The ANNIKA driven by Gainbridge at Pelican

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Belleair, Florida, USA

Pelican Golf Club

Annika Sorenstam
Annabelle Pancake-Webb
Ryan Dever
Justin Sheehan

Press Conference

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: All right, I will kick things off. Good afternoon everybody. Thank you for joining The ANNIKA driven by Gainbridge at Pelican media conference call previewing The ANNIKA in a couple weeks, November 9th through the 15th.

So good afternoon everybody. For those of us in Tampa, whomp, whomp. I know we watched our Rays last night. They tried. We all supported them during the season.

So we are looking ahead to the next great sporting event that's going to be taking place in Tampa Bay in a couple weeks, The ANNIKA driven by Gainbridge at Pelican.

On the call today we have our tournament director Ryan Dever, Pelican Golf Club COO and director of golf, Justin Sheehan, Hall of Famer and the greatest of all-time Annika Sorenstam, tournament namesake, and Annabelle Pancake-Webb who is going to be a rookie on the LPGA Tour in 2027. She is an Epson Tour winner this year. She earned her LPGA Tour card at the Epson Tour Championship by finishing fourth in the season-long Epson Tour race, and is a sponsor invite courtesy of Gainbridge, our title sponsor.

So Annabelle, Annika, Ryan, Justin, thank you joining. All our friends in the media that are on and partners, thank you also for joining.

I will kick it over to Ryan for a couple of quick high level comments and thoughts about the upcoming tournament, how things are coming along at Pelican Golf Club. He is currently in our tournament office as the build is going, so Ryan, kick it over to you.

RYAN DEVER: Thanks, Jeremy. Good afternoon everybody. Thank you for joining. We look forward to seeing you all here in a few short weeks on site for The ANNIKA driven by Gainbridge at Pelican Golf Club.

Personally our team, everybody included, we're excited for another great installment of this wonderful championship alongside our partners Pelican Golf Club, Gainbridge, and of course Annika Sorenstam and the Annika Foundation.

As Jeremy mentioned, currently calling in on site from our office trailer. The tournament buildout is progressing nicely on the course with hospitality structures, fan amenities, and signage and branding being spread throughout the property in preparation for everybody's arrival.

Course is in great shape. Look forward to hearing more of that from Justin in a bit.

As you a earlier today, fantastic field in store with the world's best professional golfers en route to Belleair, Florida, including world No. 1 and three-time champion of the event, Nelly Korda.

The entire list of past champions at the event including Sei Young Kim, Lilia Vu, and defending champion Linn Grant. And lastly, 19 major champions and plenty of other fan favorites.

As we announced on media day, thank you all for joining us down at Tropicana Field with the Tampa Bay Rays tournament week; (indiscernible) kicking off on Sunday, November 8th this year off site at Homestead Miami Speedway for the NASCAR Cup Series Championship featuring the No. 71 car, and Michael McDowell will be competing in his car fully wrapped in The ANNIKA/LPGA branding. Our classic pink and blue will be flying around the track that day.

Annika Sorenstam who on the call and Annabelle Pancake-Webb will be joining on the site. In addition Lauren Coughlin will be cheering on Michael and Spire Motorsports. We thank Gainbridge and Spire for this great partnership again, cross collaborated through sport, helping elevate the game and this great championship.

After the race we'll return back to Pelican Golf Club with the course opening to the general public for our Wednesday pro-am, and throughout competition rounds, concluding on Sunday, November 15th.

The tournament falling around Veterans' Day, we are excited and privileged to honor those that have served this great country. Complimentary admission will be provided to all veterans, active duty military, as well as first responders, police, fire, and EMS.

In addition, veterans and active duty military will be receiving complementary admission to exclusive hospitality venus on our featured par-3, 12th hole, the Hero Outpost presented by FedData. Excited to share that. Thanks to the support from FedData and our partners, we were able to increase the size of this venue by 50% going into this year to host even more of these great patriots here on site at Pelican.

November 14th we welcome all juniors and their family to Annika the Junior Golf Show featuring Annika.

This event is always a blast. It will take place on the driving range at 2:30 in the afternoon featuring Annika and some of her friends on the LPGA Tour providing and exhibition to hundreds of juniors, speaking of the benefits of the game of golf, health, wellness, and growing for the next generation.

Also share that juniors 17 and under are welcome to the tournament complimentary with a ticketed adult and there is plenty of great options available on theannika.com for folks to come out and join us later on in November.

With that, I'll pass it over to Justin with a couple course updates.

JUSTIN SHEEHAN: Hard to follow Ryan. I can't believe this is year seven, and the fourth year with Annika and Gainbridge. Feels like it was just year number two. We had an incredible summer at the club. We did a ton of work. Really beat it up, tons of aerifying, verticutting, so I think it's healing better than it probably ever has.

We had quite the wet end of September so still trying to dry out. Greens are a little slow still, but we redid the first tee, which I think will make the first tee experience a lot better.

It was pretty tight there in the past. The big thing I'm most excited for this year is I think there will be a little bit more focus on the competition. We had some incredible pro-am experiences last year with Caitlin and her teammates, and I think that was all an incredible part of the event.

But I think this year we'll be focused more on the competition, so really excited for this year.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Thank you, Justin. Appreciate that. I know this tournament is near and dear to you because this was your first. As you guys were starting up, this was your first email and one of your first questions to the Doyles, like what if we do an LPGA Tour event, right?

JUSTIN SHEEHAN: Yeah, and to sit here with all of you, the whole Outlyr team, all our sponsor invites we've had, Annika, Mike, all the great LPGA players, to see all the clinics, young kids and women's lives, the Women's Leadership Summit on Tuesday, it's pretty special.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Thank you, Justin.

Annika, so we'll turn it over to you for some opening thoughts. This is your fourth year being here at the tournament as the tournament namesake.

Just give us some thoughts on your excitement about coming back to Tampa Bay in a couple weeks.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yes, thank you, Jeremy, and hello everyone. Thank you to Ryan and Justin for your comments. A lot has already been said about the schedule, so I'm sure you feel pretty informed about that.

From the host side, I'm obviously super excited about this year. This has been a fun addition to my schedule the last three years, so this will be the fourth as we mentioned. I'm very grateful for Gainbridge and the partnership and of course Pelican and Doyle and Justin and their team.

It's been a lot of fun to have my name on the event of course. I feel like wherever I go it says Annika. The branding is pretty amazing. It feels a little weird sometimes when it's you, but, no we're super excited.

It's been successful I feel like since day one. It's hard to find things to improve every year, but the team is just really dedicated to making sure this is one of the best stops on the LPGA. As far as the schedule goes it's towards the end, pretty much the last official event for all the players, so that's why we are grateful for a great field.

Players are looking to rack up some more points or dollars to be part of the CME the following week. If you've been out to Pelican you know what a special place it is. Justin mentioned it was a little wet in September. I played with my family not too long ago and it's really looking good, and excited about that.

So I'll be on site most of the time. What can I say? I do everything. I wear a lot of hats, but mostly try to just make sure the players and the fans and the partners are happy. We couldn't do it without them.

And of course Jeremy and your team do an excellent job. I hope that this year is going to be equally as exciting. It was mentioned about some of the sponsor invites. We got Annabelle here, but also Scarlett Schremmer and Macy Pate, who is our invite from the foundation who is part of Wake Forest, a senior, that ended up winning one of our tournaments, and that's how she got in here.

It's always fun to have the next generation of superstars. Great example for them to be a part of LPGA. And, no, it's just got a really good feel to it. A lot of wonderful local partners, and feels like the community is really behind it. At least that's what I felt the previous years, and on the media day that we did, Jeremy, not too long ago. Everybody wants to be involved and play.

That's kind of the ingredients to a successful tournament. Hopefully I'll see you all in a few weeks.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Agreed. And the running thing after when Annika was here a couple weeks ago for her media tour and she played Pelican Golf Club, I joked like one of the biggest pieces of news is that Will McGee is now the tallest member of the family. He's taller than all of us now, which was surprising to all of us.

So speaking of the next generation of superstars, Annabelle Pancake-Webb, like to welcome you. So share with us just your excitement on kickstarting your LPGA career, for lack of a better term, in a couple weeks as Gainbridge's sponsor invite, and how much you're looking forward to competing on the LPGA Tour in 2027.

ANNABELLE PANCAKE-WEBB: Yeah, well, thank you so much for having me. I'm just so thankful and excited to be part of it. Just thank you to Ryan and Justin and Annika and everyone who has been a part of the whole process of just getting me out there.

I'm excited. Obviously next year is just going to be an exciting start, a lot of changes. To have the chance to play an event like this kind of as a warmup to get prepared is just such a gift and I'm so grateful.

