

U.S. Women's Open

Thursday, June 4, 2026

Pacific Palisades, California, USA

The Riviera Country Club

JoAnne Carner

Amy Alcott

Press Conference



MIKE TROSTEL: Good morning everyone, my name is Mike Trostel, director of the World Golf Hall of Fame, and it's my pleasure to be here with two members of the world Golf Hall of Fame. JoAnne Carner, an eight-time USGA champion, the only player to have won the U.S. Girl's Junior, the U.S. Amateur, and the U.S. Women's Open in your last US. Open 50 years ago in 1976.

And Amy Alcott, two-time USGA champion. Won the 1973 U.S. Girls' Junior and the 1980 U.S. Women's Open, with some local ties here to this area and of course being a member here at Riviera Country Club.

Amy, let's start with you. What is it like to have the U.S. Women's Open here at Riviera just a few miles away from where you grew up?

AMY ALCOTT: Well, I always dreamed of having a U.S. Open here. I always thought that this would be a great venue for the women players, the best women players in the world, and the USGA has done a great job the last several years of putting the women on more notable golf courses, which they should be on.

Just in general as a young kid playing out here and grooming my golf game out here and working on my short game and all the things from probably 13 years old, I just -- I know what a great golf course this is and what a great variety of holes it showcases.

It's just really great to see the event here. It just kind of warms my heart.

MIKE TROSTEL: Joanne, you've played in nearly 100 USGA Championships all over the country. What are some of the fondest memories you have starting with the Girls Junior all the way up through the U.S. Women's Open, of playing in these women's championships?

JOANNE CARNER: Well, any USGA event is probably the hardest because you get very fast greens, you get rough.

You can't play four perfect rounds. You know you're going to be off. So you have to work on your short game all the time. And learn to hit out of the rough and learn to accept that you're not going to hit it that well at a USGA event.

Q. Amy, you were here a little bit earlier this week and you spoke to the amateurs in the field, the 25 amateurs playing this week here at Riviera. What are some things that you told them, and what was that night like to talk to all the ams?

AMY ALCOTT: Well, I told them I played my first U.S. Open at Rochester Country Club. I think it was 1972. I was 15 or 16, and I led the U.S. Open shooting 70. Played a lot of good trash shots.

Out of the -- as JoAnne was talking, out of the rough. Found a way to shoot 80 the next day and missed the cut by one.

But I just told them that you have to live your life with gratitude. The opportunity to just be here and play in a U.S. Open is something you'll treasure for the rest of your life. Just to enjoy it and also that not every one of them in the room was meant to be a pro golfer. This game, as we all know, is a gift, and you can use it in so many other ways beyond taking it to the pro stage.

You have to have the right internal makeup. You have to understand that you may play with 14 clubs, but it's this 15th club between your ears that will make you a great champion. It was enjoyable to be with them all.

Q. JoAnne, for you, talking about that 15th club that Amy talked about, what do you think made you so successful in those USGA Championships over the years?

JOANNE CARNER: I think just because I didn't expect to play perfect golf. So it didn't ever bother me to hit into the sand or into the trees or whatnot. I would immediately start thinking about, as I'm walking up, thinking about the next shot. If it's sand and I'm thinking about what the green looks like, all this, I never really got down on myself at any time.



Q. Would love both of your reactions to just how much women's golf has grown since you both competed on the LPGA and were playing in the USGA Championships.

JOANNE CARNER: Well, I was at it for 35 years or something like that. It was endless. A player makes right now in one tournament what I made in my whole career. So that's the huge difference is the amount of money they're playing for.

Other than that, there's probably more exceptionally good players. We always had sort of top five, top ten among the pros that you could bet were going to win each week, you know, one out of that. What I see out here is there's a lot of them that can.

AMY ALCOTT: Well, I would agree with JoAnne. It's like night and day. I would like to say, I'm oftentimes asked, you know, you really can't compare generations of players out here. JoAnne and her husband Don were great mentors to me when I first joined the Tour as a young player. We both played for the same company, and we were great shot makers, I like to think. Loved hitting those wedge shots and practicing.

