

ANA Inspiration

Wednesday, March 31, 2021

Rancho Mirage, California, USA

Mission Hills Country Club

Mike Whan

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, everyone. Welcome to the virtual media center at the 2021 ANA Inspiration. Happy to have you all with us.

We're here with LPGA commissioner Mike Whan. Just a little housekeeping, and we'll open with a few remarks from Mike.

Mike, enough from me. This is quite possibly your last time speaking to me as my boss, which I'm living in denial of. 11 1/2 years, your last trip to the desert wearing the LPGA logo.

What thoughts are running through your head as we take to the week?

MIKE WHAN: I wasn't sure where you were going with that. First off, I never felt like your boss. I think it was always the reverse, most of the time we worked together. Just as you were asking that question, it hit me, when I took this job in late 2009, I flew to New York for a Madison Square Garden announcement, I took the red eye that night to San Diego to meet with all the tournament directors, and I don't think many people know this, but I got up the next morning to the desert to meet with the Kraft people. Literally my second official day.

I wasn't even working yet, but I came out and met Denny Belcastro and the team. We walked most of the back nine course. We had lunch overlooking -- pre-COVID -- overlooking the 18th green, and as he's walking with me to my car, and he said, you know, right, that 2013 will be our last year.

Last year of what? We told the previous commissioner and the team, you'll have three years with us, 2011, '12, but we won't be here in 2013. So literally my first meeting with a sponsor was good-bye. I remember thinking this is one event I've been coming to most of my golf fandom and TaylorMade and everyone else and quickly learned afterwards the LPGA Championship was no longer title sponsored, and we were trying to figure out where to put that.



The British Open was going through a pretty difficult time in terms of sponsor renewal. I remember thinking at the time I might be in the job a year, and we'll be down to one major. I had a first board meeting and said to the board, majors are -- you build a house on a foundation. You build a tour schedule around the foundation of majors. I'm really excited -- that's not the question you asked me.

When I think about leaving here, and this one being our last, we have these majors. Majors have been our foundation at least the whole 11, 12 years that I've been doing it, and we really built a schedule around these foundations.

Obviously, we added Evian, but created the KPMG, Women's PGA, created the AIG Women's Open. Obviously the U.S. Open has been the U.S. Open. It's exciting to think that what felt like pure fear back in the fall of 2009 has turned into what this is. We've built the schedule that luckily has been built on the foundation of these majors.

THE MODERATOR: The majors certainly setting the foundation for the last 11 years, but what are some of the other things that you're most proud of looking back, and as you leave the association, where we are moving forward?

MIKE WHAN: I think, when I started in late -- again, when I got announced in late 2009, almost all the questions at my press conference were about global. All the influence from all the parts of the world, and I felt like all those questions were asking like why don't you go back?

I do know there was plenty of players, caddies, sponsors, and employees that were wondering why don't we go back?

I had taken a few brands global before, and I looked at this brand, and I said, when we get to the other side of the tunnel -- and that's what it is, it's a tunnel -- you're going to love how this feels on the other side. I'm really excited about the fact that now other sports ask us how do we get this global? How do you get your TV in so many different countries? How do you have players come from all over the world and play in the same for forum.

All you have to do is go to the Olympics, and it all makes



sense. I remember my first press conference at the Olympics was how cool is it to have players from so many different countries playing on one golf course? I'm thinking, be cool. This person doesn't cover us. We had I think 30 countries in that event. I said, next week we'll have more countries playing at an LPGA game than we have playing in the Olympics. It's just neat to see. I've very proud of that.

For your question, Christine -- because I know your mom is kind of messed up when I call you by your nickname. I think the coolest thing about this -- and just bumping into Shirley, I was walking through the lobby. The thing that Shirley and the rest would be most proud of what we've done for the future. The future of this game is so female, not just here in America, but all around the world. Events like this are what matter to these young girls.

I don't think, if you said 12 years ago to anybody the future of the game, junior golf, was going to look almost 40 percent female, back when we were in that 13, 14, 15 percent range, that's what I think we should be most proud of, because this is important.

But what we're leaving is more important, and we're leaving this game pretty female -- I'm leaving this game a lot more female than when I got here, thanks to a lot of people that made me look good. I'm most proud of that. I'm really proud of this and the Symetra Tour and the LET and our 2,000 teachers all around the world. But most important thing, I don't think these women will have daughters that will have the experience my mom had trying to join the game in the '70s, '80s, and '90s. They should be proud of that, and we should be proud of that.

THE MODERATOR: One last question from me before we open it up. You mentioned the Olympics. You basically have a super season here with the five majors, the Olympics, the Solheim Cup. What are some of the highlights of the season coming up for you, and also to take the opportunity to thank companies like ANA and CME and AIG who have stood with us through what's been an incredibly tough year.

MIKE WHAN: It's funny. If I would have said back in 2010 that we were going to play, dot, dot, dot, fill in any golf course you want after that, that we're just playing this year. With the Olympics and the Invernesses and the Atlanta Athletic Club, any one of those would have probably been the new story of 2010.

Today as we sit here in 2021, I don't think it's a news story at all, which actually makes it pretty cool, that we're playing these kinds of venues and will continue to play these kinds of venues going forward, not just in our majors, but even

events like Solheim Cup that are having us and giving women a chance to showcase themselves in these historic venues.

Yeah, 2020/2021 will be a year for all of us that I think we'll all remember for the rest of our lives. For me, it will be conversations I've had, literally 50, with almost every sponsor we've had. Going through the scare they went through on their own business, the scare we were going through on my own business, and to wake up -- you know, in the last two years, which includes six months pre-COVID and what I'll call the early six months of 2021, we've added 11 official marketing partners and 8 title sponsors.

So in the middle of all this we have more corporate sponsorship today than we had when we started 2020. So in the middle of the last 17 months, 15 months, whatever it's been, that's pretty cool stuff. ANA is a great example. Imagine if you're an international air carrier going through what we just went through, and to be here twice in the last eight months is a pretty impressive statement about ANA.

THE MODERATOR: It's pretty awesome to be back here. At this time, we'll open it up for questions.

Q. Mike, what initiative is either in its infancy or halfway through that concerns you as you go through this transition?

MIKE WHAN: I don't know. You know me better to know that there's probably not one. I think our partnership with the PGA TOUR is really in its infancy. We've done some really cool things together to this point, but I think having the men and women play on the same course, same field, both as sanctioned event from us, I think it's something that I thought I would have done by the time I walked out.

I think our new nine-year deal together with the PGA TOUR, NBC, CBS, Golf Channel, is in its infancy, but it's going to put us in a much better place, including a lot more network television. All things that I would have probably, if you'd have asked me three years ago, would be done now, but it's coming soon.

I think we're just getting started with the Ladies' European Tour. We were together for 90 days and added seven tournaments. I'd love to see what 90 days in a non-COVID era could create there.

Yeah, I think my board, my players and my teachers, are more committed to the global impact we can have on this sport, not just here in America, but all around the world because of all of those things. All of those things are new, but not infancy like I'm afraid will they grow up. They're going to be just fine.

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

But all things I wished we were farther along as I'm walking out the door.

Q. As you walk out the door, can you spin forward three years and tell us what the relationship between the LPGA and the USGA will be like?

MIKE WHAN: Probably not. I'm going to have a real good relationship with the LPGA and they're going to have a real good relationship with me. Where can we go with my knowledge of golf and their knowledge of championships and opportunities, I don't know. I'm really excited about it.

At the end of the day, when you think about all the difference we made in the future of this game for girls golf, USGA is at the top of the list for the reasons why.

I said to them many times, I wish I would see you guys on TV taking credit for it. I'm the one on TV always taking credit because, one, I'm not afraid to take credit, and, two, I like talking about it. I'm going to talk about it at the USGA. I'm not going to be happy with 37 percent of junior golfers.

I think there's some really cool things we can do together. Whatever boat you want to put me on, but some really cool things we can do for the development of the game in America and for around the world that I think that together with the PGA TOUR, with the PGA of America and the LPGA, I'm really excited about what we're all going to do together on the diversity and equity front.

Yeah, I don't know what it's going to look like, but I'm excited because I feel like their mission in growing the game and being a difference maker was what attracted me.

Q. You were just talking about what you came in and inherited with the Kraft contract. Can you talk about which contracts are up this year and what the next commissioner might be facing when he or she steps in.

MIKE WHAN: This is embarrassing. Any year I could tell you to a specific number, but I'm not sure I could. Mostly because contractually we're kind of a mess. If someone didn't play in '21, they're playing in '22. If they didn't play in '20, we added the year on.

I'd probably have to walk through the schedule. I don't have any significant concerns. I probably shouldn't say this, but this wouldn't shock you. We're pretty close to announcing another new event that will come in '22. If a couple of events in '21 don't go over -- I think we're past the stage that you and I live through in the early 2010s

through '15 of trying to make sure we could keep it to a certain number.

I think we're in real good shape. I don't think the new commissioner is going to come in and instantly be petrified about contract, perpetual sponsor deals. Right now as a future sponsor said to me yesterday in a meeting, this is a real good time to joining with the LPGA. We feel good about what you guys mean and what you represent. I didn't start a lot of meetings like that back in 2011.

It doesn't mean the new commissioner and team won't have to work to bring in title sponsors and keep corporate sponsors, but we're not in the same kind of concern level that I think we would have had back then.

The good news is we're going to -- you're going to see us and them keep adding sponsors and tournaments along the way.

Q. Is there anything you can tell us about the commissioner search and how far along you are?

MIKE WHAN: I would say the commissioner search is probably halfway, even though those on the selection committee would probably go it doesn't feel like halfway.

What I mean is there were so many candidates, hundreds of candidates, and some of them pretty significant and senior that, even if you weren't going to go forward, deserved, before we went forward, to have these conversations.

They're just starting the interview processes now. Most of this has been tabulating, following up, seeing who's interested, but with my own personal experience with USGA, a process that I thought might take six months took six weeks.

In the world of Google and Zoom and Teams, it used to be, Hey, Mike, when can you get to New Jersey and we'll try to get the group together and you start doing date games? Now it's how's Tuesday at 6:00, and I open my computer in my living room and six other people open their computer, and you just had an interview with six people.

I think this process will go pretty fast. I think we're looking end of May. They're probably saying end of June, but internally they're targeting end of May.

Q. What advice would you give to your successor on this tournament --

MIKE WHAN: You're talking ANA?



Q. Yes. Even as you're speaking, eyeballs are being taken away from this event by the Women's Amateur being played elsewhere. Is it sustainable to continue having this event in the state with what's going on at Augusta?

MIKE WHAN: Sustainable, yes. Optimal, no. I think with time -- I think with time we'll move out of this date. Just like you know, moving a major sounds so simple to a fan or to a Twitter follower. To a commissioner, it requires 15 other people agreeing to move things around.

The other thing is we don't want this major to feel any less major because of somebody else. So moving it two weeks earlier hasn't been an option for us for a while. By the way, we're not talking about two weeks earlier, two weeks later. One of the most important things we need for this major is the 28 hours of live TV it gets. We could say, we'll move it a week earlier, a week later. Obviously, a week later doesn't get 28 hours for all kinds of reasons, we'll all be next week in Augusta.

And moving it earlier didn't give it an option mostly because the Dell Match Play is so consumed on TV. We had to find other windows in the TV schedule that could generate 28 hours of live TV. In the windows we currently have, either the golf course and location isn't available, or it is available right in the middle of Coachella, which would actually be worse than the week we're in. I think we'll solve that longer term, but longer term is probably post-'22.

Q. Is the week after the Masters doable?

MIKE WHAN: It's doable. It's just much more difficult here, between weather, volunteers -- as you know, a lot of our support here is volunteers that will leave in the next week or two. We're also in first week of Coachella. Average hotel rate here goes from 120 to 920. It's just really difficult to just say, Hey, move it back because I'm afraid we might get better media support.

We might get the same kind of TV coverage. I'm not sure I give them the major that they deserve. So I think we can solve the date problem as long as we don't feel rushed to solve it. Like I said to my team, as long as their experience Thursdays through Friday isn't detrimental, I'll go whenever you're going, but don't move it until you know the Thursday to Sunday is the Thursday to Sunday.

Q. Yeah, Mike, and Karen sort of touched on what I was going to ask, so I'm going to go in another direction. This thing's been going for 50 years, dating back to Dinah Shore, and some of us still refer to it as the Dinah Shore, but how important is this tournament in the greater context of the LPGA tour? How much of

a cornerstone is it?

MIKE WHAN: Well, I think you know with your question, Jim, we don't have -- and I wish we did -- we don't have 30 events that have been with us for 45 years. You can't go back and look at -- you can go back and look at the Waste Management in the '80s and see what that looked like. We don't have many of these -- Toledo, Portland, here -- where we can really talk about these women, when they were 7, 8, and 9, watched this tournament on TV and dreamed of it being here.

It's important here because we just don't have a lot on the LPGA of these long-term, historical pieces. What I would tell you, after being commissioner now going on my 12th season, must haves, I've learned long ago -- when I tell people we're going to move from the LPGA Championship and create the Women's PGA together with KPMG, half the people in the world thought I had fallen off a ship. Really when you wake up today and look at that you go, what a great tradition we've created now for the future.

I would hate to see us ever leave here, but at the same time, if we did, would I be concerned about the future of the LPGA or the future we're creating? I wouldn't, because I'd only leave here if we could trade something significantly better. We're not facing that crisis today. As you probably know, this is not our last contractual year here. Whoever steps into my spot in the team they'll inherit will realize this will be goal number one. If we can't deliver here, we'll only leave here if we can do something better.

You hate to lose tradition, but as I always tell people, respect history, love history, don't be afraid to make a little along the way. If you can make a new history that's better, have at it, but this one to be tough to achieve that, I'll be the first to admit.

Q. And one follow-up going in a little bit of a different direction. Obviously, with the controversy in the NCAA over the men's and women's tournaments and sort of the unequal nature of the two, what the LPGA does not only for golf but for women's sports overall, what are your thoughts about that and where your tour fits in in that struggle for equality.

MIKE WHAN: At the end of the day, Jim, we're used to it. I hate the fact that we're used to it, but we are. I'm sure all the writers, yourself included, can attest this isn't an easy thing to say to your editor, yeah, I'm going to go cover the ANA Inspiration and they go, that's great. You probably have fight for the lines you get. I have to fight for what we get here. I wish I didn't have to. It is what it is.

I understand why there's different purses and different fans

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

and different TV coverage for the men's game versus the women's game. I get it. I've seen the business logic.

Thank goodness a bunch of congress people back 30, 40 years ago didn't wait for the business logic to put Title IX in and say it's the right thing to do. I do believe there will be a Title IX on women's golf. If you're going to cover men's golf on NBC, you have to cover women's golf on NBC. If you're going to have these purses, you have those purses. I'm not going to wait for it.

Was I shocked by what I saw in the NCAA? I wasn't. Live it every day. We're not tied to some other male entity. There's not some entity at the end of the year where I can call and go, you know what, I lost \$12 million. I got you covered. For seven years, we've been on our own. Proud of it, but also we raise what we can.

I wish this tournament was a \$10 million purse, not a \$5 million purse. This is what we've got today, and we're going to keep building on it. When I started I think our average major purse was a little less than three, and now we've -- I don't think we have a major under three, and most of our majors are between 4 1/2 and 5 1/2.

It's a battle. It's a struggle. It's one of the reasons, quite frankly, why I'm glad I took the job because, as a male, certainly as a white male, it would have been really easy for me to glide through life and never pay attention to this challenge. I also raised three boys, not girls. I never thought about, as a father, the future of the game of football or baseball they were playing. I'll never be able to think about sports or lifelike that again because these athletes are in my head and in my life.

So these athletes think about the future of the game. They think about what kind of experience their daughters are going to get in golf. They realize they have to work a little harder for maybe a little less. It's all embarrassing to say as their commissioner, but it's true. We're going to keep fighting to make that truth go away. Currently, we're facing that truth.

Q. What did you see as the future or long term future for Phoenix as a stop?

MIKE WHAN: We could be back there as soon as '22, and I couldn't tell you if we'd be back there with the Founders Cup or back there with a new event, but we'll play in Phoenix. We'll be back there as early as '22 or as late as '23. It just works on so many levels, between the great golf and the great fans and how many players I have that live there.

If you don't figure out Phoenix, you'll wish you had. We

have four or five events in Florida. It works. It's good for the athletes and good for TV times.

With our spring schedule leading into events like this, it's great for the reps, it's great for -- we have a huge fanbase there, and so I have zero concern about the long term.

Q. Would that be somewhere where your partnership with the PGA TOUR would come into play?

MIKE WHAN: Maybe. To be honest with you, it's not as easy you think with the PGA TOUR. Not because they're not good people. When I say, Jay, what do you have? How many open dates. You can see their schedule. How many open weeks do they have? Not many.

Then we need to figure out what could be official, unofficial on those schedules. We worked out those deals, but I don't know. To be honest with you, for me personally, I want Phoenix to be full field, official, because I wouldn't want any athlete to not be able to get into that field.

Q. Piggy-backing on your alliance with the PGA TOUR, do you feel that relationship is something that can help address the inequalities between the men's and women's side of the game or is that something you've ever spoken to them about?

MIKE WHAN: I think it already does, to be honest with you. The PGA TOUR had no real incentives to include me in their PGA TOUR TV deal they just did. But I'm part of it. They didn't need me to be part of some of their promotional deals and TV production deals. They did that because I think I knew they could help. I think they like our product. They like it.