It'll be a great opportunity, and so, yeah, looking forward to it.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Annabelle, as a native of Indiana, in Zionsville where Gainbridge is headquartered, when you got that call that you're going to be the sponsor invite from Gainbridge who is from your hometown, how extra special was that?

ANNABELLE PANCAKE-WEBB: It's so cool. I grew up getting to see kind of like games in the Gainbridge Fieldhouse, so it just feels really close to home. I'm just so honored to be able to now represent them well in a tournament, and it's very full circle for sure.

And so, I mean, the fact that (indiscernible) is a member (indiscernible) the course I grew up playing is just really cool, too, just to have that family connection as well.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Wonderful. All right, we will now kick it over to our friends in the media for questions. Couple of you all mentioned a couple of questions in the chat. If you have questions just mention that you would like to ask a question or raise your hand.

Mr. Mike May, go ahead and unmute yourself and ask away.

Q. Truth be told, I've got a special connection to Annabelle because I grew up with her father Tony in Seymour, Indiana. Of course I spent some time in the LPGA Tour on the scoring team and now I'm a golf writer. I've taken a lot of interest in Annabelle. Delighted for her. You've had a few caddies for you in the last couple years. Have you made your decision who will caddie for you at The ANNIKA?

ANNABELLE PANCAKE-WEBB: Yeah, this year my dad is going to caddie. So he's available. Work is kind of dying down for him, so he'll be on the bag. It'll be something to see if he can carry a heavy bag. I think they're going to give me a staff bag which will be cool. Yeah, it will be fun with him.

Q. Have you played Pelican yet? I know you're living in Sarasota. Have you been up there?

ANNABELLE PANCAKE-WEBB: Yes, Justin and Jeremy and everyone was able to coordinate a time for me to go play I think it was last week or a week or two ago. The course is in incredible shape and I'm excited for what it'll be out there in the tournament.

Q. One follow-up question: Now that you played it, have you started visualizing that ideal tee shot on day one on Thursday, where it's going to go and which club you're going to hit?

ANNABELLE PANCAKE-WEBB: Yeah, I mean, I've definitely been trying to kind of prepare for the different holes because some are really short and some are really

long. So practicing a lot of wedges and a lot of long irons for sure, so...

Q. And then Jeremy, Annika, any words of wisdom for this young girl from Indiana in a couple weeks and then throughout next year? At one point you were where she is right now.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, no, it's funny. When she mentioned her that dad will be on the bag, I remember those early years when family and friends were stepping in.

No, we're super excited to have Annabelle with us. It's a great experience. Right now she's just kind of -- in the professional career she's just kind of teeing up from the first few holes, so she has a lot of holes and years ahead of her.

I just keep telling players, soak up as much as possible, learn the ropes, get used to what it's like to be out there.

I think the number one is just make sure that you pace yourself. It's exciting to be able to play, but you got make sure you're rested when you do play. I've always focused more on quality versus quantity just because you can't play them all, and it's better to play well when you do play.

But it's going to be a learning curve for sure. But make sure that you focus on the things you got to work on, stick to your routine, make sure you stick to your workout routine, and to keep improving.

But should be fun. That's what it's all about.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Bill, go ahead and unmute yourself and ask away.

Q. Yes, had a question I guess for both of those people. Annika, every year the Pelican and everyone else tries to raise the bar and make this tournament even better than it was the year before and the year before that. So my question is: What player experiences have you brought to enhance this year's tournament and perhaps that could spill over to experiences not only for the players but also for the fans?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: First of all, nice hat.

Q. Thank you. I wanted to represent.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: It looks good. Yeah, I like the pink. Thank you for your question.

Q. I almost wore this one.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: That one I have. I haven't seen the one you have there. Got to check it out.

As you know, the goal is to make sure the players are really feeling comfortable. We always do a survey trying to make sure the players give us feedback, whether it's the course or the food or just things in general.

And I think we have come to a point where I think a lot of players are very happy. I think that's why we see a great field every year. This year we're going to do the caddie thing a little bit with Terry my caddie -- used to be I should say -- celebrating him as a caddie award presentation.

So we are taking the caddies in consideration this year, so that should be a good initiative. It's actually the caddies' idea, and we thought the timing to do it at our tournament was good. It's just a nice tribute to Terry, and it also emphasizes the importance of the caddies. They play an instrumental part of players, as you know.

That will be one thing that I can think off the top of my head right now. It's always small things here and there. Talking about gifts to the players. We love to take care of them in different ways. So, yeah, small little things. Fine tuning it for sure.

RYAN DEVER: Yeah, no, I agree. You hit on that, Annika. In addition to that, just really we'd like to provide a world class experience for the players as soon as they walk on property from their complementary hotel accommodations, the Doyle Family and the club provide complementary hotel accommodations to the entire player field. Travel and some of that overhead is one of the expenses to bear for them throughout week in and week out, so knowing they're coming to Pelican Golf Club with the opportunity for a complementary hotel room is a massive benefit to start the week.

With that, around the site, the hospitality that Pelican provides from a locker room, player dining, practice facility standpoint, really just gearing the players up for making sure that they're at their very best on Thursday, round one starts.

I think across the board we look to raise the bar in terms of parties for our large army and network of volunteers that help and support the week. Also just different special events and experiences throughout the golf course for fans.

I think providing the access, the complementary admission to juniors just to experience this maybe for the first time or for the seventh time is something that's a highlight for me

personally, and I know the team here each and every year.

So, yeah, top of mind throughout.

Q. Thank you. We look forward to a wonderful week. It's always a big event obviously here in Belleair and it's part of the community. It's the highlight of the year for us.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Thank you.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Beth Ann, unmute yourself and ask away.

Q. This one is for Annika. Annika, Nelly is on the doorstep of clinching player of the year. Of course that would put her only one point away from the Hall of Fame, which since she's won your tournament now three times is an easy favorite going in. Two-part question: One, as she's so close to getting into the Hall of Fame, what has impressed you the most about the maturation of Nelly and the legacy that she has in the game so far? Second question is: As a player who knows what it's like to win the same tournament many times over, what are the feelings that you get coming back to a place you've had so much success at as a player?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, good to see you and thank you. There is just some courses that as a player you like more than others, whether it's the setup or the time of year or the condition of the greens, the distance. A lot of factors come into why you like this course versus that course. Seems like Nelly likes our course very well.

Why does she like it? From tee-to-green if you've been out there you know. It's quite open. But she's a good ball-striker, and I think the second shots are really important at Pelican because of the greens. The greens are quite undulated. They're fast. Well, depends on the weather, but most of the time they're firm, right? They want kind of, you know, that type of feel when you play.

So the think the golf course fits her for that reason. Being a Floridian she's quite used to the conditions that she will see there.

And that success, as you mentioned, it's really put her right there, so close for the Hall of Fame. It's just a matter of -- it's not like when, it's -- it's not a matter of what it's when. She's going to get that last point or two and many more I'm sure. She has established herself very well in the sport. She is a good representative.

I think people when you think of her you think she's tall, athletic, has a beautiful swing, very consistent. Just something about her that makes people want to watch, and I think it's good for the game.

So excited for her and about that opportunity. I think early on in her career I'm sure we could all picture the day she would get at that final point and be inducted. So excited for Nelly and what she brings to the Tour, no doubt about that. Nice to see her at No. 1 again.

Always a little more meaningful when you're at the top. More talking points, and also I think as a player it's kind of cool to be able to say that you're the No. 1.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Thank you, Beth Ann.

Kelly, good to see you.

Q. Thank you. I have one question for Annika and one for Annabelle. Annika, I know, like you said, we are going into the season finale the week after the Annika. How pivotal is it to have your tournament scheduled right before the finale? And having been in those players' shoes, what are you looking to see out there knowing that everyone will be vying for the top 60 spots?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I think we feel very lucky to be in this spot. When you look at tournaments and locations and so forth, you want to put your tournament in a place people want to play. We're in a sweet spot: Florida, November, the week before just kind of set it all up. The community gets involved.

So the timing is very, very crucial and very important for us, and we noticed that with the field. So we want to, again, just kind of set up a course that it tests you in a lot of different ways, because, again, we know what's at stake and we want to make sure that it's a fair golf course.

So if you play well you should be able to score. A lot is on the line, so want to make sure you test every part of the game. So, yeah, it's a perfect spot for us and the timing, and so we been following many of the players throughout the season. Obviously we know how they're playing and who is coming in and so forth.

But we want to put on a good show. Justin said this year we're going to focus on the competition. Not that we haven't done that in the past. He didn't really mean it that way. It's just a lot of the stuff going on. This year I think the players speak for themselves. There is a lot of stories out there that can be told and will be told.

If you're on LPGA fan, I think you know what I'm talking

about. There is a lot of players to be proud of. Hopefully be exciting finish on Sunday.