JoAnne was always a brilliant putter and more than anything, a real gamer. So it's with gratitude that I'm here with her today because she was of another generation with me.

I can remember -- I'll answer your question in a second. I can remember being at the DuPont Country Club at the LPGA Championship in Wilmington, Delaware, and I shot like a 68. Someone from the press came over to me and asked me a similar question. How has the Tour changed? And I said, well -- and now these players are now veterans. And I said, well, this gal over here, she had her Power Bar and she's got her team with her and she's got an endorsement deal drinking a certain kind of water and she's got a yoga instructor, and she's got that, all these modern day things.

I flipped the guy's shoulders around and I said, see that lady on the putting green? He says, yeah, JoAnne Carner working on her putting over there? I said, JoAnne, her breakfast in the morning is a half a grapefruit and three cups of coffee and your cigarette (laughter). And she likes to imbibe a nice vodka every now and then.

That's how the Tour's changed. You have this very natural grassroots player that came out of Washington the way JoAnne did, became one of the great women golfers of all time as kind of a grassroots player. Now you have the

generation I was talking about. And now that generation, this generation is kind of on steroids.

So they've got their stretching and their -- we're in a whole other age. I don't know if that answers your question, but it's also a little bit of a story.

Q. You guys have been friends and known each other for a long time. How long has it been since you two were together? Is this a nice little reunion for both of you?

AMY ALCOTT: Yes.

JOANNE CARNER: It's great. I played the Women's Seniors and would run into them then. Other than that, I'm on one coast, she's on the other. But Amy does call me several times during the year just to make sure I'm alive (laughter).

AMY ALCOTT: You'd better stay alive a long time, JoAnne. You've got a lot of people that really love you and admire your wisdom and your great play throughout the years.

Q. JoAnne, you've been a great ambassador for the game for many years. Amy, same to you, and especially this week being an ambassador this week here at Riviera. I'm curious, I don't want to get too far ahead of this week, but the Olympics will be here. I'm wondering if you are -- the stage and how big that will be for women's golf with a global and wider reach beyond even this week. How excited you are for that and for women's golf?

AMY ALCOTT: I think it's great the Olympics will be at Riviera in 2028. I mean, this is a great venue for the U.S. Women's Open. It's just one of the great classic golf courses. I think -- you know, I think there's always been controversy even going back to 2016 in Rio because I was involved in the design of the golf course there with Gil Hanse.

Does golf really need to be in the Olympics? You know, that was the big question mark. Golf has the Ryder Cup, the Solheim Cup, the International Cup, the Presidents Cup. Does it really need to be in the Olympics? I think it does because the game has gotten so global.

Stand here, look down that fairway, and you've got probably 30 countries that are being -- you know, that are in women's golf now. The leaderboard is definitely. So I think it will be a great, great venue.

Q. Kind of following up on the question about the

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

growth of women's golf since you two played, what are your thoughts on the popularity and like the fan base and how that has changed?

JOANNE CARNER: I see it changed -- I mean, naturally, when we started getting the really fine players out of Japan and Korea, brought in a whole new type of fan. The LPGA has done such a great job of interviewing them so that they see how hard they work to speak English and whatnot. They're all very versatile, and a lot of them come over here to college to play golf.

It just keeps growing actually. More and more countries, as Amy said. I don't see an end to it not growing even more.

AMY ALCOTT: You remember when it was 1976. It was my -- year and a half I'd been on the Tour. Do you remember when Chako Higuchi, the No. 1 player in Japan at the time, she came over and played in the PGA Championship. That just opened the floodgates for all the great Japanese players. Okamoto and all of them. That was kind of the beginning of it, wasn't it?

JOANNE CARNER: Exactly. Chako was a great ambassador. Same as --

AMY ALCOTT: Ayako now so many other great players. There's no question. I mean, if you look at the college golf teams and you see how many Americans are on these teams, I mean, versus Sweden, Poland. I mean, they're from everywhere. I mean, the players are from every country now, and they want to come and they want to play on the best Tour in the world, and that's right here.

Q. So many of these players look up to you as heroes. Who are some players you enjoy watching in the women's game as you're taking it in?

JOANNE CARNER: Well, I never really had an idol, someone that I would like to emulate and whatnot.

I just enjoyed watching them and would watch them on the driving range as well as when I played with them and whatnot.

I lost my train of thought.

AMY ALCOTT: Have you ever watched somebody hit a bunker shot and said to yourself, hell, I could still do that? You were always so good out of the bunkers. Get in there with that glove you always had half on, half off.

JOANNE CARNER: Yeah.

AMY ALCOTT: You know.

JOANNE CARNER: Yeah, I can remember.

AMY ALCOTT: With Joanne it was all feel.

JOANNE CARNER: Yeah, I remember trying to teach one of the girls how to hit out of the heavy rough or right around the green. She couldn't get it and couldn't get it.

She finally looked over at me and she said, you got your glove not fastened. I said, yeah, because I want to keep it loose, my hands loose, and let them drop down lower.

So she hadn't been hitting it well. She took the -- unstrapped her glove, set down, took a couple practice swings, and holed it. So that was it.

But I had a different way of playing than most of -- I wasn't the -- nowadays everything is so mechanical.

AMY ALCOTT: Yeah.

JOANNE CARNER: They all swing great now. You don't see any Lee Trevinos or whatnot, the unusual swingers. They're all taught so mechanical. But teaching is just simplified where they can put together something that works for almost everybody in golf, rather than, you know, this one is good at carrying slices and so on, you know.

Q. We've alluded to it a little bit, how much fun, Amy, are you having this week just to see your LPGA counterparts, fellow female golfers, just take on Riviera? How cool is it to look back on little Amy playing out here and being here now as a great ambassador for golf?

AMY ALCOTT: Yeah, I can still see myself with my little bag. I still carry it late in the afternoon down the fairway here in the light with the smell of the Eucalypts trees and really I'm thrilled that the event is here. You know, I don't lose cited that I was a young kid with a joy of a game and parents that didn't play golf but gave me this wonderful opportunity.

When I'm out there carrying the bag late in the afternoon going down No. 12 or 13, you know, I'm doing it for all the right reasons, you know. I think in life that's important to do things for all the right reasons.

That, you know -- I didn't mind spending all the countless hours. Earlier in the week he was talking about all the movie stars and people that I would meet here and putt with Rita Hayworth; had Dean Martin as one of my sponsors. Hit balls on the driving range with Jim Backus

who was the voice of Mr. Magoo, see all these people around.

But it was that time that I spent by myself, that every pro golfer, nobody sees that time that they're spending. You have to really enjoy being with your own self, and spending time out there grooming your game and fixing it on your own so you know how to channel that under pressure.

I don't lose sight of that, all the emotions I have during this week. So I just think it's great. I always thought it was a tremendous course. When I was in high school I used to tee off at 6:30 in the morning with that group of guys from the back tees.

I learned how to swear and how to drink. (Laughter.) When we came in, I've never seen a bloody mary, but once or twice a week just before I turned pro, they put me back on this back tee and in the fog here, just a day like today, and I couldn't hit any of the par-4s in two.

You know, I tee'd off on No. 3. Come up 40 yards short with two full shots and the way I had to learn how to get the ball up and down. So when I got on the Tour a year or so later, even though I was a kid, I had all the shots. That's what a course like Riviera kind of teaches you, you know.

Anyway I can ramble on for too long here.

MIKE TROSTEL: JoAnne Carner, Amy Alcott, thank you so much for being here. Two U.S. Women's Open champions in the history of that championship is so great. It's made even better by both of you being here at Riviera this week.

AMY ALCOTT: Thank you, Mike.

JOANNE CARNER: Thank you.

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