

The Ascendant LPGA benefiting Volunteers of America

Tuesday, October 3, 2023

The Colony, Texas, USA

Golf Clubs at The Tribute

Angela Stanford

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome Angela Stanford to our media center this week here in Dallas for the Ascendant LPGA.

Just thoughts on this week coming back to play so close to home and where you have been a past champion.

ANGELA STANFORD: I love this week. I love that I get to go home every night, that I get to sleep in my own bed. I've grown to love this golf course now being here year after year and having those good feelings of winning here.

So I just love this week.

Q. You've grown love this golf course?

ANGELA STANFORD: Yes. Well, the first time I played here my short game was awful. You have to kind of know, one, where the ball is going around here, and then you're going to chip a lot and have some really difficult putts. The greens have a lot of movement and that are bermuda and grainy.

If your short game is not on point you're in trouble this week. Needless to say, my first few years here I had a hard time. (Smiling.)

Q. I know you have a busy schedule and have been doing a lot lately, which we'll get into. But just the feeling of coming back and getting to play and be out on the golf course, how good is that? How does your game feel.

ANGELA STANFORD: It's been a really interesting year. I feel very blessed, fortunate that I've been able to do some TV, still been able to play a little bit. Just trying to figure out, you know, what's going on, what I want to do. It's well-documented the last couple years have been really hard.



THE ASCENDANT LPGA
BENEFITING  Volunteers of America®

I kind of said at the beginning of this year I felt like I was coming out of the fog a little bit. Not ever dealing with the grief that I dealt with, I didn't really -- it's hard to live everyday life.

I think this year was really good for me because I do love doing TV and I hope I get to do that in the future, but I also found myself traveling with my clubs and going to random places to hit golf balls, and that kind of told me that I'm not finished yet.

I don't know what the future holds playing-wise, but do I want to try to get to 100 consecutive majors. That's kind of been a big goal. That also means I have some work to do in the beginning of next year.

So the fact that I kind of have that energy and burning desire to try to do that is a good sign for me.

Q. Speaking first on TV, how much are you enjoying just being able to be out there with people you're still competing with and still get to go watch them play and analyze everybody's game? Does that give you a little bit of an advantage?

ANGELA STANFORD: The thing I learned is I've always known how good these women are. To see it up close and get to talk about it has been really cool. The thing I learned in all of this is like I would go and ask them what their lineup was for their clubs and how far they hit their clubs.

A number of times I'm like, wait a minute, I hit my clubs that far. I think through the process this year of watching a little bit I feel like I can still maybe compete a little bit.

But I can appreciate where I am in life, too.

So I'm finding a lot of joy in playing, and my game actually in Portland was really good and I was really upset that I couldn't keep playing after that. So it's good. I feel like I'm in a really good spot.

I do love working with those people on NBC. They're the best at what they do and I learned that really quick. They're just nice people, too.

So I kept thanking the good Lord above that I found good people there too, and it was a lot of fun.

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

Q. Coming off the Solheim Cup just two weeks out, I know we've spoken to you since, but how was the co-captaincy? Was it everything you expected it to be, and how energized does it make you having had such success?

ANGELA STANFORD: Well, I think Stacy did a great job. You know, I told her in the end -- she handled it really well. She told the girls, look, we didn't lose. Granted we are not going home with the Cup, but we tied. We did not lose. I kept telling them, we don't have to wait two years to get this back. We get to do it again next year.

Stacy did a great job preparing them. She made it easy for us to do what we needed to do when we got there. A lot of credit to those 12 ladies that played. It was a lot of fun to watch them come together as a team and gel as a team.

Great individuals, great personalities, but they did come together as a team, so it was a great week.

I told Stacy in the end, I said look, we're trying to turn a tide here. It was all Europe for the last however many years, but I think we started to turn that tide. You can't just expect things to flip overnight.

So I tried to tell her afterwards when -- you know how Stacy is, she's rethinking everything and hates to lose -- but you did something here this week that is foundational. This is going to pay dividends down the road. We needed that step.

So she did great. I enjoyed it. Enjoyed helping. It was a lot of fun.

Q. I want to follow up on the Solheim trend here. Speaking of the tie, do you think that it should be changed moving forward so there is some sort of playoff format?

ANGELA STANFORD: I think so. You know, I think at the time it felt pretty good not to lose, but, again, we didn't leave with the Cup. There is still that.

In the back of my mind I kept thinking, this is why you have to win the Cup. Then you earn that right to retain. But how cool would it be to have two players from each team be put in an envelope at the beginning of the week and they go out and play best ball and it's a sudden-death thing.

If you did something like that it would be so much more entertaining. There is a sense of finalizing the week. And at the same time, like I grew up playing sports that you don't tie, so when I got on an airplane and left I'm like, I still

don't quite understand what happened. (Laughter.)

So, yeah, I think it's probably time. Let's do something fun and let's have somebody win.

Q. And then we heard this from Stacy, but putting Lexi out in such high-profile positions throughout the Cup, what did you see change in her game when you got to Spain? What was different?

ANGELA STANFORD: You know, I have to say, I have the utmost respect for that girl. And I did before, but we told her, Stacy told her, we're not going to play you alternate shot. In Cincinnati Stacy told her that.

I think she could have taken that a number of ways, and instead she was a great teammate. She put her head down. She was getting closer. Her ball striking was coming around. She put her head down and worked.

We get to Spain and we're on site and have the advantage of the stats guys there, and watching the strokes gained in her practice rounds, all of a sudden she's hitting it better and playing that course better than everybody. So she kind of earned it. I hope people didn't miss that.

It wasn't like Lexi just showed up and we gave that to her. She earned it and earned that first tee shot and the anchor match. I don't want people to miss that. I know people, they wanted to ask her about the chip. It was a terrible lie, but I feel like we're kind of missing the point on Lexi in this year where she had one of the worst years she could possibly have and she showed up in that setting and I just -- I have a tremendous amount of respect for a person that does that.

Q. Last question, if I may: Caroline Hedwall got overshadowed a little bit at the end with Ciganda doing what she did on home soil. Can you speak to where that ranks for accomplishments you've seen, not just in a Solheim Cup, in all of the years in all of women's golf?

ANGELA STANFORD: Yeah, and I think it's -- it is quite an accomplishment because of the little we saw her play in the year. I'm not sure she played any LPGA events. I'm not sure where she was on the LET and how she was playing.

I didn't see a lot of that match, but I will tell you I was standing in 18 fairway and I saw her hit her second shot into the green. I would say at that moment under that much pressure it was one of the best shots I've ever seen. When that ball took off -- I thought Ally hit hers good, but when Hedwall hit her ball I was like, what a time. I really

don't want to like this right now, but it was probably one of the best shots I've seen in that situation. Ever.

You could rank it up there with Suzann's putt, because really if we get a half there we win the Cup. The shot she hit on 18 I'll never forget, but definitely one of the biggest I've ever seen.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Angela. Happy to have you.

ANGELA STANFORD: Thank you.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports