

# The Annika driven by Gainbridge at Pelican

Wednesday, November 1, 2023

Belleair, Florida, USA

Pelican Golf Club

**Annika Sorenstam**

**Billie Jean King**

**Lyn St. James**

**Leela Srinivasan**

Press Conference

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: We will get things going on this call. Again, hello everybody, my name is Jeremy Friedman. Thank you for joining us today for this unique and tremendous press conference discussing Parity Week, which is a celebration of women's sports taking place next week, November 6 through 12.

Joining us today are three icons in women's sports and three Hall of Famers: World Golf Hall of Famer Annika Sorenstam, international tennis Hall of Famer Billie Jean King, and automotive Hall of Famer Lyn St. James.

Also joining us on the call is my co-host and tag-team partner for the call, Parity CEO Leela Srinivasan.

Now, without further ado, I would like to turn the call over to Leela Srinivasan. She's going to preview everything going on that we have next week across the world literally with these three events with Parity Week by Gainbridge.

She'll also welcome our esteemed panelists. Leela, the floor or the Zoom is yours.

LEELA SRINIVASAN: Thank you so much, Jeremy. Thank you for joining us today. This really does feel like a pretty unique press event. We're here today to celebrate the remarkable journeys of three true icons in the world of sports. They just happen to be women.

These are three women who deserve to be recognized not only for their just incredible, extraordinary talents on the court, on the course, on the track, but also for the crucial role that each of them have played in paving the way for the next generation of women athletes and leaders.



I think you'll agree this feels like a very timely conversation. People are really talking about 2023 as the year of women's sports. We've seen incredible growth and interest. We've seen a surge attention this year.

At Parity we think of this less as a moment and more as a movement and one many, many years in the making. As we reflect on this transformative time, it's a great time to pause and acknowledge the powerful strides that we've taken and the remarkable women who have all along the way defied the stereotypes, shattered glass ceilings, and really ignited a spark that continues to inspire all of us, millions if not billions of us around the world.

That brings me to Parity Week by Gainbridge. This week-long celebration was designed to pay tribute to the icons who have been the driving force behind where we are today and the remarkable growth that we've seen in women's sports.

Parity Week by Gainbridge is centered around three flagship events which kick off November 6th and run through the 12th.

First we have The ANNIKA driven by Gainbridge at Pelican in Belleair Florida. The tournament runs the 9th through the 12th of November.

We have the Billie Jean King Cup by Gainbridge taking place in Seville, Spain with all -- you know, throughout the week culminating in the finals over the 11th and 12th.

And then last but not least, the Women in Motorsports North America's Women with Drive III -- Driven by Mobil 1 Summit taking place in Phoenix, Arizona, November 7th and 8th, and Gainbridge of course is a sponsor there, too.

As for Gainbridge, Gainbridge has become an emerging merging leader in the women's sports sponsorship space, and I think this floors me, 40% of their annual sponsorship dollars go to support women's sports.

Let me put that in context for you. The national average is just 9%. So 40%, 9%, A pretty remarkable commitment by Gainbridge. Gainbridge has invested financially in each of



these events, and over the course of the seven days of Parity Week 180 women athletes will be competing for nearly \$13 million in prize money, which feels like something really worth celebrating.

The namesake for Parity Week is Gainbridge's sister company, Parity, where I am privileged to be the CEO. For those who are not familiar with Parity, we are a brand sponsorship platform and we are dedicated to closing the gender income and opportunity gap in professional sports.

The way we did that is we develop high-impact campaigns and collaborations between brands like Gainbridge -- between brands and also between professional athletes and their fans bringing those three audiences together.

Parity has proudly put millions of dollars directly in the pockets of women athletes, and we have over 900 women athletes that we're proud to work with over 75 different sports, including golf, motorsports, and tennis, but everything you can think of from American football women players, all the way through weight lifting.

We are proud also to work with dozens of brands including Gainbridge, but also Microsoft, Morgan Stanley, Strava, and many others.

Over the course of Parity Week, not only will you see athletes obviously competing, but you will see a good number of Parity athletes involved in activations, both in person at the events as well as across social media platforms we will be amplifying the week and the overall message.

I should mention that Parity and Gainbridge are both companies in the Group 1001 universe, so Group 1001 is a parent company to Gainbridge, and the majority shareholder of Parity.

I've asked Group 1001 CEO Dan Towriss before about his advocacy. Like why does he invest in women's sports. His response to me has simply been, because it's the right thing to do.

Dan is one of those people in the world that believes the best way to create change is to lead by example and hope others will follow. So I could say much more about Parity. We are obviously gearing for a ton of very exciting activations and celebrations of women in sports, and we can add a link in the chat to a landing page where you can see all the details.