But their members -- no members of Jay are asking him, hey, how are we doing with the LPGA? I think for Jay and his team to take that on is just an example of what stakeholders do. I don't know that PGA of America needed the KPMG Women's PGA, but I think they thought it was the right thing to do and they could do it.

As a stakeholder, it's an important message to their members and people that play golf. The R&A would have been the R&A whether or not they took on the Women's Open Championship or not. They're writing a check and not receiving one. I think that's pretty cool.

When I decided to get involved with the LET in a joint venture, I asked (indiscernible) to not only them to join us but to help us financially and to be on the board, and both said yes in one phone call. Never had a legal document that followed that. I just think those are stakeholders doing the right things.



Augusta National writes a check to us every year for the USGA/LPGA girls golf. You probably didn't know they did. If they didn't, nobody would know. They like what we're doing. They believe it's important to the game. So, yeah, I think -- I've said this many times. When I left the industry to golf in 2000, I didn't really feel like the stakeholders of the game are in it together. If you asked me, I'd tell you about their program, not somebody else's.

When you jump over to 2011th, I feel like there's a cohesiveness among that group. The Olympics maybe helped start, maybe the Pro Golf Hall of Fame helped start. I would consider Keith Pelley is a great friend, not just somebody who runs the European Tour. Jay, Jay Monahan calls me when he has challenges and vice versa.

We don't talk about those calls. There's a friendship there. At the same time, when you ask a friend for a favor, what can they do? I don't know, but I think they're already helping. You may not see some of those inequalities, but imagine if Jay just finished his deal with NBC, CBS, and the Golf Channel and two years later I went out to the market and said, Here I go. Not sure what I would have had, but I'm pretty sure it wouldn't be what I have.

Q. Just an unrelated question. Do you have any update when we might expect to see fans out on site?

MIKE WHAN: I don't think we'll see fans until post-Kingsmill. I wish I could give you a better answer, but as you probably know, these events get established 90 days before we plan. I wish I was petitioning California right now for fans. Having been to California a lot during the pandemic, it's a lot different today than it was even a month ago, and I think, if we would have been talking to them right now about 90 days from now, I think we'd have some degree of fans and a broader footprint here, and we would have last week.

But because you have to do that 90 days ago, and I think that 90 days ago, nobody knew where we'd be vaccine-wise, and I think Kingsmill is the last one. I think Kingsmill is planning no fans. Post Kingsmill, to be determined. I know the U.S. Open and MediHeal will struggle with San Francisco, but I think this summer and from there on out we'll have a pretty good fan footprint.

We did it the opposite way. I like the PGA tournament was in California first and Texas and Florida. We came to Texas and Florida early and came here later. But we're playing. Can't really be too unhappy about that.

Q. How would you explain to someone who's a fan of the Olympics but not necessarily into the weeds of

golf, how competitive it is to make the South Korean Olympic team for women?

MIKE WHAN: I don't know there's a harder team in sport to make right now. Quite frankly, it's starting to look that way on the U.S. team as well. In terms of just the talent and world ranking players vying for one option.

It's funny, when we played the International Crown in Korea and the top four players from Korea were on that team, in Korea, they were writing articles about the fact that you're looking at the Olympic team potentially because it's just as hard to make that team kind of based on the same world rankings.

But imagine being the ninth best player in the world and wondering if you're going to be on the Olympic team for that same sport. That's kind of what they're facing.

So that just tells you something about the power and the depth in that country. And like I said, I believe, if not in '21, in '24, you might see the same thing in terms of trying to make the U.S. team.

Q. A quick follow. Did you get any sense that in some ways for all that Inbee's done on the LPGA Tour, that her gold medal resonated more in South Korea?

MIKE WHAN: I didn't get some sense. It's factual. When Inbee was teeing it up to win her fourth major in a row, the Korean rating on TV was about 8. An you guys know because you follow, an 8 rating is Tiger Woods in the Masters. It's a huge number. In Korea, that's what you would expect. Here she was about to make history like nobody had ever seen. When she won the Olympics, the TV rating was 27.1.

So just imagine Tiger at Augusta times three, right, in terms of TV? Did anybody miss that? Nobody that I know that watches TV. That's what happens with Inbee. As she said, she went from being a really -- what did she say? A really noteworthy golfer to being one of the most famous people in Korea in one weekend.

Yeah, there's nothing -- same is true, by the way -- I'm embarrassing myself, but who won the gold medal? Who won the silver medal for the men at Rio? Henrik Stenson. So in his home country, when he was competing with Phil at the Open Championship, I forget what he said, but they had 120,000 viewers. Ten times more when he was competing at the Olympics.

So as I've said many times, when people ask me, is it worth it all that you have to put on to put on the Olympics? Because it is a lot, right? You guys have seen our '21



schedule. Imagine being an Olympic athlete and looking at your schedule and figuring out where you're going to be, what time schedule are you going to be in these major events, but it is the largest gathering of what I'll call casual golf fans. Maybe not even casual golf fans, currently non-golf fans.

What sport wouldn't benefit from ten times the amount of eyeballs than normally watch your sport? I can tell you, for me personally, from traveling all the around the world, I'm constantly in an airport, where somebody will ask me a question about the Rio Olympics and has no idea we've been playing since then. They probably think we're just gymnastics, just show up every four years.

For us, the world paid attention to women's golf for four days, and so, yeah, that's worth it. Certainly worth it to us.

THE MODERATOR: Before we close, I know there's a story that you're wanting to share. You talk a lot about the Founders and what they've meant for you, what they've meant for our TOUR. But I know you've got a pretty special story that a lot of this group behind me doesn't know yet that you'd like to share before you leave.

MIKE WHAN: I talked to Armstrong last night, but I don't know if it's appropriate. It's always inside baseball. For me, my board, my family. I didn't even talk to staff about this.

It was November 2009, I'm at the LPGA Tour Championship at the Houstonian. I'm not commissioner yet. I'd been announced but nobody knew who I was. It was a great week because you could walk around and nobody told you what was wrong with the tour. It was a really great time to be a fan.

That night I had a drink, and this won't shock you guys, but with Louise Suggs, she said, Kid, keep it simple.

Then she went on to talk about an hour. Nothing she said was simple. She talked about all the aspects of the LPGA. At the end, I said to her, Hey, Louise, when you say keep it simple, what do you mean? I have this -- it's not a napkin, but this little 5 by 7 card that I carried with me for years in my briefcase, and it just said, keep it simple on the top. Underneath it, she said, Mike, it's just this simple. You guys can probably hear her saying this. She pointed to a bunch of players in the lobby and said, give them a better place to play.

I knew what she meant. It wasn't courses and purses and TV, but all of them. She said give them a better place to be. Care about the future. It caught me off guard. As a brand new commissioner in 2009 I'm like, what do you

mean? She said, we have a tour today because we cared about the Founders. Make them care about the future.

How do I make them care about the future? I've got to create an event where we talk about the future. She said, make them care about the future. I probably shouldn't say all of it. I'm leaving. What the heck? You guys can say whatever you want about me. She said, Get the boys involved. What do you mean get the boys involved? You know, the boys. The guys that run all the boys stuff. What are you talking about? PGA, USGA, R&A. She called them the boys. Get the boys involved. They'll help.

If you think about it, KPMG, PGA, U.S. Women's Open, LPGA, USGA, Girls Golf, the European Tour get involved with the ladies, the PGA TOUR selling their TV rights. I really think the boys, as she called them, are involved.

The last one is -- this last one is not probably for your articles. It was just for me. She said, Be a good and honest man, and I'm thinking, I just met her. Does she know that I'm not a good and honest man? I remember saying, what do you mean be a good and honest man? She said, this job will test you. It will test you personally, test you ethically, and it's going to be hard on you.

When you're facing a crisis, focus on your family first and think about them as your extended family, but your family first. I'm like, Louise, I'm a family guy. I'll be fine. She's like, I'm just telling you, you're going to wake up four or five years into this job, and somebody's going to suffer, and it's okay if it's us. It just can't be your family. No one has ever said that to me before or after. I'm pretty proud of that. My family would probably not agree that they didn't suffer, but be a good and honest man. And Juli Inkster said something to me very similar timing, which is we can handle honesty. We just can't handle lack of honesty out here.

When in doubt, we've been in a lot of crises together, including 2020. If you treat them honestly, they'll treat you honestly back. I'm not sure that everyone would agree that Mike is super honest, but I feel like when in doubt.

The next thing for the next commissioner, keep it simple. Give them a place to play. Make the future involved for them. Keep the boys involved. And when you're talking about your family, be pretty honest. At the time she said it, I didn't think any of it was powerful, but I was smart enough to write it down. I think that's a good way for me to exit.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks so much. Here's to a great week at ANA.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports



