

Solheim Cup

Thursday, September 12, 2024

Gainesville, Virginia, USA

Robert Trent Jones Golf Club

Team USA

Captain Beth Daniel

Asterisk Talley

Gianna Clemente

Elizabeth Rudisill

Sophia Cherif Essakali

Anna Fang

Mia Hammond

Jude Lee

Avery McCrery

Nikki Oh

Scarlett Schremmer

Natalie Yen

Assistant Captain Riley Corona

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome everyone to the media center here at the 2024 Solheim Cup. My name is Emily Carman, and I am excited to be joined on stage with the champions of the PING Junior Solheim Cup, the United States team.

This winning team consists of, starting here on my left, Captain Beth Daniel, Sophia Cherif Essakali, Gianna Clemente, Anna Fang, Mia Hammond, Jude Lee, Avery McCrery, Madison Messimer, Nikki Oh, Elizabeth Rudisill, Scarlett Schremmer, Asterisk Talley, and Natalie Yen.

I'll begin with a few questions, and then I will open it up to the media here and on zoom.

My first question is for our captain, Beth Daniel. In your first captaincy with the PING Junior Solheim Cup, you led your team to the largest victory in the history of the Cup. What was the secret to your tremendous success this year?



ROBERT TRENT JONES
GOLF CLUB
GAINESVILLE, VA

2024

BETH DANIEL: These 12 players. That's all it took. They played their hearts out. They grinded it out, and they got the wins when we needed them. It was all them.

THE MODERATOR: Amazing. As a past captain of the U.S. Solheim Cup team, I'm wondering what advice or experience did you share with these ladies as they aspire to achieve their dream of maybe one day playing in the Solheim Cup?

BETH DANIEL: I told them that so many players move on from the Junior Cup to the Solheim Cup, but basically takes hard work and dedication, and I think all of them do that already.

I think Riley Corona and I kind of worked on our pairings really hard, particularly the foursome pairings, because I think that's a little more difficult for kids in the United States because we just don't play it as much.

Riley and I did a lot of research to put the foursome teams together. You never know if it's going to work your way, but I think it worked out pretty well.

Then in the singles, to win 10 1/2 out of 12 points is incredible. I've never -- I played eight Solheim Cups, I captained one, I've never seen that. I've seen some big margins of victory, but not 10 1/2 out of 12.

Like I say, they just grinded it out and kept their heads up and just kept going.

THE MODERATOR: My next question is for Asterisk. Just a few weeks ago you played in the Curtis Cup, which was a really close battle until the end. How did that experience light a fire in you to come out and win this week?

ASTERISK TALLEY: I think that was a great experience to get something like that under my belt. I feel like that was good preparation for this week, and I think that it really put me in the mindset of what I had to do this week, and it really prepared for me to win my matches.

THE MODERATOR: Gianna and Elizabeth, you two were on the PING Junior Solheim Cup last year in Spain, along



with Asterisk. How did you use that experience to help lead the team this week to victory? Gianna, let's start with you.

GIANNA CLEMENTE: I think last year we had a very -- a much older team, and this year we have a lot of younger players. It's just been really fun to make new friends. It's like we're all best friends on this team now, which is really fun.

We did really well and worked really well as a team. And as Beth said, they worked really hard on the pairings, and I think they did a really good job. Yeah, it's so fun to be on a team like this, not something we get to do very often. So it was really fun.

ELIZABETH RUDISILL: It's always an amazing experience, and we have great captains and teammates. Especially this year with Beth, I mean, she was -- had a huge impact on our team and was so positive.

I think that's what we really needed after our loss from last year, just a lot of positivity. She really believed in all of us, and she's the reason we won this week, and we could not have done it without her.

THE MODERATOR: My last question, and this is for whoever on the team wants to answer. I saw you all celebrated your victory on Tuesday with the team dinner with the U.S. Solheim Cup team. I just want to know how that went, if you enjoyed your experience. I think I saw some fun karaoke videos from that night.

BETH DANIEL: I'll start. We all walked in the room, and they all stood there like this (staring) and they were so shy. Stacy had them play, We Are the Champions. Then they saw there was ping pong, karaoke, and all of that.

These guys have been singing on the bus all week, so once Megan Khang got them in a karaoke contest, it was all over.

SCARLETT SCHREMMER: We had singing contests in the van every day with Team Europe coming back from the matches and the practice. So that was how we opened our performance at the Junior Solheim Cup, so to end it off singing karaoke with Megan Khang especially, and all the girls -- and all the women on the real Solheim Cup team, it was kind of our way to close the book.

I think we wore them out. They had to be on the tee the next morning at 8:00 a.m., and I think that was a wakeup call for them. It's okay. It was a lot of fun.

THE MODERATOR: Did you win your singing contests

against Europe too?

SCARLETT SCHREMMER: Oh, yeah.

ELIZABETH RUDISILL: This morning Asterisk was singing on the bus because she was tired of all the karaoke and dancing.

Q. We'll start with Beth. For you to have a hand in inspiring the next generation of Solheim Cup players and likely LPGA Tour players, what does it mean for you to be part of seeing this growth in the women's game but also be part of encouraging this growth?

BETH DANIEL: I think it's important, when we end our careers as LPGA players, that we kind of move on to help other players. I actually have embraced my role mentoring players and young players in general and also through my junior golf tournaments.

When John Solheim called me and asked me if I wanted to be the captain, I kind of said to John, boy, I thought my time was gone, that I would never be a junior captain.

He's like, well, can you group text, and do you do social media? I'm like yeah. And he said, oh, you'll be fine.

Well, it's -- I went to tournaments to try to meet the players. I think the only player hadn't met prior was Anna. Yeah, right there. I had seen her play, but I hadn't met her.

It's been fun getting to know you, Anna. She's funny. She's funny. She's 15. I tell her she's 15 going on 30. She's pretty mature for a 15-year-old in some ways.

Anyway, yeah, I love that part of it. I love the part of dealing with different personalities and how you do that. If you're going to put a team together, you have to be able to do that. These guys have been great.

Q. For anybody on the team that wants to answer, what did you teach your captain about either TikTok, social media, Taylor Swift, whatever it might be? Did you give Beth any lessons this week?

NIKKI OH: We were doing a ton of social media. We were filming TikToks on the course. We were singing so many songs in the advantage. She learned a lot from us.

ASTERISK TALLEY: I think I taught Beth how to put a face tattoo on this week.

NIKKI OH: We sang the same song over and over again. Riley and Beth know the lyrics.

SOFIA CHERIF ESSAKALI: We also filmed the winning TikTok of the week and I think the captains really enjoyed it.

BETH DANIEL: I think Riley and I didn't have a choice. We had to enjoy it. Let's just say we didn't have any quiet bus rides. And we learned some Spanish songs. It's been interesting.

I will say Riley and I did our first TikTok video ever with these guys. Did you post it? Oh, God. I'm not on TikTok.

Also, Scarlett kept doing some sort of selfie from the camera.

SCARLETT SCHREMMER: The point fives. I take a lot of selfies because I'm 6 foot tall. We took a lot of .5s this week. We also taught Beth and Meg about aura, because they didn't know what the Gen Z version of aura was. We said when we all won our matches we got aura and we all gained some good aura. So it was fun.

Q. Elizabeth and Madison, I know you're alums of the Peggy Kirk Bell Tour in Girls' Golf, so what advice would you give to girls out there who maybe dream of being in this situation?

ELIZABETH RUDISILL: I guess, when I started out playing the Peggy Kirk Bell tournaments, I never thought -- like I was always looking up to those top-ranked junior players, and I never thought I could be there, but just with hard work and patience, you can actually really get there and just staying positive. You really need to just like love golf. You can't make it too competitive.

Also in the Peggy Kirk Bell tournaments, I said I would play in Beth Daniels tournaments when I was younger. So having her as team captain in the Solheim Cup is so special because I always looked forward to playing in her tournament every single year.

BETH DANIEL: Elizabeth won my tournament two years ago. Elizabeth and Madison are the two that played my golf tournament.

MADISON MESSIMER: I would just see have the most fun you can. You always play better when you have fun.

AVERY McCRERY: I also played on the PKB Tour. Biggest thing for me, I'm from Delaware, so playing on that tour you get to know a lot of girls you play with in the future, like Madison, like Elizabeth here.

Like Madison said, you've got to work hard, enjoy it, have a lot of fun because that's going to help you work harder and

help you create friendships that last a lifetime. So just keep working at it.

Q. Gianna and Sophia, our Girls' Golf program has the tagline, little girls, big dreams. Could maybe each of you reflect on some of the dreams you had when you were younger. Maybe what your dreams are sitting here right now.

GIANNA CLEMENTE: I think for me I've always had the dream of playing professional golf for a really long time. My dad used to take me out to our local LPGA events when I was really, really young. I looked up to those girls so much. I would go out and watch Lexi every single day, like the entire round, and I would never leave.

So I've always just had that in the back of my mind, and that has continued throughout the last couple of years as well. Hopefully, someday I'll be doing the same things they're doing right now.

SOPHIA CHERIF ESSAKALI: I've always seen the players play the Solheim Cup, and I've always looked up to them. Being inside the ropes and seeing them play this week has been really special.

Q. Last question for me. Just Asterisk and if anyone else has an answer. Our Girls' Golf program hit 1 million girls in totality last year. Can you maybe just reflect on what it means to be a girl in golf and what you hope the future holds for women's golf?

ASTERISK TALLEY: A long time ago, women's golf wasn't really a big deal. People didn't really watch it. I feel like the growing of the game is really special to all of us here and to all of us that are watching the game, I feel like it's amazing to see women's golf grow.

We're all so excited for the future of women's golf and to see what it can become.

AVERY McCRERY: It's really cool to see how the game has grown for girls. I know growing up most things are about the boys. So it's nice to see that stuff is about the girls too. It's nice to have the place to showcase our talent and show we can compete as well, like I can compete with the guys. I do at my home course.

And that we can also play on TV. We can also be like entertainers, and we're really good as well. So it's nice to see the growth there.

JUDE LEE: Just walking on the 1st tee today, we were so inspired by everyone. Nikki, Scarlett, Natalie and I, we were like we have to be in this when we grow up. This is

our dream. So this is an inspiring week for all of us.

SCARLETT SCHREMMER: We all made a pinkie promise with each other on the 1st tee that we're all going to play on the Solheim Cup team together. So we'd better hold up our ends.

I think especially while playing when we were playing the Junior Solheim Cup after our last practice round, we did kind of a junior clinic, and it was pretty much all little girls wanting to get autographs and hit golf shots and stuff. I'm really the only girl that plays in my club back in Alabama, so for me to be out here with all the little girls that were just like me when I was playing is really Hart warming and cool to see that people are interested in what we're doing. There's so many Americans rooting for us this week and rooting for the pros too.

MIA HAMMOND: I also think it's really cool that having so many juniors involved in the game is so uplifting and such a positive thing to look up to in the future. I know I had to grow up playing golf with my dad all the time, which as a little kid isn't the most fun thing in the world. So knowing they have those to look up to growing up and get better is super comforting looking back on that.

Q. Any other sports that you guys did when you were younger?

SCARLETT SCHREMMER: I grew up in Hawaii, and I was a competitive surfer my whole life. Both my two older surfers are both professional surfers. I was surfing competitively on a national stage until I was 13, and I just was tired of training in the water and I wanted to train on land. So I started playing golf.

MADISON MESSIMER: Some pickleball, a little ping pong, but mostly golf.

AVERY McCRERY: Madison is really good. She's so good at ping pong. She was kicking our butts in the team room the other night. It was crazy.

Personally I grew up playing three sports. I played volleyball, squash, and golf. My dad was a squash player. My mom was a volleyball player. My grandparents played golf. My family made sure I was integrated in each sport because they wanted to claim that for themselves, I guess.

As soon as COVID hit, golf was the only thing I could do. So it kind of took hold, and I started loving the game.

I think playing sports is important. I think playing other sports, especially volleyball, really taught me that an individual sport is for me. It was super fun, and I'm glad

that I could make my grandparents proud that I chose golf.

NATALIE YEN: I used to fence as well, foil and saber. That definitely helped as well. If you're growing up, definitely play golf, but play other sports as well. You don't have to prioritize only golf. Play other sports as well.

THE MODERATOR: I will just close it with one final question. What's the plan, ladies, for the rest of the week? Will we see you singing out on the 1st tee this week?

SCARLETT SCHREMMER: Anna will be doing karaoke and jumping up and down and getting the crowd really ready tomorrow on the 1st tee. She has the most energy on the team. Her nickname is Funky, and she will be going crazy getting the team all hyped up.

NIKKI OH: She says she's the Megan Khang of our team.

ELIZABETH RUDISILL: We're getting a hot dog after this. Shout out to Riley for reminding me I need a hot dog after this.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports