

The Memorial Tournament Presented By Workday

Tuesday, June 4, 2024

Dublin, Ohio, USA

Muirfield Village

Jack Nicklaus

Jackson Koivun

Leandro Mihaich

Jackson Klutznick

Grant Greazel

Isac Wallin

Juli Inkster

Press Conference - Nicklaus Award

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everybody. I'm Dan Sullivan, Executive Director for the The Memorial Tournament presented by Workday. Welcome to the 49th Memorial Tournament. We have a great week ahead of us.

This is the traditional timing for the Jack Nicklaus press conference -- and I'm going to take one thing from Scott here. With that timing we -- this year, because of our change of date, we've had the unique opportunity to recognize the Jack Nicklaus Award recipients on Tuesday as opposed to Sunday, giving the D-I Player of the Year the chance to play in The Memorial Tournament, which is obviously exciting for him and for the tournament.

So what we are doing today is recognizing the nation's college Player of the Year and not only Division I, but Division II, III, NAIA as well as the junior college level. We're excited to have the gentlemen here. They have come from all over the country. I know a couple of them played in the U.S. Open qualifier yesterday.

In addition to recognizing the Jack Nicklaus Award recipients, we have a special opportunity because of the timing and because of our friend Juli Inkster being here with us as the honoree to also recognize the Juli Inkster Award winner, which goes to the top D-I collegiate player in her final year of eligibility within college. So Juli will come up and visit with us in a second.



PRESENTED BY



We're very much honored to have Aneel Bhusri here, who is our presenting sponsor, founder, cofounder, and executive chairman of Workday. Workday is a very unique position where they are not only sponsoring the Juli Inkster award, but they're also sponsoring the Jack Nicklaus Award, so we have this great opportunity to bring.

Thank you Aneel and Workday for being such a great supporter of college sports.

(Applause.)

So I don't think any other place has that opportunity to recognize great colleague athletes. So at this time I'm going to ask Juli to come up and talk about the Juli Inkster Award and recognize that player, who unfortunately is not here today, but we'll definitely recognize her in our releases going out today.

Juli.

JULI INKSTER: Thank you, everyone. First of all, congratulations to you guys. Golf is really hard and you guys are very good at what you do, so congratulations to all of you.

I'm here to recognize with Workday my Inkster Award, and just to kind of -- a little backtrack on it, the LPGA qualifying school is always in the fall and a lot of girls were leaving early to go to the LPGA and not really finishing out their obligation to their school, their teammates, and their coach. You could be, like, the third or fourth person on a team and maybe have a really good chance of winning a national championship and your best players are leaving for the LPGA, so Anne Walker from Stanford and I got together and we put this award together.

So basically, it's for the highest-ranking senior player that finishes four years of college to their school. With that, while we start their career, Workday gives them \$50,000 to start on the LPGA, we get a sponsor exemption in Portland, Oregon, and they go right to the second stage of qualifying school, and then they spend two days with me on a mentorship. I have them come out and they stay at my house and we play golf and we just talk about what's their next journey because going from college golf to



professional golf is a huge jump. Everything is really done for you in college, travel, when you practice, what you eat, when you work out, and then all of a sudden you leave school and you're out there on your own.

So I try to help them navigate their next year in professional golf. This is the fifth year I've done this, and Ingrid Lindblad from LSU is the recipient of the Juli Inkster Award. She's a five-time All America, she's from Sweden, just an overall great player. I think she's going to really do well on the LPGA. She is playing her first professional event this week in Michigan on the Epson Tour. She's 24 years old and just a great ball-striker. I think she's going to really do well.

So I would like to thank Aneel and Workday for really giving me this opportunity to have this award. I wanted an award that I could kind of keep mentoring these girls, and this is my fifth, and I talk to most of 'em once a week, so it wasn't just an award I wanted to give and move on. This is something that I was really passionate about, is helping these girls navigate on the Tour because it can be lonely out there and sometimes you just need a someone to talk to.