Let's now turn over to this incredible panel. They need no introduction, but just as a reminder, we have the 72-time LPGA Tour event winner, Annika Sorenstam; the 39-time

Grand Slam champion, Billie Jean King; and the 1992 Indy 500 Rookie of the Year, Lyn St. James, the first woman ever to win that award.

Quick question for each before we open things up. Billie, let's start with you. You have long been -- so great to see you.

BILLIE JEAN KING: Great to see you Leela.

LEELA SRINIVASAN: So great to see you. I had to compose myself before I got on this call, just the thought of having this opportunity.

But I will say you have long been a champion of social change and equality. Thankfully we've come a long way from late '60s, I believe when you won the Wimbledon singles, doubles, and mixed doubles in 1967, and you received a 45 pound gift token your efforts.

In my mind you haven't just paved the way, you've architected it.

My question for you, in your eyes, how would you say the landscape has changed for women athletes over the years if you think about the totality of compensation, sponsorship, media coverage, visibility, and what more can we do to expedite this exciting growth and change we are seeing?

BILLIE JEAN KING: First of all, Parity is already doing it. Also Gainbridge, like you said, 40%. We're trying to get everyone to do 50/50 men and women.

Things are just now -- Lyn St. James and I were talking about this earlier -- that it seems like we may be at a tipping point. We don't know, but we're hoping a lot there.

I think this is an example of the tipping point, what we're doing this week with Gainbridge. I think that and with the 900 athletes which Parity has, it's just fantastic. The thing is to get money in their pockets, which has always been difficult for women athletes.

Wasserman just came out with that we're finally getting 15% of the media. We have been stuck and 4% and barely 5% forever, since I can remember. So to get to 15 at the beginning, I think we're now at a tipping point because people want to sponsor us. They care about us. They want us have equality, particularly CEOs who have daughters. Makes a big difference as well.

We have had some amazing male allies to help us get to this point, as well as women.

LEELA SRINIVASAN: I think you're right. That media



coverage has been ticking up. So see that number make that exponential jump in a short space of time...

BILLIE JEAN KING: That is where the money is, is media rights is where all the money is. If you talk about men's sports it's always about their media rights, and that's why they have more.

LEELA SRINIVASAN: Annika, as I mentioned earlier, women athletes competing for nearly \$13 million in Parity Week, including at The ANNIKA. How would you compare the world you competed in when you turned pro in the '90s to the world you see now for women athletes, and what are your thoughts on the disparities we continue to see between men's and women's prizes at major tournaments?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: First of all, thank you very much for having me. That is great. Honor to be part of this panel.

No, I mean, the numbers you're talking about, it's nice to see it's growing. We have now the biggest prize of any tournament on the LPGA other than majors for next year, which we're super proud of.

And of course Gainbridge has a lot to do with that and we're thankful. You're so right, the CEO Dan Towriss, he wants to change by showing how it's done and he is really doing that with this LPGA tournament.

We're super excited about that.

But I would say this is just the tipping point, as Billie Jean said. There is a long ways to go. I think we're going in the right direction. We're just going to keep on working and getting that exposure, talking about women and being seen. Every time we're seen and heard people love it and they want to be a part of it. We just got to continue to fight for that.

It's nice to see that companies like Gainbridge are stepping up. Of course, when I came on the scene in 1992, '93 it was a little different. But it's just the hard work is really paying off and we're seeing that.

Of course, I think the players, on the LPGA, I mean, I'm thankful for their commitment, what they do, and it's helpful, whether it's doing it on the golf course, their shots, their performance, their social media, the community engagement, everything helps. Everything is important to really grow that awareness of women's sports.

LEELA SRINIVASAN: Absolutely. And I do think social media has been a great boost for women athletes. We see this routinely at Parity. The followings of women athletes

are passionate, they're loyal, they really care about the athletes on and off the court of the field or wherever they're playing.

So great points there.

Lyn, your turn. When we think about racing it hasn't historically been the most inclusive of sports for women. Perhaps you can describe some of the challenges and obstacles that you faced in the early days of your career, and also very curious to hear how you would describe the state of women in motorsports today.

LYN ST. JAMES: Thank you. It is a huge honor, not only personally to be here with these icons I admired for so, so long. But at the same time, to have women in racing now elevated and included in the story of women's sports, through Billie Jean and going to the Women's Sports Foundation I was always there and Janet was there before me. It was like we were still isolated compared because we didn't have the numbers.

And so now that we have numbers, we have girls from seven, eight years old in go-karting all the way up through the entire decades of their lives racing. So we have numbers now, so to be a part of this, the story of women's sports, is a proud moment, and it's a proud moment not just for me, but everybody working with Women in Motorsports North America, as well as now the sanctioning bodies, race team owners, everybody is looking to say, hey where -- they come to me -- where is the next women? We want these women.

So that's changed the whole complexion I think of the opportunities for women in motorsports.