Q. Annabelle, you had one win on the Epson Tour this season. Are you bringing any of that mentality into your start, and will that help you manage nerves on Thursday?

ANNABELLE PANCAKE-WEBB: Yeah, for sure. Any time you get a win it boosts the confidence a little bit knowing you can finish out a tournament when you come down the stretch and it's close.

But kind of like Annika said, this is just an opportunity to learn and to soak everything in and get used to being on the biggest stage, so my hope is really just to soak it in, learn a lot, and just enjoy the experience, enjoy the walk.

It's just about the process and the journey anyway, so I'm just excited to learn this week, and, yeah, obviously bring some of that confidence in for sure. I still want to compete and do well, so that's the hope, yeah.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Amy, good to see you. Unmute yourself and ask away.

Q. This question is for Annika and maybe the tournament staff as well. The three sponsor invites for this year, Macy, Annabelle, and Scarlett, can you speak to what you look for in determining who receives the invites and what you saw in these three that made them attractive candidates?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, I can start. Maybe the rest of the team can fill-in. Good to see you, Amy. Thank you for being part of this.

Yeah, I mean, you know, sponsor invite is kind of what it is: It's a sponsors, and we have three in this case as you know. We look for players that are -- I mean, me personally, we focus a lot on the next generation, providing opportunities and through The ANNIKA Foundation. It's all about empowering and advancing young women.

We kind of want to tie it in not just because we're the beneficiary, the foundation, but we want to tie it in with other events we do. Annika Intercollegiate, as you know, that we just hosted in September in Minnesota. We wanted to tie it in so Wake Forest, you know, they decided that Macy was going to play.

So it fits in. We've done it in the past. It's in a way they kind of earn their way in, if you know what I mean. Not qualifying in that sense, but it's the next generation of stars we're looking for. They will contribute in a way that we -- you know, as personalities, as good golfers, learning experience, all the things that we could provide to make them better but also add to the tournament.

So every year we get a number of players wanting to play, which is very nice. It's always hard to pick. But from my perspective, this is how we pick ours. I know Pelican Group has their categories, and same thing for Gainbridge. I think Annabelle, you know how that tie comes in.

I think we focus on youth, and that's what to me opinion about these three invites this year, they kind of fill that category.

RYAN DEVER: Yeah, Annika you hit the nail on the head. I think it's budding stars who have great careers so far to date, but also massively bright futures ahead.

And so providing that opportunity for them to partake in our field is an honor and privilege for the team that puts on the tournament, and we're excited for all three of them to join us in a couple weeks.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Justin, want to chat about miss Scarlett Schremmer and ya'll's sponsor invite?

JUSTIN SHEEHAN: Scarlett goes to school in Miami and she's had an incredible fall. She has won two of her four events. I think one she shot 17-under, and she's just a great person. Everybody who knows her loves her, so we're excited to have her.

Q. Annika, one more for you. Fourth year as the namesake for this tournament. You wear a lot of hats and are involved in so many different aspects of golf and giving back. What role do you see this tournament in your legacy and in that role?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, no, it's a good question. That's the goal of still being part of the game. I feel like we have kind of accomplished that the last whatever we are -- 2008 was my last year, so 18, and the foundation is now going to celebrate 20 years next year.

We want to cover every aspect of women's golf and junior girls golf. You've seen our initiatives. I mean, it literally starts is with six year olds with the Share My Passion Clinics, which we have on Saturday of the tournament. The foundation is a beneficiary. We have a collegiate event. We sponsor players with the ambassadorial program, development program, and then the Annika Women's All Pro Tour.

Bottom line I think the legacy is to give back in every aspect of the sport. Now we're even doing some executive

women that are joining us in some events. So it's a big spectrum, right? I feel like it's all coming together. Really the force in women's golf is kind of our goal. It's been fun. Certainly been fun.

It's different work than playing, but really feel like my playing career is helping these initiatives along.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Jeff, unmute yourself and ask away.

Q. Thanks, as always, for doing this. Thank you, Annika, Ryan, Justin. Question for Annabelle and Annika. Annabelle, you mentioned that this is a little bit of a warmup looking ahead to next year. Obviously at the same time you want to play well. Is there anything in particular that you are looking at in terms of routine or anything that will help you make that step a successful one from Epson to the full LPGA?

ANNABELLE PANCAKE-WEBB: Yeah, I honestly -- that's kind of what this tournament will be, is figuring out the routine I think. It will be a good test drive. Obviously what I did on Epson this year worked really well, but the schedule is very different from Epson to LPGA. You start on Thursday. You're traveling on Monday but also trying to get practice in on Monday.

So it'll be a good adjustment to kind of learn the ropes a little bit with the new schedule and trying to prep, but I think I'm going to try and somehow make it similar, because if it's not broken, don't try and fix it.

So, yeah, it'll be an interesting test drive, but I'm interested to see how it'll all work together.

Q. What's the balance that you're going to have to strike between soaking it in and learning, and at the same time playing well hopefully playing four rounds?

ANNABELLE PANCAKE-WEBB: Yeah, so I think that's where the preparation beforehand comes into play. Preparing like the results are up to me, really putting in the work, making sure I'm coming into the event knowing I've done everything in my power to do everything to play well; going out and playing and enjoying it and soaking it in.

So I'm not taking the rounds too seriously. Taking my prep seriously, but then just going out and knowing I put in the prep, put in the work, and now I can just enjoy the walk, the process, and hopefully the results will show the prep and the work.

Yeah, don't want to put too much pressure on the rounds, that's for sure.

Q. For Annika, I know that your goal every year is to make it a great experience for all the players, but for somebody like Annabelle, somebody like Scarlett, Macy, who are experiencing in many cases their first experience inside the LPGA ropes, do you give them any little extra to make sure that they are comfortable in their new surroundings?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Good to see you, Jeff. I mean, we're here for all the players. I hope that these three young women feel welcome and that they can always reach out. I'll be spending some time with Annabelle I believe in Miami in a few days, right? Next Sunday maybe. Time flies. We're going down to the race, so get a chance to spend some time together. Hopefully she feels comfortable to ask my questions with the team.

And then Scarlett, I kind of keep in touch socially with her as far as just congratulate her. I feel like we already have a little connection there.

Don't know Macy very well, but she'll be out there and I'll be obviously introducing myself and being around there. I think the extra attention is being around there and knowing I'm there and cheering for them. But it's a fine line. Many of them have their teams and their routines, and I'm not there to interrupt any of that. On the contrary it's more just if they have any questions or feel any concern.

I think a lot of this has already been taken care of before they get there knowing that they're invited and we're there for them. Of course we always cheer a little extra for our invites. Like I said, for the next generation, I've been cheering for them for years, so hopefully that comes across.

Q. One more for you. You were mentioning Terry is getting honored with a caddie award. What was the genesis of that? And when you called Terry, I'm sure you made the call, what was his reaction to having something for him?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, no, it was his friends on the -- caddies on Tour. They wanted to do a special celebration and also to highlight Terry's career. So I think it was really their idea. I'm not going to take any credit. When they said, what do you feel? I was like, this is fantastic. He's a great guy. You met him. You know him, he's worked hard all these years and has been caddieing for a lot of players and helped them to fulfill their dreams.

To have him being recognized at our event, that I guess warmed my heart more than anything. He's going to get it, but for them to do it here at the end of the year was very,

very special. I've seen him the last few weeks and he's excited. And, no, it's always the player that gets all the recognition, so I'm glad it's reversed this time.

Q. Justin, you mentioned about the weather. It's been an interesting summer here. Started out with a lot of heat. You mentioned September was very wet, and now it hasn't rained in about a month. How difficult or challenging has it been for you to keep the course where it needs to be, and if you could just detail a little bit of the changes that you said were made to the first hole -- first tee, I'm sorry.

JUSTIN SHEEHAN: Sure. For us, the summer actually worked out perfect because it was dry during our heavy work. The rains came when the grass was healing when we were done beating it up. So it stayed wetter longer than we would like, but as far as the growing and the healing process it's been great for us.

As a club we're looking at what we can do to make the golf course better. We have a long range plan we're working through. One simple change was just to combine two tee boxes on the first hole to make one long 40-yard one, which opens up a lot more space for the tents and rope line.

So it just doesn't feel so tight when there is a big fan or gallery presence there.

Next summer we're going to see a few more changes to the actual golf course. That's our goal every year, to make it better. We pick two or three big things and see if we can improve it.

Q. I see. That should be a big help on one. If I could ask Ryan a quick question as well. You mentioned before there has been some operational changes, especially adding another fan entrance. Just detail that a little bit and how that's going to be easier for the fans to get in and out.

RYAN DEVER: Yeah, great question. I think we take, like Annika mentioned throughout all the parties, right, players, partners, volunteers, we take feedback, and some of our patrons local low and in and around Belleair. Our main spectator entrance where parking lot shuttles drop off was our kind of formal main entrance over the past several years, but that didn't allow easy walk ups for some of the residents within the town of Belleair.