So thank you to Jack and The Memorial and Dan Sullivan for giving me this opportunity to announce my winner here and I look forward to the week. Thanks.

(Applause.)

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Juli. We couldn't be more proud that you're our 2024 honoree. We look forward to tomorrow afternoon. For those of you who are staying with us tomorrow afternoon, 2 o'clock on the driving range we'll have an opportunity to recognize Juli.

Okay. Now, we are going to hand it over to Dustin Roberts to come on up and introduce the gentlemen who are representing the Jack Nicklaus Award this year and move on with the program. Thanks.

DUSTIN ROBERTS: Thank you, Dan. And before we get started, I would like to add my congratulations to Ingrid, who, in my opinion, is one of the greatest players in college golf history and also somehow one of the most underrated.

But this year's Jack Nicklaus Award recipients for National Player of Year.

First, from Division I, Jackson Koivun. So Jackson is the only golfer to win the Ben Hogan, Jack Nicklaus, and Phil Mickelson Outstanding Freshman Awards in the same season. He finished inside the top 10 in 12 of his 13 tournaments, including a runner-up finish at the 2024

NCAA Division I Championship and the SEC Championship and winning the SEC Championship.

He had the lowest adjusted scoring average NCAA Division I this season with a 67.3. He led the Tigers to 10 tournament wins, including their first national championship and fifth SEC championship while going 7-0 in post-season Match Play.

Joining Jackson today are his parents, George and Meghan Koivun, his head coach, Nick Clinard, who just a few minutes ago was named the recipient of the Dave Williams National Coach of the Year Award. So congratulations, Nick.

(Applause.)

And assistant coach, Chris Williams.

(Applause.)

Our Division II recipient is Leandro Mihaich from Oklahoma Christian. The sophomore from Bell Ville, Argentina, won the Lone Star Conference Championship, finished second at the South Central/West Regional, won both of his matches in the 2024 NCAA Division II Championship.

With nine top-10 finishes and 7 top-5s, Mihaich earned the Lone Star Conference Newcomer of the Year, First Team All-Conference, and PING First Team All-America Honors while leading the Eagles to their third straight NCAA championship appearance.

Leandro is joined today by his coach, David Lynn.

From Division III, Jackson Klutznick from Emory. Klutznick is a three-time PING First Team All-America selection. A senior from Denver, Colorado, he recorded nine top-15 finishes and a 70 adjusted stroke average was the lowest in NCAA Division III. He broke multiple Emory records with his 11-stroke victory at the Gate City Invitational, including eight birdies and a hole-in-one during his final round 61.

He will become just the third NCAA Division III player to compete in the Arnold Palmer Cup this summer at Lahinch Golf Club.

Joining Jackson here today is his father, John Klutznick and assistant coach, Keenan Hickton.

From the NAIA, Isac Wallin. Isac is from Keiser and is the first Seahawk to win Sun Conference Golfer of the Year Awards multiple times. He recorded the lowest adjusted scoring average in NAIA with 69.9 and finished inside the top 10 nine times this season.



A senior from Sweden, he won four of his 10 tournaments. He shot a school record 54, hole total of 199 to win the Saint Leo Invitational. He is a three-time PING First Team All-America selection.

From the NJCA, Grant Greazel Kirkwood. A sophomore from Marshalltown, Iowa, he won the Division II Championship by five strokes and led his team to a second place finish. He won four times this season and posted five additional top-3 finishes. He placed in the top 15 all three of his tournaments this season.

He's joined by his mother, Bianca Bennett; father, Lance Greazel; girlfriend, Kendall; and head coach, Darren Pint.

Before we turn the podium over to Mr. Nicklaus, I would like to take a moment to also thank Mr. Bhusri for his sponsorship of college golf. College golf is very appreciative of everything you do. It's not just for the men's college golf, but for women's college golf.

Mr. Nicklaus.

JACK NICKLAUS: Okay, Dustin. Well, thank you very much.

Juli, congratulations. I think it's great what you're doing, and even greater is to have Aneel sponsored for you.

But we're going to run you out of money, you know that?

No, but Workday has been fantastic. They helped us with everything here, they helped the girls, helping the guys, and you know, his commitment to the game of golf has been something that has been very, very special and very unique, and we thank you, Aneel. Thank you.

We love having the guys and the gals here, now that we've added the gals. I love having the guys here that have won the awards each year, and I hear some of the résumés and see some of the scores they have shot. 67? 67. I was lucky to ever shoot a 67 in college. The scores that these guys shoot today, I think it's -- they're going to finish up their college career when they do, and if they go to the TOUR, which I think most of 'em probably will, they're going to have a great background and a great future in front of 'em.

I love seeing what's happened to college golf this year and the last couple years. You see more college golf being shown on television, and I think that has been a great plus for the game, I think it's a great plus not only for the game, but also for recruiting for you coaches. To see these kids being played on television, have them display their talents,

it's something very special.

So, congratulations to all of you. I think we're going to get an individual presentation here, aren't we, Dustin? You changed the order on me. (Laughing).

That's all right. Anyway, we're going to present each one of the young men their trophy and then we're going to have Jackson -- he's playing this year. This is the first time we've had our winner have the ability to be here and play. So we wish him well this week. He only got about -- it's not like beating 144, you only got about 72 to beat. So we got a smaller field for you.

Anyway, we wish you all well and let's move on with it, Dustin, get these guys their award and let them -- Jackson probably wants to -- have you played already today? All done? You're going to go play, aren't you? Yeah. We'll get you out there. You're going to find out that you got to hit a little soft shot in there that you've been throwing in.

We were talking coming in here. You know, Scott Tolley, who is with me and so forth, Scott's a big Florida State guy, and of course I went to Ohio State, and Jackson put the two of those two teams away himself the last two rounds in the NCAA.

Anyway, congratulations, guys.

DUSTIN ROBERTS: Our first trophy presentation, Jackson Koivun from Auburn.

(Applause.)

JACK NICKLAUS: I've got a granddaughter going to Auburn next year. You better look her up. She's pretty cute. (Laughing).

DUSTIN ROBERTS: Next, Leandro Mihaich.

(Applause.)

DUSTIN ROBERTS: Jackson Klutznick.

(Applause.)

DUSTIN ROBERTS: Isac Wallin.

(Applause.)

DUSTIN ROBERTS: Grant Greazel.

(Applause.)

JACK NICKLAUS: Congratulations, guys.



DUSTIN ROBERTS: All right. So we're going to start our Q&A with giving each of the recipients a chance to ask Mr. Nicklaus a question.

JACK NICKLAUS: And how are we doing that?

DUSTIN ROBERTS: Jackson, go ahead and get started.

JACKSON KOIVUN: You know, there's thousands and thousands of PGA TOUR pros. What do you feel like separated you from the rest of 'em?

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, the first thing you do is the same thing you're doing right now, is you go win. I go back to my college and I played -- we didn't play as freshmen, and I didn't play as a sophomore. I made the Walker Cup team and my golf coach -- you guys wouldn't do this today. I went and made the Walker Cup team and the golf coach says, Boy, are you going to have a great spring. I says, no. Kep was his name. I said, Kep, we're going to have a great team. He says, No, no, no. You're not going to school this spring. You're going to go play golf.

So I went over and played. I played the Masters, the North & South, British Amateur, Walker Cup matches, and then came back to school, played my last two years. And, you know, as I played in college, I was fortunate enough to win the national amateur and almost won the U.S. Open twice and won the U.S. Amateur again the second time.

Well, you know, that's how you get to where you're going. Don't jump over the progression. In other words, they're saying, how do you win when you get to the TOUR? Well, you got to beat everybody you're getting to before you get there. I never thought I was all that great a player until I made the Walker Cup team, and I said, Hmm, I must be one of the 12 best amateurs to make the Walker Cup team. And then I won the U.S. Amateur later that year and I was ranked No. 1, and I was 19 years old. You're 19, aren't you? And I said, Hmm, I must be better than I think I am.

But I didn't put myself in front of that. I didn't jump up to the next level. I kept playing my college golf, I played a lot of amateur tournaments, played a lot of TOUR tournaments too, but as an amateur, and, you know, I let my progression work up to grow into it. I wasn't ready at age 19 to go play the TOUR. You know, I might have made it eventually, but because I played enough golf that gave me a progression to get up there and grow, I got there -- when I got there, I was ready to play.

I won a whole 33.33 my first tournament. I tied for 50th in L.A. That was my first tournament. Then I remember I

won \$540 my second, \$440 my third, \$256 my fourth, and \$250 my fifth, and then I finished second in Phoenix and won \$2,333, I think it was for second place finish.

Anyway. But you know, that was the question you asked me. Yeah, I mean, don't get ahead of yourself. You've had a great season and you may be ready, you may want to play another three years of college. I don't know what you want to do. But, you know, a little seasoning won't hurt you, and neither would a college education, incidentally.

Grant?

GRANT GREAZEL: Would there be anything you would change in your pro career if you could go back and do it again?

JACK NICKLAUS: I don't have any shots that I would go back. People have asked me that question, anything I would change. You know, what I did progression-wise and so forth I was quite happy with what happened to me with that. But I don't have any shots that I -- but I have two shots that somebody else played; one Trevino and one Watson. They both chipped in on two holes that kept me from winning majors, on the 17th hole both of 'em. But anyway.

When Trevino chipped in at Birkdale -- or in Muirfield in '72, I would have held all four major championships at the same time, but he chipped in on 17, and then I ended up losing by 1.

And then Watson chipped in at Pebble Beach. That was '82. Chipped in at Pebble Beach. They were congratulating me on the 18 green for winning my fifth U.S. Open and all of a sudden this big roar went up on 17 and Watson was running a cross the green after chipping it in. So don't get too far ahead of yourself again.

But I was actually -- you know, I always felt like every shot I played I took responsibility for. It wasn't anybody else's fault. It was my fault if I played a bad shot or whatever I did. But also, it was my fault when I played a good one.

So, you know, did I play bad shots? Sure, I played a lot of bad shots. Everybody plays a lot of bad shots. But you just sort of dust those right under the table and go play it and play your next ball. You got to go chase after it anyway. It's your ball, right? So I don't have any regrets of anything that happened. I was very fortunate that way.

ISAC WALLIN: Now I'm done in college, I'm going to turn pro start of next year. Maybe these guys have some few years left in college, but what's your best advice for me to start my like pro career?

JACK NICKLAUS: Start your pro career? Well, I don't know how they start pro careers today, but I know that the -- you know, you'll have to probably qualify someplace. The PGA TOUR is a pretty darn good place to start. They do a pretty good job.

There's one thing here in the United States -- you're from Sweden?

ISAC WALLIN: Yeah.

JACK NICKLAUS: Here in the United States, which we are very blessed that the PGA TOUR has supported junior golf, amateur golf, college golf, all the way through to where we feel like we have a little bit of indebtedness to the TOUR for that. And so when you starting back out and wherever you start, you have been -- there's many layers that have been supported before you get there. So when you get out to qualify to make it, then you work your way up through it, and the progression they work up through today, I think is pretty darn good.

You'll qualify for wherever you qualify. If you qualify for the Korn Ferry Tour or -- that's probably where you go first, but it's a good, easy progression of if you play well, you get rewarded and you move on. I mean, if you look at these guys that are here this week, a lot of those guys, it wasn't very long ago they were playing that Korn Ferry Tour.