But our sport has always been really an inclusive sport. We have never had to have a women's-only type of competition to be able to race or compete, but we just never had the opportunity. Part of it is the funding. Unfortunately most of the women getting recognition in motorsports, it was like they were getting the recognition because they were a woman, not because of how they were competing.

And so people support winners. People want to support winners. So we need -- now we're getting women that are winning. My being recognized even at Indy in '92 to getting Rookie of the Year honors, I think that opened a lot of the people's eyes. I didn't win the race. I didn't win the Indy 500, but got race in it seven times and get that recognition.

We now have women winning and we now have this tipping point as we were all talking about, that we're part of the story now. And so you have people that are spending



a lot of money, like Gainbridge, in motorsports, and so now they have the opportunity to also support women in motorsports and really kind of justify their commitment and have a place to put that commitment.

So it's changed. I see this picture behind me and this was part of my team back in early -- when I was vintage racing actually. Now that we have women engineers, women drivers, women owning a team like Beth Paretta who owns an Indy car team. We have women in every area of motorsports.

It's also where some of our numbers, which is why we're successful with our Women With Drive Summit that's launching Parity Week. When you gave me the dates I realized, we're first. We're Tuesday and Wednesday of next week the 7th and the 8th, so we're first off to celebrate the Parity Week.

We're going to have over 400 men and women. As Billie mentioned, we need and have allies. Believe me, I have found those allies and I have looked them in the eye for decades and I say, now it isn't just about me or Danica or one individual. It's a movement. They're showing up.

So I'm excited about Parity Week and the support and Gainbridge and getting to go learn more. I know we started out at Parity with just two women race car drivers, and now we've added a number of them that are coming as part of the auction you guys do with Parity Lockers.

So very excited. A lot of work to do. The work is not done, as Billie knows. She taught me that. She always taught me too -- she taught all of our athletes, you are the most powerful when you're competing. Well, I'm not competing anymore, Billie, but I'm not going away either. So we're moving the ball forward.

BILLIE JEAN KING: That's before we had social media, too. We were talking.

LYN ST. JAMES: You're right.

BILLIE JEAN KING: Annika and Lyn, I just want to congratulate you guys. First of all, to be Rookie of the Year, I've had more people tell me in motorsports what you did in '92 to be the Rookie of the Year is -- especially in '92 -- it's amazing. I can't tell you how many people tell me that, you don't realize what Lyn St. James did. To be Rookie of the Year and a women in '92 was amazing.

Annika, of course she's the greatest ever that's lived.

So this is wonderful to be with both of you. I can't get over it. It's great. I'm glad we're all still in it in a big way. I know

the Women's Sports Foundation has honored the original 13 Founders of the LPGA. We did it off and on through the years. I don't know if there is anybody left of the Founders anymore. I think we're down to one. I don't know if we have that anymore.

But when you look at the -- you look at Annika and what she's done and the different generations as they've come up to now and what Annika is doing off the course in creating opportunities is just amazing that we're all three still kicking and going for it and having fun.

It's really exciting. You were talking about Dan Towriss. He absolutely is committed. He has total commitment to what we're doing here. He said, you got to do it, like you said, Leela. You have to do it and then people will follow.

And it's true, people are. It's starting to happen. People are talking, there is a lot more content, things are happening.

Because I'm so old I have perspective on that. I really do. I mean, playing in the '60s, actually '59 and now we're into whatever we're into, it's amazing. I'm looking forward to going Spain next week. Leaving Saturday for Seville. Gainbridge has made sure we're getting equal prize money with the Davis Cup winners, which is \$2.4 million -- that's just the winners, not the total -- but we're equal, and he made sure that we're equal. So I thank that Gainbridge for that and Parity.

LEELA SRINIVASAN: You know, if we are at a tipping point, I see three people on screen who have driven a huge part of that. Thank you all. I have so many more questions I could ask, but at this point let me hand it back over to Jeremy to open the floor.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Billie, you just touched on it. I was going to ask each of you to do a quick walk-through on your respective events. Billie, you just did a tremendous job on talking about the Billie Jean King Cup for next week.

Annika, if you can touch on a little bit our event that's coming up in Tampa, The ANNIKA driven by Gainbridge at Pelican, the sole namesake event on the LPGA Tour. Talk about your excitement of coming here to Tampa next week and our tournament.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, no, I'm super excited to have my name on the tournament and be involved. It's going to be a full week of lots of activities. We're doing a women's summit on Tuesday where we have very interesting speakers, you know, businesswomen, other players, and just a way to not just network, but share stories, inspire, and motivate each other on how to

continue to drive it forward.

So we have that on Tuesday, and of course we have the pro-am on Wednesday and then we have all the top players playing Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Nelly Korda is the defending champion. We have a really good field. We're proud of that.

But I think one of the reasons is because of the tournament. And Gainbridge. And Pelican. This is the last full event before the Tour Championship in two weeks in Naples. My foundation is one of a few beneficiaries, so we appreciate that, and we'll be hosting a clinic for young girls on Saturday ages 6 to 12. We call it Share My Passion.

It's just a great way for young girls to meet other girls and learn the fundamentals of the game and see what happens behind the scenes in a golf tournament. The purpose of course is to inspire them and. We want them to -- we want the golf little seed to grow and be inspired to be out there.

So, yeah, there is a lot activities, so super excited. Tampa, Clearwater, Belleair is a great place this time of year. The community has been very much involved. As you know, Jeremy, we have a great team from Outlyr putting the tournament together, and of course the Doyle family. They're also a big partner in this. They own the course and only do things right.

If you're a player, spectator, fan, media, you're going to be treated first class, so we're really looking forward to the week.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Lyn, let's talk about motorsports a little bit. I think out of everybody you have the coolest background on Zoom currently. I think you beat everybody on that one. Talk about the Women With Drive Summit taking place next week.

LYN ST. JAMES: This coming weekend is also the NASCAR Championship last weekend, and it's going to be decided in Phoenix at the Phoenix Raceway. So we're excited because on the No. 77 Gainbridge Chevrolet driven by Ty Dillon, in that championship race this coming weekend, they will have the Billie Jean King Cup tournament on it, The ANNIKA Sorenstam golf tournament on it, and then they have our Women with Drive, WIMNA, so all three logos are going to be on that race car, as well as the No. 7 NASCAR Craftsman Series race driven by Marco Andretti on Friday.

So this weekend there will be race cars with the Billie Jean King logo on it, the ANNIKA logo, and our logo on it celebrating Parity week.

Two days later, on Tuesday of next week, is when our summit will start. This is our third year of doing a summit. It was a vision our executive director Cindy Sisson and I had about having an industry annual summit to be able to change -- find out what we needed to do to not change, but to grow our sport by bringing inclusiveness and more women into the sport.

Successfully we are in our third one. We'll have over -- as I said, over 400 men and women will be attending; we have 88 speakers and panelists; we have over 50 sponsors. This is an industry support event happening annually.

So I couldn't be happier. It was a vision that I don't know if -- well, Annika you -- well, you might have been around then, too, but back in the early '90s with the Women's Sports Foundation and the LPGA, we did a Women in Golf Summit. I was president of the foundation at the time. Cindy was working as the head of marketing at the LPGA.

There was this vision of how we could grow the golf industry serving women, and of course that's all happened as a result of the '90s, starting that anyway. I remember saying to Cindy, we need to do this in motorsports. It wasn't the right time. Motorsports was not ready for us in the '90s.

I didn't care. I was going to show up and do what I was going to do, but we weren't ready as an industry to support it. Now we are, and I couldn't be more proud and excited to do it. To be able to see our logos on the race car over the weekend will be great.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Billie, just to conclude you touched on it a little bit but talk more about your event a little bit, the up with of women's tennis.

BILLIE JEAN KING: It's in Seville, Spain, which I have never been. The thing I'm excited about is the Flamenco originated there, and I love watching Flamenco dancing, so I'm like, I'm there.

But we have 12 of the top teams because they have gone through qualifying through the year. We have 134 countries to start. We are down to 12. This is it, this is the finals, the big one.

The Swiss for the first time won last year, and I've never seen a team so excited. I saw them during the year and they're still flying high. It was exciting to see that.

But it's the coming together of all these countries that have fought to get here, and for Gainbridge to make sure that the winners are getting the same amount is huge. Equality



is very big in tennis, to get the same as the men, and thanks to them, as I mentioned earlier, they're doing that.

It gets tense. I hate watching sometimes. I get too tense watching all your sports actually. But to listen to them, I will meet with every team while I'm there, all 12 teams. We have other -- like you guys are having other things.

Our company just got involved this year so we have big plans for the future with the International Tennis Federation.

And what people have to understand, they have to play in this to qualify to play in the Olympics. I don't think a lot of people connect that. I don't think they know it. So there is a lot. During the year if you don't play enough times then you don't get to qualify.

So it's very, very interesting how it works. I had the privilege of being a captain, which is really like a coach of the a team through the years for the USA. So I have a pretty deep understanding of what the captains and coaches go through.

Obviously owning tournaments and doing things since 1968 I know what it is to have money in the sport, to put your money where your mouth is. I've been on the good side when we made money and bad side when we haven't.

I don't care. I think women's sports, just now as we were just talking, Lyn and I and now Annika, that just now people think it's kind of in to sponsor and to celebrate women in sports.

I can tell you, that has been a long, long haul. So for me personally, I am thrilled. I'll turn 80 this year and it's the biggest, best birthday present I could ever have to see what's happening in women's sports.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: That's a perfect segue to our Q and A. Thank you, Billie.

Now we will open up for questions.

**Q. Hello, all. For the three of you --and Leela, thanks for your assistance putting this together; it's great -- I wanted to ask all three of you your initial impressions that you heard Parity and Gainbridge would be partnering to put on this mega sports week on three great platforms? Secondly, as you look across the menu of all the events from competition to the summits, where do you hope to make the most impact with your respective events?**

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Lyn, you want to go first?

LYN ST. JAMES: Two-part question. Well, I'm going to answer the second part first because probably the most passionate about it. The industry represents so many different careers and so many different -- motorsports is so fragmented in the types of racing. There is drag racing, we have stock car racing, we have sports car racing. I mean, we have so many categories. There is so much more in common of how they run their business.

So I think there is a lot of difficulty. When you are on the outside looking in traditionally you get into the sport because usually you have been exposed to it, family got involved, you were maybe a fan first.

But it's very hard to navigate. You're on the outside looking in.

I said, our sport is not going to grow or even sustain if we rely on just family members to be able to run our sport. So now by having the summit we're opening the eyes and ears of so many people.

I have to mention something that I forgot to mention earlier, is that because of Gainbridge, they are sponsoring the summits' livestreaming globally. So our summit is going to be live streamed globally next week. Not only will the 400 people in the room have the opportunity to hear these stories and the advice, you know, there is so much to be gained from just telling the stories of how we got where we got.

I think this is going to open up a lot of eyes and ears, and for people to go, wow, I could have a career in this sport.

I'm very excited about that, and that's what our summit does. I forgot your first question.

**Q. I was wondering each of your initial reactions to hearing putting these three events together in one week.**

LYN ST. JAMES: Well, my quick answer is as I said earlier, the fact that women's motorsports is now included in the women's sports message and story and support, I couldn't be more proud.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Annika, same questions.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, number one, I mean, I think it's fantastic. It's awesome. I applaud Gainbridge for doing that. You just look at the name Gainbridge, it's a bridge that we're going to gain through these different sports to tie it all together. I think it's a genius move really.



I think it's exciting that we're tying in the sports together. Lyn mentioned long time ago there was talking about golf and motorsports and the timing wasn't right. The timing is right here for all three different ways, and just increase not just exposure, but talking points and awareness about women in sports and inspire. Not every young lady plays golf or plays tennis or loves to drive go-karts.

I think to create this platform is unique, but it's just -- I welcome it. So I'm super excited for that.

You know, I think our biggest goal of the tournament, obviously we want to put on a great show with the best players in the world, and we're lucky to have them here, but I think just, again, it's just expanding the reach of the community by having different initiatives that Marci Doyle and her team are putting together, bringing business people into golf and being on site and seeing and hearing and being part of it.

Having other players talk about golf is business and women in business. Of course the clinics with young girls. It just touches the whole spectrum. I wouldn't say it's one purpose. This is a purpose-driven tournament in a lot of ways, and I love that about it.

So I think it's going to just be a wonderful week that way by bringing everybody and trying to find the synergy and the different demographics.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Billie, same question.

BILLIE JEAN KING: I think Annika hit it. I think they all pointed out all the pluses. I think together, as Annika said, is the synergism that comes from having all three of these events, but also the events themselves surrounding each major event is huge. That's where a lot of work is going to get done.

Plus, how are you effecting the community? We're going to Seville, Spain. We are doing clinics, all kinds of things, but the point is, how can we get them energized to be around our sport, just get active, to be moving, to make them think about the health aspect.

Because actually tennis is the healthiest sport on planet. They've done research now. The Mayo Clinic and everybody, so that makes me happy. I still try to hit the ball just for that reason. Not only do I love it but it works.

If we get people excited at every level, every age, and the generations to be connected to it in whatever way makes them happy, the main thing I'm trying to get people to do is move.

If you walk a golf course, I think it's like four miles or four and a half miles.

Obviously you have to train to be able to drive.

All these things are so important just for our health. It's really exciting. This is the first time I've really been involved at this level because just changed the name anyway a couple years ago. It was always called Fed Cup before that or Federation Cup. It's our 60th anniversary, which we are going to celebrate. I was 19 years old when we had the first one. We had 16 teams, 16 countries. Now we had 134 this year. We want to have more than that, because it affects grassroots tennis.

That's where we get kids into the sport, adults into the sport. That's mainly that's what happens.

And we need ever continent involved. We have ever continent involved now, but we really want more. For instance, Africa is some place that we should start concentrating on. One out of every four people in the world in 2050 are going to be from Africa. I think we need to pay attention to where there is opportunity.

These types of events really do -- to be together like this is so amazing being in different sports and to showcase them and to get people interested in them, which I think is fantastic.

And if they already are interested to get them more excited than ever.

**Q. Lyn, I think one of the interesting things about the Indianapolis 500 is it's the one major sporting event where women are competing against men at the same time. Where it used to be a story that a female driver was running the Indianapolis 500, now it's fairly commonplace. As Janet Guthrie and other have said, the car doesn't know whether it's a man or a woman driving it. All three of you have been at the Indianapolis 500. I've seen Billie Jean King there with Janet Guthrie a few years ago, and Annika Sorenstam was a sponsor at Cusick Motorsports this year. What are all three of your thoughts on the fact that that is the one type of sport where men and women can compete against people at the same time?**

LYN ST. JAMES: I've always called it a gender neutral sport. The reason it's male-dominated is more guys showed up. In simple terms that to me -- that's the way I have always felt about my sport. I've always had to answer that Bruce, as you well know. People that don't know that keep asking, why is it male-dominated? Why is it male-dominated?

At the same time, you have to have the funding, the right equipment, the best team. This is a team sport. It's just that the driver is this individual player that gets all the exposure or most of the publicity.

If you don't have the right team and equipment you're not going to be successful. So that's the change agent that has to happen. We still need more funding to help the women there that are worthy of that and have demonstrated that talent and depth of knowledge and the capability to understand what they can accomplish.

**Q. Billie Jean, this is the 50th anniversary that you defeated Bobby Riggs.**

BILLIE JEAN KING: Yeah, that was great. Actually all three of us, I was thinking about it earlier. All three of us got much better known -- this always happens -- when we're in the male arena. It always used to be if you can get in the male arena everybody starts talking about you.

Just wanted to say with Lyn, I mean, talking to Lyn and Janet Guthrie, and for people don't know who Janet Guthrie is, you can tell them Lyn, but she was basically the first woman.

LYN ST. JAMES: She was the first, yeah.

BILLIE JEAN KING: Everything I would hear is they're underfunded. You have to have the same money to have as good a car, to get as good a team. It's the same thing in tennis. There is no way getting around it. It's the same way in golf. You have to have the funding.

Finally we're just starting to get that. But I loved watching Annika play I think it was in -- was it the Colonial that you played?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yep.

BILLIE JEAN KING: I was watching you and then talking to Lyn and then watching you. It's so nerve-wracking. So I just think that you all know us probably because we've been in a male arena. That's good news, bad news.

So it is what it is. When I played Bobby Riggs there was 90 million people watching to give you some perspective. The Super Bowl had 53 million that year. So we had a lot more people watching us. Why was that? Because I was playing against a guy.

But I think it did help with social change, and that's what we're all trying to do, is change perceptions and where you put your money. We're just as important. I think that's --

it's just starting to happen. Just. I'm very excited to see what's going to happen in the future.

**Q. Annika, you were a part of Indianapolis 500 this past May. Your thoughts on what it was like to be involved in that event.**

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well, it was incredible. I have to be honest, I'm not much of a motorsports fan until my trip, until my husband and I went there. It was just incredible. I was actually lucky to be in a two seater, so Lyn, I don't know how you do it, because I sat down and did two laps and I probably went half your speed.

But I have a lot of respect, and I think it's great to hear what you said, that the car doesn't know who is really driving it. The potential is there. The opportunity is there to get young girls into the sport.

So a lot of it is, again, both of you ladies mentioned it, funding. It's awareness. Getting it out there and getting the interest. So just we just got to continue to push and make sure the young girls want to do that.

I have to say that I've been through a lot of sports, but this is probably the most fan-friendly sport or arena or place I've ever been to.

The demographic, everybody is there. I saw young, old, just it was fantastic. Men, women, you name it. The way that you can interact with the drivers, the team, and go out there on the track and take photos and touch the car almost, I mean, personally I think golf, we can actually learn a lot from that because I think it just brings in a lot of people to the sport.

I mean, obviously you see the thousands of people that were there for hours just watching the cars zoom by. You can hardly see the color on the car they go so fast. Again, I'm glad to hear there is a lot of potential and growth for girls to get into motorsports.

LYN ST. JAMES: I'm going to add, we have been blessed because the Indianapolis 500 is the single largest single-day sporting event in the world. We have that accessibility. It supports that if you can see it, you can be it.

So having Janet as the first, me as the second, followed by others now, but now we have women, as I said team owners, women engineers everywhere in that sport that people can now see. If you can see it, you can be it.

Billie, I watched you play Bobby Riggs. I said to myself then, if she can that do that on television in front of 90



million people, I can go out and drive my Ford Pinto and try to find a way to get it on a race track.

BILLIE JEAN KING: You're amazing. It's so cute though. The women I talked to talk about tinkering around cars when they're very young with their dads. I think that's where men are so important to us.

