

# Hanwha LIFEPLUS International Crown

Wednesday, May 3, 2023  
San Francisco, California, USA  
Harding Park

**Maja Stark**  
**Madelene Sagstrom**  
**Anna Nordqvist**  
**Caroline Hedwall**

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome, Team Sweden, to the media center here at the Hanwha LIFEPLUS International Crown. From left to right we have Anna Nordqvist, Maja Stark, Caroline Hedwall, and Madelene Sagstrom.

You've played in a lot of Solheim Cups and a couple Crowns. What is it you love so much about match play and maybe how is this event different from the Solheim Cups that you've played in?

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, I think what's so special about the team events is that we don't do it every week, and you get to have a teammate alongside you or you get to play for a team. It's just a totally different atmosphere. Everything from the practice round to the dinners at night, you just do everything as a team.

I've been very fortunate to be a part of this group this week, and obviously have very good memories from the past. I'll be teeing it up with Caroline tomorrow, and we've played a few matches over the years. Just very excited to get the opportunity to play with her again.

I think what makes this tournament different than the Solheim Cup, you get more countries involved. I know like Thailand and Korea, they love representing their flag, and they don't obviously get to be part of the Solheim Cup.

I think it's awesome that we just get to be so many different countries and everyone gets to experience the same thing playing for a team.

**Q. Maja, you're the only one here who hasn't played in a Crown before. What have you asked of your teammates about this event and what sort of advice**



**have you gotten from them?**

MAJA STARK: I haven't asked a lot. I asked on Monday. I saw the schedule and I said, when do we get to do what we want to, and they said "never." That's pretty much the only thing I asked.

But it's all fun. Have I asked any good questions?

MADELENE SAGSTROM: That was probably the best one.

MAJA STARK: Like any team event, I think we've all kind of grown up thinking the same way about team sports or team events like this. I don't think it's much to ask, honestly.

We have our rules that we've had for a long time, I guess, with the Swedish National Team that we're all kind of familiar with, I'm guessing.

**Q. Caroline, you've played a lot, as Anna mentioned, together. What makes this matchup work so well?**

CAROLINE HEDWALL: I think we know each other really well and we know how to speak to each other in the ups and the downs.

I just enjoy it a lot. We played a lot when we were younger together, and I think just knowing each other that well, it's crazy to say that I think we've known each other for 20 years. I feel really old when I say that. But it's true.

Then having that experience together, I think that's just the key.

**Q. Were there any conversations about you two not playing together, or is that just absolutely --**

CAROLINE HEDWALL: Not really. Not really.

MADELENE SAGSTROM: Anna asked the question and I was like, are we actually discussing this? I was like, the question should be who goes first and second.

**Q. Madelene, you have played before, as well, 2018. What sort of memories do you have from that last International Crown that you remember fondly, and**

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**what are you looking to this year that might be different?**

MADELENE SAGSTROM: Well, I think that what you're going to remember most from these weeks are the things that happen outside the golf course. It's the team bonding, it's the laughter, it's the nights, it's the dinners. It's all the things that makes us human, makes us enjoy this lifestyle even more.

The golf is fun, but it's having somebody backing you up no matter what, and that's what I always bring with me playing team events, ever since I was an amateur playing in Solheim and in 2018 in Korea, those are things, just representing our flag and representing each other and just having an amazing fun week together.

**Q. What are all of your impressions of Harding?**

ANNA NORDQVIST: It's hard.

MADELENE SAGSTROM: I mean, I think it's fantastic being a public golf course. I think it's a lot of fun. It's going to be a good challenge.

When the wind and the rain, if that comes this weekend it can be very interesting. I'm kind of really happy that we're playing four-ball match play because I don't really want to keep a score, to be honest. It feels very good.

**Q. At the end of the week, the team that wins will have done what well here?**

MADELENE SAGSTROM: Everything.

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah.

MAJA STARK: I think it's a challenge with everything. It's pretty long. It's very narrow in some places. Rough is thick. Tough greens.

Yeah, I think you have to be perfect --

MADELENE SAGSTROM: I think, too, we talked briefly, I'm not sure if it's going to be a birdiefest out there, so I think just having -- especially the first three days, like having two solid scores going at the same time is going to be key.

I think just having -- not trying to get yourself out of a hole but just keeping it up and making sure you've got your partner's back is going to be important.

I think making pars is going to be good, and then throw some birdies in there.

**Q. Maja, how much has the Swedish national program made a week like this even more comfortable given how early you get to know older players?**

MAJA STARK: Oh, I feel very comfortable here. We have two of the national coaches here this week, too, so I think this felt very natural.

I'm guessing we've all kind of grown up with having the rules that we have for team events. I'm very comfortable around them.

It feels pretty crazy to sit next to my idols that I had growing up. Yeah, it's a little bit unreal, but I'm very happy to be a part of it.

**Q. Do you remember the first time you met Anna?**

MAJA STARK: First time I met Anna, I think it was at a girls' camp, the big girls' camp.

ANNA NORDQVIST: It must have been like 2016.

MAJA STARK: I think it was a "coach" there because I was on the national team and there were younger girls there that we were in charge of. You went to that one, and then the next week after you played Evian and won, I think.

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, or the ShopRite, yeah. I'm known for practicing a lot, but I wasn't the last one to leave the putting green at night.

MAJA STARK: Caroline, when was the first time? It wasn't that long ago probably.

CAROLINE HEDWALL: Well, the first time was -- we played the LET event in Helsingborg and I went to visit a couple of the girls.

MAJA STARK: Oh, my God, I remember this. This is our coach's favorite story because she did a surprise visit to our hostel where we were staying. I was just sitting in the common area and I heard the door open and I looked back and it was Caroline, and then I looked back, and -- then I went like that and I couldn't believe my eyes.

Madelene, we had the same coach when I was in high school, so she would come visit quite a lot. Yeah, probably 2015, '16, something like that.

**Q. I was watching your practice round yesterday. You were speaking Swedish on the 18th hole so I didn't know what you said, but from your body language there was obviously a match going on. You took a**

**time-out. Did you do that to break up the monotony of practice rounds or was it divided of how you were going to play to just kind of get you in the mentality of the team competition?**

ANNA NORDQVIST: I think it was more about having fun. We teed off the back, so we played the back nine practice round and we all kept going for a couple more holes. Yeah, it was just some friendly banter, trying to have a little birdie match.

It came down to the last and Caroline took her time lag putting from 15 feet and she hit the lag putt for the win, so, yeah, it was a good time.

**Q. I saw you nearly ace the seventh hole recently at Pebble. Can you just talk about the experience of that day? Yesterday was media day for the U.S. Women's Open, so a lot of buzz about the championship. And then for all of you, your experience at Pebble.**

ANNA NORDQVIST: Yeah, so I didn't play last week, so I figured since I had never been to Pebble or that area before, I wanted to kind of experience it like non-tournament, because I know coming U.S. Open it's going to be crazy and it's a busy week.

I had an opportunity to go and I played 18 holes Sunday, and it's probably the best golf course I've played in the U.S. I was lucky with the weather. It started blowing two, two and a half clubs on the back nine, but what an amazing golf course.

Yeah, it was beyond what I could ever dream of, and it's going to be an amazing tournament there for the U.S. Women's Open. I've been pro since 2009, and just to have the opportunity to go to such like an iconic venue playing golf, I think it's an amazing opportunity for the women's game.

We've been getting more and more like special venues when we keep getting them. It's going to be a great test, but I just can't wait to see all the spectators and what it's like -- hopefully it's going to be a little bit warmer than 55 degrees in July. But you never know.

But I can't wait for the championship, and it's going to be a true test, and I think that's what makes the U.S. Women's Open so special.

MADELENE SAGSTROM: Nope.

MAJA STARK: Nope.

MADELENE SAGSTROM: I wish, if I could fit it into the

schedule maybe. It would be great because it's always nice to play some of those courses before just to have an idea of like where's the bathroom, where's the locker room, so you don't freak out when you get there.

But maybe.

**Q. Anna, can you expound upon the idea of elevating the women's game by going to iconic courses?**

ANNA NORDQVIST: Well, I think -- now it's going to make me sound old, but I've obviously been on Tour for a while and I think we should be playing at a course like Muirfield, like that was first in the rotation last year. You know, coming to Pebble Beach. Don't know if the women's Tour has ever had a tournament there. We play some great golf courses. I feel like the KPMG Women's Championship has had -- adding Sahalee, and we've had Olympic Club, Olympia Fields, just really tough golf courses that really test your game.

I think it's just only going to make the women's game better, but even having the opportunities -- I have a dream myself to get to play Augusta one day. Hopefully when I'm still playing, even before I'm just around.

Just coming to golf courses like you watched on TV, I think it's important, and I think we as a Tour, we deserve to play great golf courses like that. I think it's great when those golf courses are supportive of us coming there.

**Q. In regards to this tournament, since you've played enough Solheim Cups as well as this, can you talk about if the pressures are different either way between playing this and playing a Solheim Cup?**

ANNA NORDQVIST: I mean, it's a team event and you want to give everything for your team. It's obviously very different teeing it up this week than to a Solheim Cup, but I think this tournament is just going to keep growing and growing, and we're excited to have it back for the first time in a couple years.

I think the Solheim Cup, it's just such a buildup for two years and so much history and so much passion and just so much work that goes into it, and you are like 12 players on the team and you're going to need everyone to play well to get the Cup at the end of the week. You really play your heart out.

This week you're less people and you know maybe your point is even more important to make it to Sunday to have a chance. I feel like they're different in a sense, but they're both match plays and you both really want to try hard to be there for the team. You really don't want to be the one

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letting your team down, so you're going to be fighting probably extra hard this week.

But Solheim is just different because of all the history and all the memories and that atmosphere being a little bit different.

**Q. Building off of that, this is an opportunity for the Tour with its second team event. What do you think needs to happen this week for the tournament itself to be a success in your eyes?**

ANNA NORDQVIST: In my eyes? Well, I mean, I played it -- Sweden has made it to two out of the three. I had Caroline and Madelene in the last one in Korea and the tournament in Korea was amazing. We had a lot of spectators.

Just having it back on the schedule, and now we're going to have it back every other year for the next couple years, it's just nice to see that playing a team event, because I know how much it means to the Korean girls, the Chinese girls, and the Australian girls that don't have a team event.

I think that's why it's very important to have a team event like this to get more countries involved and have them experience what it's like. I think it's just going to keep growing.

**Q. The format change on Sunday, Caroline, you start. What's your thoughts on that, opinions, all that?**

CAROLINE HEDWALL: Well, it's obviously tougher playing foursomes than singles. I think it's a good thing. I really enjoy the format for the first three days. I think it's the right way to do it.

But just stepping it up a bit with foursomes and singles, I think that's the right way to do it.

MADELENE SAGSTROM: I think it's interesting. I think what we're -- to have the success and getting the tournament to grow or just getting women's golf to grow it's just creating that excitement around golf, so I think that could be interesting for spectators both to watch that and for TV, so it's going to be fun. It's going to be good.

ANNA NORDQVIST: I think it's good. You're ultimately playing for -- well, three points instead of two, and I think a lot more can happen. Where it was just two matches, now you have three matches.

If the first two matches go 1-1 and then you have the third one, that kind of determines it.

I think it just kind of -- it makes everyone have to even play better because there's more points on the board.

**Q. The numbers on the back of your jersey, can you tell us why you picked the number that you did?**

MADELENE SAGSTROM: I have 13 on my back, and 13 has always been my lucky number. I'm born Friday the 13th, so that was my pick.

CAROLINE HEDWALL: So I went for 13 but that was taken, and then I wanted 10 but that was taken. I went for 3 because my twin sister used to have that on her shirt when she played soccer.

MAJA STARK: I have 8 because I turned pro in August, I won my first pro event in August, and I won my first LPGA in August, and I played with ball No. 8 when it --

ANNA NORDQVIST: So I was lucky to get my favorite No. 10 ahead of Hedwall. 13 was already taken, but I wasn't considering that one.

But yeah, I'm born on the 10th and I used to have it on my golf ball when I could pick a number. I guess there's some good soccer players that have No. 10, too, but that's nothing that came to mind. But 10 is my favorite number.

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