

Dana Open presented by Marathon

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Sylvania, Ohio, USA

Highland Meadows Golf Club

Stacy Lewis

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We welcome in Toledo native Stacy Lewis. How great is it to be back at Highland Meadows.

STACY LEWIS: It's awesome. This is a tournament I look forward to. It's definitely family week for us and just fun to be back.

The golf course is as good as always. It's a little softer today with the rain we had last night, but they moved a few tees, few lines back on us, so it'll play a little bit longer this year.

But yeah, it's good as it's ever been.

Q. Does having the family and friend support here add an extra level of motivation, comfortability, anything of that sort while you're out there?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, it's the comfort. It's dinners at night, getting to hang out afterwards. Just a really low-key week for me.

You're not going out to dinner a ton and it's just hanging out with family, so it just makes things pretty chill.

Q. What is it about the Dana Open or Highland Meadows that has allowed you to have success here?

STACY LEWIS: To be honest, I don't feel like I've had a ton of success here. I know I've had a couple top 10s, but I don't know if it's one of those courses that doesn't necessarily fit my eye.

But yeah, this tournament is special to me just because it was where I played my first event as an amateur. I was one of the first invites I got. It's just special to me from that aspect.

I wish I played better on it, but I'm going to keep trying to figure it out.

Q. Just curious what the season has been like, balancing the Solheim Cup captain role with your playing?

STACY LEWIS: Well, life is busy. There's not a whole lot of downtime. I don't go back after I played golf and sit and watch Netflix or watch a movie anymore. On top of having my daughter and my family, life is just busy.

I would have liked to have been playing better. Kind of been struggling with my golf swing and feel like I'm working on the right things finally now to start trending in the right direction.

But I don't think Solheim Cup stuff has affected that at all. It's just kind of the nature of this game that we play. I've enjoyed the Solheim Cup stuff. We're getting -- we're within about three months now, so it's coming up fast.

Q. Obviously the team is kind of taking form now and kind of seems like you maybe know what's going to happen. What do you think of what you're going to have on the U.S. side?

STACY LEWIS: Definitely the last few months have made me more excited. Rose playing the way she's been playing, Allisen winning last week.

I think they're going to be Solheim Cup rookies, but they're going to be very experienced. We'll have probably at least three rookies and two of them will have won majors. The other rookie will have just won a tournament.

We're going to look young on paper but they're going to be very experienced. They're going to bring a different mindset to the team room. They don't know the last couple years of losses. They were not a part of them at all. It will be a good thing that they bring. I'm excited to see what they do.

Q. How well do you know Rose?

STACY LEWIS: I know Rose pretty well, actually. She played for me at an amateur competition that was called The Spirit that I captained, so I got to spend a week with



her, got to see her play there. And I've played with her on Tour during COVID out in Palm Springs. I've played with her quite a bit.

I was watching her prior to -- I was hoping she was going to turn pro this year and was watching her for 2024 Solheim Cup because I figured by then she'd be a member of the Tour, she'd have a chance of making the team, and she kind of blew those plans out of the water and went ahead and won this year and took care of it for me.

Q. Last two Solheim Cups the U.S. has lost. As a captain this year do you feel pressure to right the last two years?

STACY LEWIS: Yes and no. I desperately want these girls to experience what winning a Solheim Cup feels like and the celebration and pulling the shots off when you need to. It's definitely hard to -- you put all that work into it and to not win.

But Europe is going to be good. They're stacked. They've got a lot of veterans, a lot of people with a lot of experience. They've got some young ones with a lot of game. It's not going to be easy by any means.

At the end of the day, if we don't win, it's not life or death. That's something I've reiterated to the players. It's not life or death. But if we win it's so much fun, so let's go do it because we want to be able to celebrate and not put so much pressure on yourselves.

Q. Heard the setup might be a little longer. What are a couple holes where we'll notice the biggest difference, and how do you think the setup this year will change the scores from years past?

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, 16, they probably moved the line back about 10 or 15 yards on the tee box, so obviously that hole -- some years it's played where you can almost get to the end of the fairway, but now it's softer, too, with the rain we're having. That hole is going to play significantly longer.

You've got 6, the par-3. They've started using that back tee over the years where you're hitting a 180-, 190-yard shot into that green, which is not necessarily made for it, so I don't like that one.

You've got even like 14, the lines -- they just kind of keep moving the lines back five yards at a time. They just play a little bit longer, and it's going to play longer because of the wet.

Does it do anything to scores? Probably not. These girls

are good. You've got par-5s and wedges in your hand, they're still going to make birdies.

Q. Going back to the Solheim Cup, as the captain you're in a leadership role. You're an ambassador for the sport. Did that come naturally to you or is that something you've developed over the last couple years?

STACY LEWIS: I think my good play has led -- my good play led to that position more than anything. You play well, the camera is going to be in front of you. You're going to be doing press conferences like this every single week.

I had some older players that kind of came to me and just said, every opportunity you have, you need to answer the questions. You need to get in front of the microphone. It gave me a platform to talk about things I'm passionate about and to talk about trying to make this tour better. Just found a way to use it to not only help myself but to help the Tour.

I wouldn't say it's natural. I'm a very shy person by nature, but I definitely had to learn to be comfortable, and I do feel like being a little bit older and being out here longer that it's kind of a natural role that I see the other girls are watching and they're paying attention, and I need to do things the right way.

Q. This is the 25th anniversary of Se Ri Pak just exploding on to the scene. Won here that year, '98, first of your five victories. In your mind, how did Se Ri Pak change the LPGA Tour?

STACY LEWIS: Se Ri made us a global tour. We were very American based prior to her. It's not just South Korea. It was Thailand, it was China, it was all these other countries that players started coming from because they saw what she did.

You know, it's really remarkable, to be honest, to think that one person could really create that much of a movement inside of a country.

It made us a global tour, and we've been able to embrace it. To truly say you tee it up with the best in the world every single week, and when you win, you're beating the best in the world, no men's Tour can ever say that.

Q. I think it's even more than just the Asian, it's also players of Asian Heritage --

STACY LEWIS: Correct.

Q. We wouldn't see an Allisen Corpuz 30 years ago

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but perhaps because of what Se Ri did.

STACY LEWIS: Yeah, you're going to see it on the U.S. Solheim Cup team this year. There's plenty of girls that these are kind of first-generation Americans. They're Americans because their parents came here, so they were born here. They wanted them to have the opportunity to grow up in this country.

It's just kind of what society is now. It's what this country is.

I just wish people would embrace it a little bit more. You talk to a lot of these girls that have South Korean Heritage, but they grew up in Southern California, and they are definitely more Southern California than they are Korean.

I wish people could see past what they look like. And these girls are USA. They have USA on their bags. They've got it on their sleeves. And just embrace it a little bit more.

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