

# CME Group Tour Championship

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Tiburón Golf Club

## Commissioner Mollie Marcoux Samaan

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon. Thank you for being here at the CME Group Tour Championship where we celebrate an incredible 2024 season. I'm pleased to be here with Molly Marcoux Samaan. I'll turn it over to her for some opening remarks.

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAN: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for joining me here today and us here at the CME Group Tour Championship as we really celebrate the 2024 season and we look to the future of the LPGA.

I'm really proud to reflect on the state of the LPGA and really share our plans for continuing to grow as the global leader in women's professional golf as we help lead, I would say this women's sports revolution that's happening now.

As you all know, we've been in existence for close to 75 years. We're going to be celebrating our 75th anniversary next year, and the LPGA has been really ahead of our curve in women's sports throughout our history.

Each year as an organization we really look at many metrics. We're constantly looking at metrics to judge our performance, but for the LPGA Tour there are a few main ones. Number one, do we have the top players in the world competing on our Tour? Is the investment in our tournaments growing? More importantly, are the earnings of our players growing?

Are we putting on an exciting product for our partners and for our fans? Are we over-delivering value for our partners?

Are participation numbers for girls golf and women in the game growing, and are we honestly changing lives through our platform?

I'm going to walk you through how we're doing, because



quite honestly the metrics and the numbers are eye-popping in terms of the growth that we've had over the last several years.

We're really proud that other women's sports are starting to get the financial investment that women's golf has enjoyed, and we're proud of the role that we've played in elevating women's sports in general.

The best women in the world -- I always say this -- need to make a living that matches their level of excellence, and we're fighting every day to achieve that goal.

As you guys know, this week one player will walk away with \$4 million. The first prize is \$4 million. The second prize is \$1 million. Every player who is playing in this field will make \$55,000 at a full \$11 million purse. That is a remarkable moment in time for women's sports.

This \$4 million prize is bigger than three out of the four men's majors, and it's what our players deserve. We're super proud that we're here.

I'm just going to highlight a couple of big numbers. We could go on and on that, but I would really say this is the hay day of women's golf. We've never seen this kind of growth in the organization's history.

So in 2021 we were playing for \$70 million. Next year, 2025, you guys all saw our schedule. We'll be playing for over \$130 million. That's close to 90% growth in three and a half years, four years.

The other thing we look at is, okay, how are our players doing? The top 100 players, the average income of the top 100 players has gone from \$575,000. We're not obviously done yet, but we're pretty sure we'll be over \$1 million.

That's nearly 100% growth and significantly more than other women's sports professionals in other women's professional sports.

In addition our athletes have benefited from over \$8 million in additional missed cut stipends and travel stipends. In 2021, five events provided some type of subsidy.

In 2024 23 events did. That was something we heard from our players, and we really dug in on that and our partners



dug in on that.

We've really focused on expanded player services, including health insurance stipends, nutrition, mental health resources.

So in 2021 we provided our athletes with \$1,800 as a health insurance stipend. We then went to \$3,000. This year we provided a \$4,000 stipend, and we're really, really proud to announce that in 2025 we are going to fully subsidize health insurance for our athletes.

We announced that program last week at our player meeting for categories 1 through 16, and we've start unrolling that. People met with our health insurance provider, and that's becoming a reality.

That's something we've been working on in this organization for a really long time, and we're really proud of that. We've also provided mental health professional support at ten events in person and then some virtual opportunities.

A number of our players have cited Dr. Julie as being a part of their success and being a part of their team, which we're really proud of. I think that's really important for athletes to have that opportunity.

So as I said before, I mean, I think the numbers are pretty much off the charts. We have a chart of all the metric that is we're looking at, and the percentages are like you haven't seen before.

So I'm proud of that growth.

I think it doesn't happen without a ton of work and support from our corporate partners, from our tournament operators, from our official marketing partners, from our players, and from our staff. So you guys spend all the time looking at us on the golf course. Those numbers are pretty much off the charts too.

The season has been remarkable on the golf course. One thing I'm really proud of is look at the top 10 players. They're from all over the world. I think we have ten Americans. Sorry. Two Americans, two Koreans, two Japanese players. We have one from Australia, one from New Zealand, one from China, one from Thailand.

It's pretty awesome. Everyone in professional sports these days, people are trying to become global. We're global. I think I missed Thai. I said Thai? Yeah, I think I got all ten.

