers. There are a variety of different designs ranging from fashion, art, food, travel, sports, and more. Each bag is carefully crafted with a keen eye for layout, color, and storytelling. Not only is imagery a factor in the creative process, but also in regard to how it will fold, where the seams will fall, and how the visuals will align once assembled.

“I want the visuals to be really good, but I also think about what people connect with,” Kane said. “Some people love fashion, some love food, others want sports.”

Couture Planet's success was not immediate. In fact, the small team initially operated out of their homes, contending with limited resources and unpredictable demand.

“There were a lot of slow years,” Kane said. “It wasn't for the faint of heart. You had to be willing to keep going.”

Seeking stability, the company was granted a loan through Lynn's Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC), which allowed it to move to a dedicated workspace, and ended up at the historic Lydia Pinkham Laboratory and Studios, where they have been for more than a decade now. The business has grown into a dedicated, small operation. Cormier, Kane, full-time sewer Maximo Ramirez, and a couple of part-time employees put in the hard work necessary to get the bags out to the public.

“The city has been great to us,” Kane said. “They took a chance on us, and we're still here because of that.”









Recently, the brand found itself in the spotlight, thanks to an unexpected appearance at one of golf's biggest events.

During the Masters, viewers might've noticed a unique handbag carried around by Rory McIlroy's mom, Rosie, which featured a newspaper design depicting her son's Masters win in 2025. This bag circulated online and turned out to be Couture Planet's "Rory Career Slam Bag."



This moment was huge for the brand and very exciting for Kane, who is an avid golf fan and player.

“I recorded the Par 3 Contest, which is on the Wednesday of the Masters. I came home, played it back, and there I saw Rosie McIlroy. I said, ‘Stop! Freeze-frame it!’ I started taking pictures of her on the television because she was holding that bag. I couldn’t believe it,” Kane said. “Now, I’m watching the Masters over the weekend, the final two rounds, and they show her sitting around at the 18th hole with the bag on the ground. I just went, ‘There she is again with it.’”

This wasn’t something that happened overnight. All of this started a year ago when Rory won the 2025 title.

Couture Planet has its bags stocked not just in Lynn, but all around the East Coast, in the Midwest, the West Coast, and at the Seven Stars Resort on the Turks and Caicos Islands. A woman named Ann Roy from Jacksonville, Fla., came across the bags and reached out to Couture Planet to be part of a news segment for a morning show. The brand shipped out some bags for them to use for the show and let them keep a couple of the bags as a thanks for the segment.

Roy attended the 2025 British Open with the “Rory Career Slam Bag” inside the announcers tent, where Rosie also happened to be. Taking notice of the bag, Rosie asked about it, and the woman ended up getting a photo of Rosie with the bag.

A new goal was formed: getting a bag directly to Rosie. Kane asked Roy if she could find a way to get the bag to Rory’s mother, and she began to work on doing just that — going all over the place and talking to different people in the process. Finally, the women found a connection through a golfer named Brad Faxon. This was a huge step, as Faxon has been Rory McIlroy’s putting coach and mentor since roughly 2018. From there, the bag was sent to Faxon. Months and months went by without hearing a thing.

A year later, Kane was caught off guard and excited to see a bag that was crafted at Couture Planet’s studio in Lynn was getting a moment at golf’s biggest event.



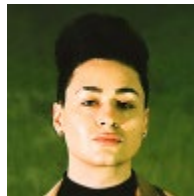
“We’ve tried to get bags to public figures before, and nothing ever came of it,” Kane said. “This time, it actually worked.”

While the viral exposure brought a spike in website traffic and approximately 8,000 visits in a single day, Kane said the challenge now is converting that attention into long-term growth.

“A lot of posts didn’t tag us,” she said. “People just called it a ‘newspaper bag.’ We’re working to get our name out there.”

Kane mentioned that they are working on, and aiming to release, 2026 Masters bags featuring Rory’s latest win. With that first goal completed, Kane has set another goal of getting the new bag into Rosie’s hands as well.

Visit coutureplanet.com to learn more about the brand, shop their bags and accessories, see what events are coming up, and follow them on their social media platforms.



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