

# ShopRite LPGA Classic

## Presented by Acer

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Galloway, New Jersey, USA

Seaview, A Dolce Hotel

## Stacy Lewis

## Natalie Gulbis

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, well, everybody thanks so much for joining us. We're taking over the ShopRite LPGA Classic for a few minutes here to catch up with Stacy Lewis, captain of the 2023 USA Solheim Cup team with a fun announcement. Just went out about an hour or so ago.

Stacy, I'll turn things over to you and let you mention your newest member of your team.

STACY LEWIS: Yes, so happy to announce that my second assistant captain is going to be Natalie Gulbis for 2023 in Spain. I couldn't be more excited. Natalie has been a great friend of mine for a while and she immediately said yes when I called her.

We had her on board -- Morgan and the two of us, we had dinner in Vegas and got things going there, so we're already busy.

**Q. Stacy, you said right off the bat you knew you wanted Morgan on your team and you knew you wanted Natalie on your team. What about Natalie made you want to pick her right off the bat?**

STACY LEWIS: Well, first, I mean, Natalie has been a great friend of mine. Really when I first came on tour we got to know each other through Bible study and became a great resource for me, especially when I start playing better golf, of how to handle the spotlight and the attention.

You know, she was just kind of a great sounding board for me. You know, I said same with Morgan. I wanted a love for the Solheim Cup, which Natalie has that 100%.

The third thing with Natalie is how stinking positive she is. I mean, I want that in the team room. I want the girls to feed off her energy. To see how much she loves the event is most important to me.

**Q. Natalie, you have a massive smile on your face**

**over there. I know you're really excited. What are your thoughts on joining Stacy's team for Team USA?**

NATALIE GULBIS: Really excited would be an understatement. Stacy has been such an incredible woman in my life and definitely one of the best friends I've ever had, so to be able to be with her during this, to be part of her captaincy, is really, really such an incredible honor.

To me, Solheims, as I look back on the 20 years of my career they're the best weeks my career. Even more than winning an individual event. Playing for your country, playing for your captain, it's just a tremendous honor.

I loved everything about Solheims. The highs are higher, the lows are harder. Just the fondest most fun memories I've had have been in Solheim Cups.

So I'm excited to be part of another one. Definitely in a different role. And for the younger players, for them to get to experience how excited I am, they're going to be worn out because I am -- I can't wait. I wish it was this year.

I can't believe that we have to wait until the end of next year for Solheim Cup. They're just such special events and it's been a privilege to be part of those. I'm really looking forward to helping Stacy any way that I can, any way that she needs us.

**Q. You were a member of three teams, three victorious teams. What are some of the moments that really stand out for you that you can't wait to share with your new, young team?**

NATALIE GULBIS: The first Solheim Cup, the first tee. There is just no different -- there is nothing that is like that in golf for us, especially in women's golf.

To get on that first tee and they're singing USA songs and chanting and all decked out in red, white, blue, that was just remarkable.

And then to win with -- I've been fortunate to win on all three of those Solheims I've been in. They were incredibly

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fun and overwhelming. Playing overseas was completely different. My second one was in Sweden, so playing in Europe was a very different experience, so I'm excited to be able to share with the younger players what that was like going over there.

Just the winning and the camaraderie with your team. Just everything really. Every single part of that week I love and I cherish. I look at the pictures all the time. I created such great friendships from Solheim Cups. Honestly, I probably played my best golf in Solheim Cups.

I don't know what it was about those sort of weeks, but you just have so much energy, so much adrenaline, you hit it so far, and I just -- I really loved every moment of my Solheim Cup experience.

**Q. Stacy, you had the opportunity in Vegas you said to meet with Natalie and Morgan. You also had a chance to go out and do some scouting while you were there. Where are you in this development of your captaincy as you start looking and thinking about building your team out?**

STACY LEWIS: We are right in the thick of things. You know, the three of us met in Vegas just to kind of get Natalie on board with where we are and what we're doing. We're starting to design clothes right now. That's kind of our big task at the moment.