My dad believed in me as much as my younger brother. My brother played 12 years of professional baseball, Randy Moffitt. Moffitt is our birth name.

But I know one of the reasons I made it is because of my dad believing in me as much as my brother. I think if you look at each one of us, I don't know, I guarantee you -- I think Lyn, you talked to me about your dad.

LYN ST. JAMES: No, but I said our sport is a lot about dads and daughters.

BILLIE JEAN KING: But you liked to tinker around cars when you were young, right?

LYN ST. JAMES: No, I didn't.

BILLIE JEAN KING: You didn't.

LYN ST. JAMES: All I did was get a lot of tickets, Billie. I drove fast.

BILLIE JEAN KING: There you go.

LYN ST. JAMES: My mom was really the bigger influence.

BILLIE JEAN KING: That's great.

LYN ST. JAMES: Our sport is traditionally about dads and daughters. Me personally, it was my mom.

BILLIE JEAN KING: That's great. Somebody, when they have authority with us, especially our mother or dad, whoever, it really makes a difference when they believe in us. I think as girls and women that we deserve as much as the boys.

A lot of times that does not happen in families. You get the message that you're not quite there. So I think that's big, big change.

**Q. Thank to all of you for setting this up and being here this afternoon. I'm going to address this to Billie Jean. Lyn and Annika, if you want to jump in afterwards, feel free. You had mentioned at the very top you feel like we're on a tipping point as far as the growth of women's sports. Obviously we talked a lot**

**about what Parity and Gainbridge are doing in the coming weeks here. What other indicators are you seeing that kind of brings us to this tipping point? I'm also curious, as you mentioned, you have been through the long haul with all of this. Any other tipping points that have gotten us to this one?**

BILLIE JEAN KING: Oh, for sure. There has been a lot if you go through history. The most recent one, I think the World Cup for women's soccer or football, depending which country. Illana and I went to Australia for four or five days to watch. You know, they filled every arena they were in. The last place was 75,000, the crazy Spain one.

And actually when we go to Seville we hope to have some of those winners from Spain. We're a big believer, at least I am, in women's sports, that we're all in this together with our different sports. We have to help each other. We definitely are hoping for that.

That was exciting to see every single event packed. It was fan friendly and all those things. It's funny, you talk about the car doesn't know what gender, but the racquet or club or ball doesn't know either.

If you think about all these things, it's really amazing if you look at each sport how it's gone up in prize money, opportunities, and all those things.

And now, we have flag football in the '28 Olympics. I got to know Diana Flores, who's the world champion. She's Mexican and they won the World Championships For Women. They're going to have men and women. You get rid of the concussion aspect I think is another important thing.

So I think flag football is going to be huge, because I think the NFL is going to get behind it. That's also girls as much as boys. Those are all the things, different sports are getting more and more sponsorship. I think the most -- Wasserman coming up with this study that it's 15% media now, it's huge.

We've got from 5 to 15 in about, like that. (Snapping fingers).

We were at 4% forever. I can't remember when we weren't. Then we went to 5 and I got a little excited. But 15, from 5 to 15, that's the first time we have ever had that jump.

And that is a great indicator to people that we're on our way.

**Q. What do you think caused that?**

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BILLIE JEAN KING: I think the media has covered us better. You tell our story. I think social media has helped a lot. I'm big in still talking to the media though, because I know without them women's tennis wouldn't have made it.

You tell our story. People love stories. They want to know what's going on. Social media has helped. Plus, I think more women in business. 94% of women in C Suites identify with being an athlete. 50% of those played varsity sports in college.

I think Title IX -- you can go back to Title IX, June 23rd, 1992, when it was the first time we got rid of classroom quotas for women. Now it's 60/40, women in college, university, which is not good. We need more guys going.

That's another discussion. But before 1992, a lot of times we were at 5% quotas in the classrooms, and that's why we didn't have women doctors and women lawyers.

And then also, the word activity in that Title IX, there is the word "activity" and they couldn't decide to leave it in or take it out. Because they left the word "activity" in is the reason we have athletic scholarships for women, and that now has also paid off long-term.

We saw the results of Title IX for the first time in the '96 Olympics when the U.S. Women stepped up and won so many the medals. But it's continued since.

So that's what we're seeing. This is a long, long -- you're talking over 50, 60 years and even more if you go back it Babe Didrikson and other great women athletes who had very little acknowledgment or recognition or never had enough money.

The LPGA was the first women's professional thing happening in 1950 with the 13 players that became Founders to start the LPGA. That was huge as well.

LYN ST. JAMES: I think another reason is the media. I'm just going to add another reason why the media jump is the whole breakdown, the traditional media no longer exists. It used to just be those networks and the control of what they covered and the dollars that demanded or supported that. Now with streaming now and all the other networks, I can't even find the things I'm wanting to watch.

I think that it's a lot to do with the fact that media is no longer the way it was.

BILLIE JEAN KING: You're right; 95% of media is controlled by men, traditional media. It still is I think. It was back then and still pretty close. I have to look that up.

You know what I need to look that up. I'm not sure.

They used to be 95%. Guess what? They decide what stories are told. Having social and others people can tell their own stories.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I mean, I think they it said. I echo everything they said.

LEELA SRINIVASAN: We have 900 plus athletes on our platforms. To me that means we have 900 plus stories. Social media has been an immense leveler and we find people are really interested in the human stories behind these athletes.

Women athletes have had to work incredibly hard to get where they are. It just adds to the interest level that you're seeing.

**Q. My question is for Annika. Annika, hello.**

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Hello.

**Q. We talk a lot about the importance of women having a seat at the table or being in the room where the decisions are made. You just became a member of one the most powerful clubs in the world, so I'm hoping that you can just tell us a little bit about what that meant to you to become a member of Augusta National, and what influence you hope to have there?**

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Good to see you. What can I say? I'm extremely honored. It was a surprise. I must say that. I was just so excited. One of the most happiest days in my golf life. It's quite an honor. As you know, it's super new so I am a total rookie. I'm just learning the ropes, so I'm not really sure where this will lead. I'm thrilled and excited about the opportunity to not just play the course, but just to get to know the members.

BILLIE JEAN KING: What about -- my prayer for Augusta is to have a women's LPGA event. That's been my prayer. I know they have the amateur girls, but I want to see a pro tournament.

So anyway, I hope that happens. I think you will make a big difference. You stand for so much and people listen to you and appreciate you.

I don't know what you're thinking because it's hard work to do things like that, but I hope that's what they'll do.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Thank you.

BILLIE JEAN KING: No pressure. (Laughter.)



**Q. Annika, do you want to respond to that, because I would love that, too?**

BILLIE JEAN KING: Don't put her on the hot spot yet. Got to give her a couple years, man. She's got get to know the members first. Get to know how it works. It's a lot of hard work.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: It's fun though.

BILLIE JEAN KING: It's fun. You keep learning.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Thank you.

BILLIE JEAN KING: Congratulations, that's fantastic.

LYN ST. JAMES: Congratulations, yes.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: All right, so Leela, I will turn this back over to you for some closing comments. We've gone a little over, but this conversation has been awesome.

So Leela, if you wouldn't mind, I'm going to put you on the spot. Summarize just what we've been listening to and talking about and what we're looking forward to next week with Parity Week.

LEELA SRINIVASAN: Thank you everyone for joining us, for participating, and for the great questions. So grateful to the three of you. It's been so cool to bring you together.

I think to reflect on what you're seeing in women's sports, the talk around this tipping point, as we all said, it doesn't happen overnight. It takes many, many, years, and the three of you have been absolutely fundamental in getting to this point.

I think what I've loved more than anything is hearing you all talk about one another's sports and just the community that I think can exist in women's sports. We're thrilled about Parity Week. Just can't wait for all the action happening on and off the competitive field.

As you've heard, it's a true celebration of women's sports and women in leadership. There is a link in the chat if you want more details. We'll be using the hashtag Parity Week throughout to stay in touch.

In addition to all the on-course and on-court and on-track action, we have another 75 or so athletes who will be there in person to celebrate and commemorate or will be chiming in on social, so please stay tuned.

Thanks again for joining us. Can't wait for all the

excitement of a next week or two, and appreciate everybody being here.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Billie and Annika and Lyn, thank you for joining us. If you have any last parting thoughts before we wrap things up, would love to hear just your thoughts on this conversation we just had.

BILLIE JEAN KING: I just like to thank you, Jeremy, Leela. I'd like to thank all the people here today in the media for covering this. You do tell our stories and we truly appreciate it.

It's great to see everyone. I get very excited to hear everyone talk. Go for it, Lyn. Go for it, Annika.

LYN ST. JAMES: I know, love it. Pressure is a privilege. You have just inspired --

BILLIE JEAN KING: Pressure is a privilege. Champions adjust. Thank you for covering this and coming, because we need all of us together to win.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I echo that. I think it's been great. I look forward to a great week and will be following you ladies and the tournaments and the races. I thank everybody for the support. This is what it takes, right? So thank you.

LYN ST. JAMES: I do want to thank Gainbridge very much. I've been talking to Dan for a couple years, so to see this come together, and we have to have a loud voice and a unified voice, and I think that's really showing here.

It isn't just these three sports. It's all women's sports. We just represent these three, but we represent everybody. We all have to speak loudly. Now is the time.

Women out there in whatever sport you're in, now is the time and we have to have a unified voice. Reach out to us and we can all join hands and make this happen. Thank you for Gainbridge and Parity to have this opportunity.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Ladies, thank you very much.

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