So just be patient. I have a lot of guys -- I always I just go back with a story with Rory McIlroy. You guys will enjoy this story. Rory was 19 years old. He came to me and I was down at the Bear's Club. He was playing in the Honda tournament down there. And he said -- you know, he says, I can't finish. Now he's 19 years old. He says, I can't finish. He says, I haven't won in a year. He won in Dubai and he hadn't won in a year. And he says, I can't seem to get to finish.

I said, Rory, I says, you're 19 years old. Be patient. Be patient. I says, it will happen. And I said, I remember when I was on TOUR, one of the officials told me, he says, Jack, he says, be patient. If you don't -- one of these days you won't shoot 37 the last nine holes, you'll shoot 33, and you'll win the tournament. And he says, but that will happen.

So anyway, about three weeks later Rory went on to play in Charlotte and shot 63 the last round and won by about eight or nine shots. So I dropped him a note, and I said -- you know, I said, I told you to be patient, but this is ridiculous.

And anyway, I got a kick out of that because that's what

you do. You've got to be patient. You'll qualify a certain place -- there are some guys that haven't qualified as high as they would like to qualify, but if you're a good player, you work at it, you'll work your way up.

ISAC WALLIN: What week was the most important week for you your entire career?

JACK NICKLAUS: Probably winning the U.S. Amateur when I was 19 years old. I came to the last hole. I had a 36-hole match, I was playing the defending can champion, Charlie Coe. We were playing The Broadmoor out in Colorado. And we were all tied at the end of 35 holes and the 36th hole we both played 3-wood off the tee, he hit it off the back fringe and I hit it in about eight feet short of the hole. And he chipped it, the ball just rolled, it just stopped on the edge of the hole, I was quick to give him that putt, believe me. And I made the 8-footer. So I then, all of a sudden, now I realize that in a big situation and when it was important I could make that putt. I knew it because I did it. So that carried me into the next event to when I got to the next time I had an opportunity like that, I knew -- I said, Well, you've done it before, you know how to do it, go do it. So, in other words, it's, again, it's a progression, it's being patient, it's, again, being, doing the things that you need to do to get you that next level, just keep working. And you look back at some of the things that you did maybe two, three years ago, may be the most important thing you've done in your life. Okay?

GRANT GREAZEL: Mr. Nicklaus, you obviously had an incredible career of playing. I'm curious what your proudest or maybe favorite moment would be, kind of being on the outside, maybe someone else playing what you would consider to be one of your personal favorite moments.

JACK NICKLAUS: Well, my first, my most personal famous moment is when I met her, the young lady sitting right there. Met her my first week in college.

(Applause.)

That set the tone of my career. Not everybody gets the right partner. And I had somebody who loved me, cared for me, supported me, and you know, that was really important. So that was a big thing to me. I don't know that anything that was anymore important than that to me. And then of course obviously we have five children, I have 24 grandchildren and seven great grandchildren, so we got a few mouths to feed at home. But that's all because of her, and I think that, I give her a lot of credit for what I've won because, you know, a golfer goes out on TOUR and if you're not married, if you got your family, you get support, your caddie or whoever, whoever it might be, that's very

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important to you. Because you know, I don't mean this in a nasty way, but I remember when Tiger was single and Tiger, then he got married and they said, I said, Well how do you think that will effect Tiger's career? And I said, Well, I think it will only be a plus. I says, he's going to get tired of coming home and telling Butch Harmon, he says, Hey, Butch, I won another one. He had somebody to share it with. You want to share your career and enjoy the fruits of your work. Okay? You got any other questions you guys have? You got what you need? Somebody wants to get out and play golf, too, I can see that on his face. Anyway, thank you all very much. Again, Aneel, thank you, Juli, congratulations thank you and thank you all of you, appreciate it. And Dustin, how many years have you been up here?

DUSTIN ROBERTS since 2007.

JACK NICKLAUS: Just 17 years? 18, 18th time. He does a great job. Give Dustin a little clap.

(Applause.)

Thank you all so much.

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