So hearing that feedback and understanding the access to provide to folks here locally to have the opportunity to walk, bike, take their golf cart if you will, we've added a secondary entrance that was formalized in 2025 and actually will continue on throughout this year and beyond.

It worked out really well. Instead of having to reroute folks walking from the confines of the neighborhood to this other entrance, which was kind of roundabout, they have a more direct path to gain access to the golf.

It was a key learning experience hearing that feedback and Jeff being a part of this since the inception, you've seen some of the big growth and changes we've made to make it a very easy and successful experience for all.

We try to kind of lessen the impact. Even though we have bunch of spectators and infrastructure getting constructed here on the golf course, we like to make it as easy to get here.

The secondary walkway entrance was a big hit last year and will be moving forward for sure.

Q. Yeah, my wife was waiting for her friend who was biking in and was a little bit difficult, so she's very thrilled to hear about this new method. Thanks so much for paying attention to the details, and thanks so much, guys, for the questions.

RYAN DEVER: Absolutely. Thanks, Jeff.

Q. Annika, as we look back on 2026 and the LPGA, what would you put at the top of your highlight reel, one or two of your best moments? And then we have to go on the other part of the spectrum. Other than the ratings for the Solheim Cup which were not good, what would you put of concern?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: That was my answer. Did you hear it? Just kidding. I was muted. It was my best reply. Just kidding.

I said thanks for a great question, Tom. Overall I look at the women's golf from the higher level, and I think it's been a good year overall. Just to see where the participation rate or just the purses have gone up, I think the LPGA being Craig Kessler has done a great job with the LPGA this year.

So I think the news with the women and the TGL is a great step in the right direction. I'm sure it could be modified, but things are happening.

And as far as Solheim Cup, I just heard that yesterday actually. I don't know who told me. Yeah, that was maybe a little surprised or disappointed for sure because I look at my career, Solheim Cup is such a fun thing, something we look forward every other year, and I thought maybe the

fans will do too.

Not really sure why, but to be continued about that.

But, yeah, I think there is a lot of high stuff for the LPGA and women's golf in general, so that's kind of where I come, and I especially look at the foundation and the things we have accomplished and the partnerships that people are seeking out asking to want to do stuff. So I feel the genuine excitement about it.

So that's my take. (Smiling.)

Q. One follow up. The FM Championship has put a new threshold on player perks with them paying a stipend to miss the cut, transportation. That's kind of a high bar to meet with other LPGA tournaments. That never happened when you were out there. What are your thoughts today as far as all those perks?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, I mean, I think, you know, look at the PGA Tour. They've had perks for years, right? Different ways to attract players to come, whether it's higher purses or like you mentioned something for missing the cut or taking care of travel or accommodations. The PGA Tour, I feel like they do a lot of good things for families.

So it's away to attract players. I'm all for it. We can't really pay appearance fees. Mostly been done overseas. I'm not against that at all. A lot of these players are independent contractor, so whatever you can do to make sure they come.

And that goes into all the things we talk about. How do we lure the players to come and play the The ANNIKA driven by Gainbridge at Pelican.

If a player loves it, they will come. Different tournaments have different approaches, so be interesting to see how that works.

Q. This is just a perky question. With having the housing on property, is it a perk for a number of players? Do some of the players get to stay there and this is really great when you're at a tournament site?

RYAN DEVER: Yeah, Jamie, great question. Thank you for it. We won't disclose just to privacy reasons the exact locations of the players' accommodations. However one of the facilities here on site are helpful for some of the guests that do come into town for the week. I will say the complementary hotel accommodations for the bulk of the field is just off property nearby with the wonderful accommodations that Sand Key Clearwater provide. So, yeah.

Q. One other quick question: Just with the changing nature of coverage in golf and so many of the college players having -- I had an interview with Stacy Lewis not too long ago and she talked about how players now are maybe gravitating more towards staying in college because it's a better conduit to getting on Tour. I know things will change. Just curious, do you look at the girls coming up now on Tour as semi-professionals? I just wondered what the perspective on that might be and where you think it might be going.

RYAN DEVER: Yeah, Annika, would you like to take that one?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, I wish we had NIL when I played. I don't know if that would've made me stay longer. Maybe it would've. If I understand the question right there.

So it's a way to make sure that players get somewhat compensated through college. I mean, I think it's good to an extent. In other sports maybe it's getting a little bit out of hand. Personal opinion maybe.

But just women's golf, I don't think it's getting out of hand. On the contrary I think we all welcome some more. I've always been a fan of college golf. I think it's a great -- maybe a little bit of a transition from high school before you step into college. It's a big step to become a professional.

We see many players that are -- they do really well in college and to turn professional and it's a big step. All of a sudden you're by yourself, no teammates, no coach. You have caddies and sponsors and have to do all that.

It's a big step so I always felt like maybe have the college to do a little bit of that instead of high school, and also I think high school you're still quite young. I think I don't think you can rent a car and get a hotel room and stuff like that, so it helps for a lot of reasons.

I mean, I think I'm with Stacy. I'm hoping these perks will make kids stay in college because it's hard out there. We've seen many times in the past players doing so great in high school and they win a lot and they feel like they're ready and come out there, and all of a sudden you play against everyone, all across any ages, any part of the world.

So I'm for college. Let's make sure we incentivize the players to go to college so they're more prepared when they come out. Nobody benefits of coming out and not doing well, so I would rather have the players be prepared.

If that takes some more years in college, then that's what it means.

Q. If Annabelle is still there, do you feel that there is so much more exposure because there is so much more college golf being covered now that you can be seen on? I just wonder whether that might have been a factor in terms of saying this is definitely something that will help me to be a tournament professional.

ANNABELLE PANCAKE-WEBB: Yeah. Yeah, I think any sort of exposure for women's golf is great, especially if you can get exposed to it in college kind of at a younger age and getting used to that, having cameras around and competing against great players. I think that's awesome.

I agree with Annika in that I think college really prepares players. Gives them four years of good competition. When you get in college, you were the best player in your hometown and now you're bringing six other players who were the best in their hometown and you're competing against players who are all amazing.

So it also just gets you the competitive aspect of like everyone is good, so kind of teaches you how to compete with the best and how to excel. I definitely think the exposure is great and I hope it continues to grow. I know it definitely -- I loved watching players in college when I was younger, so I just hope that we can continue to do that so little girls can see that and be inspired to continue to play and want to play in college because it's a great experience.

Q. I hope they'll be seeing you on the telecast.

ANNABELLE PANCAKE-WEBB: Yeah, thank you.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: I'm going to do one final question and we will wrap it up. Annika, you mentioned it during the call and Ryan touched on it at the top. Before Annika and Annabelle come to Pelican Golf Club they're going to be down in Homestead for the NASCAR Cup Championship watching Michael McDowell in the fully wrapped and branded The ANNIKA driven by Gainbridge car, the No. 71 car race.

Annika and Annabelle, have you been to a NASCAR race before? And if you have or haven't, what are your expectations and how excited are you to experience a NASCAR race?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Annabelle, you want to go first?

ANNABELLE PANCAKE-WEBB: Sure, I can go. I have never been, which is crazy. Growing up in Indianapolis you would think the Indianapolis 500, I would have experienced that, but I have not.

I'm so excited. I have no idea what to expect. I expect it to be loud and exciting. That's pretty much my expectations.

So, yeah, I'm really looking forward to it. It will be a really awesome experience.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, I'm looking forward also. I've been to a few races and I'm actually becoming a fan. I think it's really -- I don't know, I'm impressed with the drivers. First time I went, I'm new to it, but it was thanks to Gainbridge that I've been able to go to some of these.

I mean, they go so fast and they're so close and it's just super intense. You play golf and it's like you miss a shot but it's okay. You go find it and you hit it. In racing you can't really make a big mistake because there is a little more danger involved. I love it. I've been in the pit a few times. Went to Indianapolis 500.

I don't know. It's just Gainbridge has exposed me to that and this time I'm bringing our daughter, Ava, with me. Should be really fun.

Now of course when we have our name on a car now we know who we're cheering for so it's going to be bit more emotional and engaging. It's really cool. That's one of the things Gainbridge does a good job, brings in other sports, athletes, as we mentioned earlier to just create more participation or just more exposure for the tournament.

No, I'm going to be cheering -- I don't know if loud. Annabelle, it's going to be super loud. Might have to wear some headset. I think you'll be thrilled as well.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Thank you. Thank you ladies. All right, I think we'll wrap things up. So Annika, Annabelle, Ryan, and Justin, all of our friends and colleges in the media, thank you for joining. As mentioned, you guys will receive a transcript and recording of this call this afternoon.

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