We are literally a global tour, and others are aspiring to be a global tour. The LPGA is truly a global tour.

The other thing that's been really fun, I mean, think about how we started the season. Lydia winning and immediately we go into Hall of Fame watch for the better part of the first half of the season.

Then we go down to Nelly's hometown and she wins there. Pretty darn awesome in a playoff against Lydia.

Then Patty wins in Thailand.

Then Nelly goes on her tear.

Then we've got the Lydia Hall of Fame, you know, the Olympics, which was just one of the most -- the best experiences I've ever had athletically. Seeing her win there and then going on and winning at AIG, also awesome.

A number of great players have been on the tour for a while winning for the first time and then winning multiple times. Hannah, Lauren. Then we go to China, and Ronni wins in China.

I was there, and seeing the fans and how she inspired so many young girls was amazing. I mean, we had little girls running up to her crying being so excited that they were there and got to watch Ronni win in her hometown, and obviously winning in Malaysia as well.

Then Nelly coming back and winning last week was quite remarkable.

There's a million amazing stories out there on the golf course, and I don't think anyone can deny it's been a great year.

So for me that's only part of the story. All of that is a really important part, but the other part is I think what we've been building in the LPGA infrastructure, which has definitely needed to grow.

We've been betting on our athletes, betting on our staff to be able to capitalize on this next wave of growth. We're building the infrastructure in order to build our global fan base. We are looking at enhancing visibility for our athletes, ensuring that fans, whether they're tuning in digitally or attending events or engaging with merchandise, experience the LPGA in exciting and meaningful ways.

I would like to say we're building the organizational might to be able to capitalize and service this next round of growth.

Last thing I'll say before J.D. jumps in is I think we're guided by five strategic pillars. We worked on this with our

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

partner KPMG. Just to simplify what we're doing, we have five pillars, and we're focused on this every day and everything we do has to fit into one of these pillars.

The first one is we believe that we need to optimize the tour schedules. Not just the LPGA schedule. We need to work with the LET on their schedule and the Epson Tour on their schedule and really make sure that that product that we put out there is first rate and that it really serves our players, it serves our partners, it serves our fans, and it serves the media.

That's pillar one.

Pillar two is making sure, again, we're the leader in global professional women's golf. We need to continue to attract, develop, and retain the best athletes and the best teaching professionals. Really dug in on what do our players need, how can we provide the environment that they need to reach peak performance?

We talk about this all the time. We're growing the fan base and expanding the engagement with those fans, so bringing in new fans, having better communication with our current fans.

Then we're elevating the LPGA brand value and the intellectual property value through the expansion of our sales assets, but also through a digital and technology transformation.

I think that is the way sports are going. We need to improve our digital footprint, and we're super -- and we can talk more about that, but we're super focused on that.

Then the last thing is we're a really unique organization. We service every woman in the game, girls in the game from cradle to grave. How do we integrate all parts of our organization for maximum growth and impact? We're really dug in on that as well making sure we have over 600 Girls Golf sites. We have close to 15,000 amateur women playing golf. We have 2,000 teaching professionals.

We have these amazing tours. How do we integrate all of those things together to create the best opportunity for growth and impact?

Those are our five pillars. Everybody should be able to recite them. Everything we do sort of focuses on those five pillars. We're really excited with the growth that we've seen and where we are right now.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Mollie. You talked about in that first pillar the schedule and optimizing the schedule. Can you talk a little bit more about the 2025 schedule, what

you are looking to accomplish there, and what we did accomplish as we head into our 75th anniversary?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Yeah, the schedule is super -- as I said, it is everything. We spend -- most leagues, a Commissioner wakes up in the morning and someone hands them the schedule and says, This is the product. Now go commercialize it; go make it work.

For us our job is to build the schedule. It's hard. It takes a lot of effort. Ricki Lasky and Casey Ceman and that whole team works so hard on this, obviously with me. We focus on trying to really put together the very best. I'm talking about the LPGA schedule. The very best schedule.

What we heard from players is geographic flow, aligning time zones, building in some natural breaks to enhance the athlete experience. You know, we've pushed the calendar back a couple of weeks this year to give a little bit longer of an offseason.

So I think, listen, is it absolutely perfect? No, but we've made really good progress in all of those areas and happy to walk through kind of the way that the schedule breaks out this year.

We've tried to adjust the schedule also to avoid direct competition with top men's events. You know, making sure we have better TV windows for our tournaments, and, again, maximizing exposure for our players.

You'll see that as you look through the schedule. We have some natural breaks when the men are playing the PLAYERS Championship or some of the men's majors. Not all of them, but most of them.

We have a couple of new events on the schedule, which I think you guys have seen. The Black Desert Championship taking place in May at Black Desert Resort in Utah, which will be the only event on the LPGA schedule where they're chartering our athletes from Chevron to Black Desert. I think this is a great step.

We have a new event at the Riviera Maya Open in Cancun, marking the LPGA's return to Mexico for the first time since 2017.

Again, another exciting international market. That came through Gaby Lopez that made that introduction to me, which was fantastic. Thrilled that our players are really committed to helping us get the very best schedule.

The other thing we're super excited about is the Portland Classic. Longest-standing non-major tournament on the LPGA Tour. We announced this morning that The



Standard has signed on as the title partner for the next three years. We've been working on that for a long time.

That tournament has had a huge impact on the LPGA. The community loves us. The organizers love us. The new partner is so fired up about what they're going to do out there.

So this is a huge win and we're excited about it. I think you probably all saw the announcement this morning that Toledo is obviously not on the schedule this year, but we're really excited.

Stacy Lewis is here. She's going to host the event. We've pivoted into a new format that really brings in the Epson Tour players and our amazing legends. We're going to use that as an opportunity for both of them to have additional playing opportunities at a great part of the season, but also to use it to have those legends help mentor the next generation of rising stars.

We've got a unique format. Still some details to work out, but having Stacy host it is awesome.

That's a great. We're really proud of that. We've pivoted there. We suggested that opportunity, and Judd Silverman has been an unbelievable partner of the LPGA. The Toledo community loves the LPGA, and we love them. We're thrilled to be able to come back in that way. I know it's going to be an amazing event.

The other thing is you all saw the announcement this morning of the CME Group's extension of this TOUR Championship. It's pretty awesome. To be able to have a little bit more runway with that, to be able to build this event, again, \$11 million, \$4 million first prize, \$1 million second prize.

To be able to have a couple of more years and that commitment from Terry Duffy and the CME Group is awesome and I think it's big news.

A couple of other things. Enhanced athlete benefits. 24 of the 33 events will now include minimum pay-outs or travel stipends, which is a significant step towards supporting our athletes across all levels. Really just focusing in on purse equity. That's what we do every day.

Health and wellness. One of the things we heard from our athletes is, you know, we have physio that we provide, but a lot of our athletes wanted some space for private physio. They need -- these are the best athletes in the world, and they need a place to stretch, to warm up, to get ready to compete.

So we've made a significant commitment to making sure that we have that private physio space for those of the athletes that want it and need it.

As I said before, we've expanded some of our mental health athlete support services in mental health, nutrition, and then some of the increased stipends that I mentioned.

The other program this year that's pretty awesome for our players is we have a new partnership with Arcis Golf. A lot of times players come here and they don't necessarily have a club or a course to play on, so through our new partnership with Arcis, they are offering 55 different memberships to our athletes at 20 different courses. Our athletes can apply and have a place to play.

Not all of our athletes live here in the U.S., so when they're here, having that opportunity to play golf at a club or a course is really important. So we're excited about that opportunity.

A lot of other tremendous stats that we're happy to share and provide, but I think overall the growth has been amazing over the last since 2021. It's off the charts.

THE MODERATOR: You also talked about in the strategic pillars growing the fan base, the marketing initiatives, expanding our engagement. What has the LPGA done so far to grow the fan base and expand engagement? What's that delivered, and what can we expect in the future?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Listen, we all know that content is king. We've really expanded our content strategy. Most importantly, we've increased our staff pretty significantly. So the total LPGA staff in the last few years is up 35%. It's resulting in a lot of growth. These things take time, but if you don't have the people to produce the content, to make the content, to put that content out, it's pretty hard to get our players the exposure that they deserve.

So we had 22 people who are working in marketing and content. We now have 39 people working in marketing and content. Again, we have a lot of examples of when you have people producing -- and these great people that are in this room, producing interesting storylines, showing our athletes in different settings, getting the fans to get to know who our players are makes a big difference.

I think you've all noticed a pretty big difference in the way that we're delivering our product.

We have eight events on ESPN Plus through 2025. We launched Seat Geek which is our primary ticket sales platform. Data is everything. We need to have more fan

data. We've really had no fan data, and this partnership with Seat Geek is allowing us to do that.

We partnered with Aspire to drive additional individual and group sales at our own events. Growing this database; really important. We need data via Braze and our email communication system.

We've built our retail and licensing strategy with Legends, and then we've partnered with Next League, who is one of the four -- I would say one of the best companies in the world or in the country in coming up with digital transformation. Whether that's the way we use our technology, but also the way we use technology to grow revenue. So we're really proud of that partnership.

You guys all know we launched, redesigned a new website. It has single sign-on, two-way communication with our fans. That's been a huge fit. You can favorite your athletes. You can find the information more quickly. It's more modern. That was a big project that our team worked on and really proud of the success there.

What's the result been? Listen, again, these things take some time, but the results are pretty staggering. In 2022 we had -- we measure this full media consumption number. In 2022 on an average every week we had about 4.2 million engagements. Last year we had 7.2, 7.3. This year the average is over 10.8. We've had some huge weeks. Solheim Cup, 42 million people engaged. 42 million engagements with our content. That's pretty much off the charts.

At Chevron we had 26 million. That was our full media consumption number. Those are the biggest in history.

Highest ticket sales for competition days in Solheim Cup history, the Solheim Cup achieved off-the-charts retail in our first year under our partnership with Legends, and it was a significant increase from 2021 there.

What's kind of next? Obviously we have three additional events on ESPN. We have our broadcast details will be announced soon with everything airing on Golf Channel. We'll have at least 11 events on network television, NBC and CBS, which is important to us.

We get 40 times the viewership when we're on network. We're testing advanced scoring right now in 2024. We've been testing it the last couple of years and we expect a roll-out in 2025. That's going to improve real-time fan engagement and give players the data they need. It's a huge step for us, and we've been working hard on that for a while.

We also have exciting things going. Some possible celebrity ambassadors and exploring some synergies with TGL and driving innovation and visibility for our athletes. Couple other quick marketing things. It's the 75th anniversary, so we are going to dig in on that. You're going to see a lot of digital and experiential activations throughout the whole season that connects us to our past.

We have a new app coming. That app is going to focus on the on-site experience so when our fans get on site it's going to have way finding and unique content for them. But, again, a golf course is a big place. We don't have huge signage all over the place, so putting it right in someone's hands so they can find our athletes, they can figure out where everyone is, get some unique content while they're here, that's really important.

We're creating a fan affinity group to really be able to communicate with our most loyal fans and to be able to continue to get more people under our tent, which will be fun. We're starting Matt Chumura, our chief marketing officer is starting a player marketing committee, and we announced that last week at the player meeting.

He's gone out and started talking to some athletes and asking them to get involved in it and really hearing from them what do they want those storylines to be? How do they want us to talk about them and their performance and their life off the course?

That will be really exciting. He's already gotten a number of great people to sign on for that. So we're excited. I mean, we need more people engaging with our content, and we have a clear strategy of how to get there.

THE MODERATOR: Great. Mollie, last question from me, today we announced the launch of Leap, our program aimed at getting the top amateur women golfers a pathway or more streamlined pathway to the LPGA Tour, which is also part of those pillars you mentioned earlier. Can you talk more about the reasoning behind Leap, what this program aims to achieve, and what we're looking for out of this?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Yeah, it's awesome. Really just kudos to Tommy T who is in the back who really works so hard at this. It's just an opportunity to streamline some global pathways to the LPGA for really the world's elite, most elite amateurs.

Tommy really dug in. Tommy and his team, not just Tommy, but all of us. He really used an extensive analysis of amateur accomplishments to predict future success on the LPGA. So it's -- I think you guys have seen it, but it's a points-based system that allows really the best to be able

to go directly to the LPGA.

So the points are awarded based on a couple of criteria. Their WAGR ranking, LPGA tournament performance, amateur championships, and awards and team competitions.

So I think this will allow, like I said, the very elite to be able to bypass Q-Series and get right on to the LPGA. There won't be a lot of these athletes. This isn't going to happen every year. It might happen every couple of years. We don't know, but it's really reserved for the very best.

We've done a lot of analysis to make sure that the points and the criteria will really produce that best athlete. So I would love to ask you guys who you think would have qualified for this over the last ten or 15 years had it been in existence? Which athletes on our tour? See how good you guys are. You know Beth Ann. Come on. Give it to me. Oh, you already know? Then you can't answer. (Laughing)

Who else? Lydia Ko. Megan, that's cheating. Yeah. Leona McGuire. So Lydia Ko, Rose Zhang, and Leona McGuire. I mean, again, no one can argue those are generational talents. I really thank Tommy for all the great work that he's done and how he has engaged with people on this and made this happen.

This is just one step in our sort of analysis of pathways and figuring out how to get -- continue to have the best players in the world competing on the LPGA Tour.

Tommy is here if anyone has more details, he's happy to answer any questions from the media.

THE MODERATOR: Tommy will be available afterwards. You can find him and Megan in the back of the room. We'll open it up to questions from the floor here and take a few questions from Zoom.

**Q. Obviously the tour has a dominant American star for the first time in decades. In what ways has the tour been able to market and capitalize on Nelly's success?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think Nelly has been incredible. Her play on the golf course and I think what she's doing off the golf course I think she's an inspiration to so many people, particularly young girls. The way she engages with the young fans is awesome.

I think she's done some really fun things this year too. We've gotten to get to know her personality, which is an amazing, remarkable personality. I think she's just so engaging.

Obviously last week having her play with Caitlin Clark I would say two of the biggest superstars in women's sports together, and the way they sort of respected each other was amazing to see. The Met gala, the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue, just the way that she's getting out there and putting herself out there, the way that she performed at Solheim Cup on that first tee, I thought she was so engaging and amazing.

Our team works really closely with Nelly's team, and we've been really collaborative with them. She needs to keep performing like she knows she needs to, and she's focused on that. She's the best athlete in the world.

We need to make sure we respect that and how she wants to manage herself, but I've been super excited and proud of what she's done.

**Q. I think a lot of players were expecting some news on the gender policy. Could you give us an update on where that stands?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think we've made that clear that we've been using sports medicine experts, legal experts to analyze our policy over the course of the year and review our policy. We're completing that review, and we'll make any updates for the policy by the end of the year, which is what we've told our players, and we've told them throughout the course of the year.

We told them in the player meeting. We will make any updates to our policy by the end of the year.

**Q. Mollie, you said the schedule was not perfect. How do you feel like it could be better?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Yeah, I mean, I think if we could be exactly geographic flows could be perfect. Sometimes we travel a little further than we would like. I would like all of the tournaments to be generally if we can in the same time zone. Sometimes we kind of come out of that. That's some of the things that our players have said. It's hard to adjust without a break and without a time to go into that.

There's a couple of areas that I would love the flow to be a little bit better, but otherwise, I think it's really good. I'm proud of it, and I think we'll continue to make it as good as we can every year. This is what we focus on.

**Q. Despite all the numbers and achievements that you listed a few minutes ago, you faced some criticism in recent months about your tenure so far as Commissioner. How do you respond to some of those**

## critiques?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Yeah, listen, as I said, I focus every day on trying to support the athletes, to try to grow the tour, and to try to make this the best place in the world to play and to give additional opportunities to girls and women.

So I feel like the statistics and the stats really speak for themselves. I think we're experiencing enormous growth. That's really what my job is. So I'm just dug in on it, and I do the best I can every day.

The other thing too I'll add to that it's not just the statistics. The other thing is we've really built a great strategy. I'm really proud of the strategy that we've built. We've built an infrastructure to handle the next layer of growth.

So it's like we've experienced great growth, but we've also had a really good strategy. That's our whole team working on that and our work with KPMG, but we've also had to build an infrastructure to handle that growth.

So I'm really proud of that as well.

**Q. With the attention on Caitlin Clark, with the Olympics this year, with Nelly's play this year, interest in women's sports has never been higher. With that being said, my question is, do you think the LPGA properly captured that moment?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I mean, I think the numbers show that we captured that moment, right? If you look at what -- our job is to make sure that our players have opportunities to make a living commensurate with their talent.

Are we done yet? No. Should this be more? Should they be making as much as the men? Yes, we want to get to that point when we can. Yeah, I think we've done amazing work. I think our team has done amazing work. I think our partners have stepped up on many different levels and have really elevated what we're doing.

Are we done with that growth? Absolutely not. Are we focused on getting -- continuing to get more fans under our tent and continuing to get more exposure for our players? Definitely. I mean, we're a growth-minded organization.

But I don't think anybody could say that the growth hasn't been remarkable over the last three years.

**Q. What is the single biggest thing that needs to be worked on or achieved?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think more people -- I say this -- I've said this since I started this job. I think more people need to get to know our athletes, because that's what drives -- first of all, I think they're inspiring, and I think more people should be inspired by our athletes, but that also drives the commercial viability of the organization.

You need eyeballs. You need to create as much possible value for your partners. Being a partner of the LPGA is not a charity. Our partners get great value out of this, but we want to over-deliver on that value. That starts with just bringing more people into our world, bringing more people into our ecosystem.

That's a constant focus, and we're doing it through technology. We're doing it through all the marketing initiatives we talked about. The digital transformation, scoring. I mean, there are so many ways we can get at that.

But yeah, I don't think anyone can say we haven't captured on this momentum in the last couple of years.

**Q. I think telling the players' stories like that is talked about a lot. What's the best way to do that?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think you've got to see them outside the golf course as much as we can and get people to capture the moments. Because they're doing amazing things. There's no shortage of content out there.

The content is amazing. Our athletes are remarkable I would say. Not just their golf. Obviously they're the best in the world, but they're doing great charity things. They're engaging with fans in different ways. They're really unique individuals.

I think having more people to be able to capture that and then go viral a little bit and attach on to other influencers and other people who can -- just that opportunity for the LPGA to be talked about with Caitlin Clark, we haven't gotten the numbers yet, but last week was amazing.

The number of people that aren't LPGA fans who send me texts or emails and said, that was unbelievable. We see how great your athletes are next to Caitlin and how much she loved it and how greatness understands greatness.

I think that was a big moment for us. We just have to keep doing that.

**Q. My last question is, is there a day where the LPGA and the LET merge?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: We have a great



partnership with the LET. Alex Armas is here this week, the CEO of the LET. She's been in our meetings this morning. She's a great partner.

We're continuing to work with them. Right now we're focused on our joint venture partnership and elevating that, thinking about pathways to the LPGA and continuing to expand our work with them.

**Q. We asked players at the end of the year to come in and evaluate themselves and evaluate their year. As the leader of the LPGA, how do you evaluate the job that you did as the Commissioner and what sort of grade do you give yourself and the organization?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Listen, I'm obviously a -- like all of us should be, we self-reflect. We're growth-oriented. We try to get better every day. I tell my kids that every day. All you can do is wake up and try to get better and do the best you can and be the best person that you can be.

So I feel like that's what I've done. I think it's a hard job. We all work hard together. Our team is committed to the mission. I think the results sort of speak for themselves. I have to be a results-oriented person, and I think our team -- not just me, but again, it's not a me thing. It's our team thing.

I think our team has done a really good job. We work really hard. Our staff is all over the world, and they love it. They're dug into it, and I think that's important.

**Q. Then you've been in this role for almost three years.**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: More than three years. I started in August of '21.

**Q. How do you characterize your relationship with the players?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Yeah, my job is to listen to the players and to hear what they need and what they want. I think I've done a good job of that. I think our staff has done a good job of that. We listen.

A lot of the innovations and a lot of the things that we are doing, whether it's for the schedule or the marketing or the players services comes from conversations with the players. I think we try to be available. We try to listen to what they need, and then we try to respond to that.

I think that's what our role is to support the athletes.

**Q. In your remarks you had mentioned about some maybe potential synergies with TGL. Can you expand on that at this point?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think we've been talking to them for a while. It will be great to get our athletes in different positions. You know, with different exposure, different innovation in golf.

The LPGA should be in every conversation about golf. So we've been talking to those guys for a long time, and I think we'll try to figure something out how we can work together, whatever that looks like.

**Q. International Crown is many coming back to the schedule. Is there in your eyes a potential opportunity where you could add an international team to the mix? Because you're leaving people like Lydia on the sideline, Celine Boutier, Brooke Henderson? Is that a potential that could happen?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: We've always been evaluating that. We're going to make some announcements a little bit later about what that Hanwha LIFEPLUS International Crown will look like, so I'll get back to you on that.

**Q. If you picture yourself sitting in this moment next year and you have one big thing we achieved in 2025 as the LPGA Tour, what would that be and what would you consider to be one of your biggest goals for next year?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Again, I think digital transformation, making sure we're capitalizing on the website we invested in from a sales perspective and also a fan perspective.

We need to grow our fans. I think we will look at the data and look at our database and look at how many people are engaging with our content each week. Obviously we want our great performance out on the golf course and make sure our players are feeling supported. We want to make sure we're continuing to engage with the whole golf community.

There is a lot of goals, and we have clear metrics that we have laid out in each of those areas. I think we want to just keep hitting those and staying true to our five pillars and making sure every day waking up trying to make this organization better. That's all we can do.

**Q. Wanted to ask if you could explain a little bit more about the decision to drop Toledo from the schedule and if you could talk about if there is a chance the LPGA could return to Toledo in the future?**



MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAN: We hadn't dropped them from the schedule. They have been looking for the right partner to be able to fund the tournament, and we weren't able to get that done for or LPGA tournament this year.

They had a remarkable run. Toledo is the LPGA and LPGA is Toledo. So we didn't want to just have that go away. All the history that's built there, all the great support we've had, Solheim Cup being played there. So we were working with Judd and trying to figure out a good solution.

We have been back and forth trying to work on what would be great for Toledo, great for the LPGA. What we have come up with is awesome. To be able to give these opportunities to the rising stars on the Epson Tour.

And then also one of the goals we have had is to make sure that we continue to elevate the legends that made this tour what it is. This whole thing doesn't happen without those greats. For obviously 75 years we've had the best women athletes in the world playing on this tour, and we want to keep honoring that. We hired a person this year to be sort of the ambassador and link in to our alums. That's been a good success. Been working with the Legends Tour to support them.

This is a win/win. Then when Stacy said she would be willing to host it, I know she had been talking to Judd about that, I thought that was great. What could be better than that?

We see this as a positive. We see this as a great opportunity. And, yes, we awesome welcome Toledo back if they want to be an LPGA event.

**Q. A year ago at this session you were ahead of the curve a little bit when you started talking about equity investment in sport and suggested that the LPGA was looking at that. Can you update us on any progress that may or may not have been made in that regard?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAN: Yeah, we made a lot of progress. Again, as I said, we worked with KPMG for our strategic plan. They were amazing. We then pivoted into, okay, what do we need to reach all the goals we have? Any good business needs capital to grow if you're in growth mode.

So we're looking at the resources we have and resources we could attain, and so we then hired Inner Circle Sports who's an advisory firm to dig in with us more. We've done some modelling. We have looked a lot of different scenarios. We haven't made any final decisions, but we advanced that ball. We need to make sure we continue to

engage other stakeholders if we are going to move in that direction.

We have just been advancing the ball forward on that. We want to make sure at any turn we maintain the mission-driven goal of the LPGA in making sure we continue to focus on our players and our athletes as a membership organization, so we are just balancing all that.

It's been a great exercise to evaluate the long-term planning of the LPGA and what we need to grow.

**Q. Unrelated to that, pace of play has been in the news this week for the men's game and some of your players have commented on it. How do you respond to some of the concerns that some of your more visible players have about pace of play on your tour?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAN: Yeah, I think it's clearly an issue. I've heard that from players. Obviously our staff wants to speed up. I think we're all in this together. So we're going to form a pace of play committee in the off-season that includes all these stakeholders and put our best thinking forward to figure out how we can speed things up for our players' performance and also for the fans.

I think everybody is invested in this and have to be committed to making some change there. So, yeah, we totally recognize it. We hear it. We're digging in and all we can do is try to find the best solutions moving forward. We like the passion of our players. They want this tour to be great. They want it to be better.

We love hearing their feedback.

**Q. Please put Charley on the committee.**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAN: (Laughter.)

**Q. I know you touched on this a little bit earlier. A year ago at this press conference the LET was hours away from voting on possibly merging with the tour. What has happened over the last year with that and what's the current status of that possible merger?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAN: I think I mentioned this before. We worked really hard on this before. Got to the goal line; didn't quite happen. The partnership, the joint venture partnership has continued. We continue to support them. They support us. Continue to elevate them and we're working on what's the next iteration of that partnership.

Nothing specific for me to share other than like I said, Alex

is here, we're dug in and trying to figure out how to advance all the global pathways around the world on the LET and the LPGA, the Epson Tour. I think we're all in this together and we have really clear joint mission.

**Q. Is it still a goal of yours for the two tours to merge?**

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Right now we're focused on the joint venture and just making sure we can do that really well. We are just thinking different options for that.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, everyone. Appreciate your time, Mollie.

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Yep.

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