Like you said, watching players, seeing how they're playing. That Saturday of Vegas I had a little extra time and went and watched some golf.

It's been great watching these younger players, Lilia Vu, Andrea Lee, Allisen Corpuz, those are the three I got to watch out in Vegas. Just trying to see the style of golf they play, see the way they play, the way they handle themselves. Are they fast? Are they slow? How do they walk? How do they -- are they walking with their head up? Are they walking with their head down?

I'm just kind of watching how they handle themselves I guess more than anything. You know, watching U.S. Open and Mina playing so well there down the stretch. I'm paying attention to all the time. I don't want to bug the girls too much because I know I've been that player that's playing and you look to the side and you see your Solheim Cup captain standing there.

I don't want to be that person, so I'm going to try to stay out of their way, but they should know that I am, I'm always watching. I'm always seeing how they're playing. We're tracking stats. Right now although it's clothes and bags and all that kind of stuff right now.

**Q. Natalie, what do you hope to learn from this experience? What do you hope to bring to the team room and to the team as you build it out for the next year?**

NATALIE GULBIS: Well, to learn from the experience. I've only been on the side as a player. And to not only have your coach on the sidelines, but to actually start following the stats. I mean Morgan is incredible with stats. We saw this in that first time when it was just our first little captain's meeting in Vegas of just the details.

I mean, Stacy -- how many times have we heard her talk about apparel and clothing and bags and the different things she's going to be selecting or the gifts or how to make it fun.

For me I remember the Solheim experience being more than just that week. It's really is that year leading up to the Solheim Cup. You're talking about which players might be making the team. You start to come together as a team. That was really fun for me as well.

So what do I hope to bring? Anything that Stacy doesn't want to do or anything that she needs from now until Solheim, I want to be available; events that she can't go to.

Yes, I am definitely positive and have a lot of energy, but I love this week and I love these players. There are younger players that I don't know as well so I'm really looking forward to getting to know them.

When I do play out on tour, hopefully playing practice rounds with them and getting to know their games and anything I can do to help. But just really sharing how amazing -- like I am sure there are hard parts of the Solheim, but I remember all the good ones. They're really just the greatest weeks.

Maybe that's just a different vantage point. I'm 20 years into being a professional golfer and those weeks are so special. Representing your country, representing your captain, it's really amazing.

**Q. Speaking of younger players, how much are you watching now and have you been watching in the past and are you keeping up with kind of where we are with the game, with the younger players these days?**

NATALIE GULBIS: Watching now, yes. Very much so paying attention to where they are in the rankings. As far as watching younger players, yes, absolutely. Always. Especially every single class that comes onto the tour. I haven't played any LPGA events this yet this year, but as I

get out there I love -- always take the opportunity to meet the rookies, the younger players that are coming out.

Yeah, I know where players are on that list for sure. I'll be paying extra attention to them. But I remember my first couple years on tour and the veteran players that were amazing to me. I ended up being a player for them. Nancy Lopez and Juli Inkster and Meg Mallon and Beth Daniel. These are players that came to me in my rookie year and said, welcome to the tour, if you ever need anything.

I remember when Stacy came out. I was a couple years before Stacy, but I've learned more from her as player, how she handles herself. Not that these players need help. I mean, they come out, as you know, their rookie years and sometimes before in the first couple years and they win tournaments and they already know what they're doing.

It is different when you're out on tour and you're playing 30 weeks a year and different golf courses. It's an individual sport, so it is nice to have some sense of -- that there are players you can go to and ask, where do I stay? Why are we starting on the back nine this week? Do you want to play a practice round? Little things that hopefully they wasn't make some of the mistakes that I did.

**Q. Stacy, one the roles of the captain is assigning roles to your assistant captains. Have you done that yet? What are those roles?**

STACY LEWIS: Haven't really gotten that specific I would say. Morgan is definitely my go-to for the clothes. I do know that. Kind of more checking things off as we go. For Natalie right now it's just kind of watching players and seeing who is trending in the right direction.

When we are making kind of bigger decisions about things I'll definitely pull everybody together, but right now it's logistics, behind the scenes, how things are going to function when we get to Spain.

I'm making a trip after the British going over to check things out, so we're kind of making a list of things of what we need to check out when we go there.

So just getting Natalie on board, getting the three of us -- you know, I think I'm going to stick with just Natalie and Morgan for the foreseeable future and see how the team comes together, and if I need to do a third we will.

But I think right now the three of us are going to handle it and then see where we go from there.

**Q. Natalie, just going to go more general. I know you**

**had hoped to play there in Atlantic City this week, but still nursing a little bit with your back. What are your plans for the rest of the summer, both playing and prepping here for the Solheim Cup?**

NATALIE GULBIS: Yes, I love Atlantic City. ShopRite does such an incredible job with that event. Stacy will be playing so I'll get an opportunity to cheer her on from the sidelines as a past champion there.

But I'm going to play in the team events. I'll play about ten events this year. I usually like to play in the summer. Very fortunate that I get to a little bit more handpick my schedule.

Yes, I haven't been shy about saying I've had multiple back surgeries, and usually when I come back it's the hardest those first couple events. I hope that I'll be back not only in two weeks, but for quite a few events this year.

I love to play. I absolutely love to play and to compete. It's my favorite thing to do so.

I love Solheims, but I really love to compete as well, so I'm looking forward to playing more this year and also to watching ShopRite on TV. I love to watch the players, and of course will be asterisking all the ones that are getting close for the USA team.

**Q. I know when we were chatting yesterday you kept talking about the Dow event and how much you love that team event. What is it about the team side of things that really just seems to light a fire in you?**

NATALIE GULBIS: I mean, I've played an individual sport my whole life, and the opportunity to get to play as a team, it's a different level of pressure. It's a different dynamic completely, so I just really cherish and really love those sort of events, whether it was the (indiscernible) that we had, but Solheim Cups are even more -- just the idea that there is something else that's a little bit more than just you.

The Dow event is an incredible event, and I just think the highs are higher and the lows are lower and you really feel it. There is nothing I can supplement that gives that you adrenaline rush that you have when it's more than just you.

**Q. Stacy, you're now several months well into the gig. You're really getting your feet under you for what's expected. What have the learning curves been like for you since stepping up as the captain? What have you learned about the job and about yourself over the last few months?**

STACY LEWIS: I'm having to get very good at



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multitasking. Life is busy of there is a lot going on. There are times I've -- I need to say no more to certain things.

But it's all been good. We really have been able to space things out so far that I haven't been too overwhelmed. It's been fun going to the tournaments and all the volunteers are calling me captain and things like that. It does kind of hit home going week to week. It is, it's really cool. It's just such an honor to be doing all that.

Just I guess it just builds. Every day, every week we're getting closer to it. Just watching the team and watching how these girls are playing. We're planning -- kind of trying to plan dinners and plan fun things for the girls here coming up, and trying to not overwhelm them as well. Just trying to find that good balancing act and get prepared for Spain.

**Q. Well, you're prepared for Spain, but you've also got to prepare for Atlantic City this week.**

STACY LEWIS: Yes.

**Q. The Solheim Cup captain hat will go off and the KPMG hat will go back on. You're a past champion there as Natalie mentioned. We all know the hot and muggy that you have there this week. How are you feeling? How is the game feeling as you come into this week?**

STACY LEWIS: Well, I'm coming off a bout of food poisoning last weekend, so body is not at 100% yet. Hoping it gets a little bit better every day here.

So preparation hasn't really been what I wanted it to be. More about resting and just trying to get some weight back on me and get healthy.

So we'll see. Sometimes that's good for the game, too.

**Q. Beware the injured golfer. Isn't that what they say?**

STACY LEWIS: Yes.

THE MODERATOR: All right, well, Natalie, Stacy, thank you guys so much. Really excited to have you two part of team USA. Anyone who is there, we plan to chat with this crew again with Dow in a few weeks. Hopefully all in person this time.

Natalie, safe travels; Stacy, good luck this week in Atlantic City. Thanks, everybody.

STACY LEWIS: Thank you.

NATALIE GULBIS: Thank you.

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