

Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational

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Midland, Michigan, USA

Midland Country Club

Chris Chandler

Grant Boone

Annika Sorenstam

Madelene Sagström

Media Conference

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Hi, everybody. Good to see a couple familiar faces from Grand Rapids a couple weeks ago and also a lot of other familiar faces as well.

I will get things started here. Thank you for joining us to preview the Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational coming up July 10th through the 16th at Midland Country Club. We've got Golf Channel and NBC Sports host Grant Boone with us; Chris Chandler, executive director of the Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational; and of course Annika Sorenstam and Madelene Sagström.

When we get to the Q & A portion, if you wouldn't mind indicating in the chat that you'd like to ask a question, and then we'll call on you. Due to the good amount of people on here, if we could keep it to one question at least from the get-go so we can get everybody in, that would be great.

With that, I'd like to introduce Chris Chandler for a couple of opening remarks on the tournament.

CHRIS CHANDLER: Hey, thanks, Jeremy. Good morning, good afternoon to everybody. Just a few quick kind of highlights about the tournament here real quick just to set the stage before this exciting little Zoom call here.

Just wanted to let everybody know this year we're celebrating Dow's 125th year anniversary, and so when you look at 125 years ago, our founder, Herbert H. Dow, one of his famous quotes was "If you can't do it better, why do it." Fast forward from 125 years ago to today, it's our ambition as a company to be the most innovative, customer centric, inclusive and sustainable materials science company in the world.



It's kind of with that mantra and spirit from 125 years ago but also our ambition of today that we created the Dow GLBI back in 2019, and why we wanted it to be a little bit different maybe than some other events on Tour.

That's really how the team format was born here. The LPGA loved the idea. We wanted to do something different, and it was kind of a match made in heaven here.

You all know we've got a team format. This will be year three of the Dow GLBI. We have 144 players in 72 teams. They'll compete for a \$2.5 million purse this year. We're going to be airing live on Golf Channel Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and then final round will be live on CBS on Saturday from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. We're very proud of the national broadcast that we'll have on Saturday.

Many of you may know that the Dow GLBI is also one of the most sustainable events on the LPGA Tour. We're the first and only LPGA event to achieve the globally recognized sustainability certification through the GEO Foundation.

You'll really see at the heart of the event, and I think Grant has seen this from the few times he's been at the tournament, is really community and local impact. We've got a program here that we've now given away over a million dollars over the first two years in our event, and it's called the Team Up program, appropriately named, where we give away over a half a million dollars a year to 36 different nonprofits across our region.

I wanted to highlight one quick story that gives kind of the feeling of the event on-site and locally in the region, is that in 2019 we had one of our nonprofits get some of this money from this program that we have, and when we came back to them six months after the event, we said, hey, how did you guys use the money to impact your local community, and they said, you know what, we actually didn't use the money. We gave it all away to five other nonprofits in our region because we loved your Team Up spirit and we decided we wanted to take that on ourselves and give it away to others who could make a bigger impact in our community, and really that's what these events, as you all know, are about and I think what makes some of these programs so special.



Grant, I know you've been to the GLBI and have experienced it here in the Great Lakes Bay region. Obviously we can't wait to welcome you back in the booth again this year and cannot wait to welcome these two special guests we have here today.

Over to you, Grant.

GRANT BOONE: Chris, I appreciate that. Can't wait to get back to the Great Lakes Bay region for the third playing of this event, and I really think that you have lived up to Herbert Dow's mantra back 125 years ago: If you can't do it better, why do it.

You have created, and this event and Midland Country Club has created one of the best starts to any tournament that I've ever seen in the 22 years I've been covering the LPGA. It's hard to jump into the Tour and get people's attention. But you've done that, and I've told Judy Rankin, we were talking about this last year when we did the event, there is kind of an American Evian vibe going on here, a Michigan version of an Evian vibe, with everyone staying downtown, everyone staying in the same area, and you see each other at night and at meals, and it's very much of a collegial feeling that you have there fitting with the Dow team spirit.

Can't wait to get back, and when you think about what this event has done and you think about a time in the golf world when it's harder than ever as we all know to get noticed, the Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational has done it by bringing together a field that includes some of the best players of today's LPGA, including the Korda sisters, Team Jelly as they've called themselves the first couple of times, more than a dozen major champions, and now this year two of the greatest players in the history of game, Annika and Karrie Webb, competing in the same event by the way for the first time since 2008. I may have to get my pleated pants back out to commemorate.

I am struck by just the presence of these two, and Annika, I want to welcome in you and Madelene here because the two of you go back a few years now, but first and foremost we've got to get the most important question out of the way, and that is have you settled on a team name yet?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: We have not. We still have a few days, Grant, so we'll figure it out for sure. But I loved your comments on the pleated pants. I don't know, you're kind of my age group, so you know that. So you've got to be careful what you say.

GRANT BOONE: That's true. Madelene is saying, what are pleats?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: (Laughs.)

MADELENE SAGSTRÖM: No, I know, I know.

GRANT BOONE: The two of you have played together in competition, and as I recall from having been there, you both seemed to rise to the occasion at the 2021 Gainbridge at Lake Nona, Annika your home course. It was your first LPGA start since 2008. You made three birdies coming in on that Friday to extend your made cut streak to 15 years. Never mind that 12 of those you weren't playing. Still, it goes back 15 years at the time.

Madelene, you didn't want to be left out. You finished birdie-birdie and then holed out from a bunker for eagle to make the cut on the number. What do the two of you remember from that experience a year and a half ago?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: It was great. Obviously for me to come back and play at home, home course, hometown, was very, very special, and as you know, I'm in a different place now than I was when I was getting at Madelene's age. But it was very special, and of course to play with Madelene and some of the players you can play out there, we have gotten to know each other quite well the last few years. It was very, very special, and yeah, to make the weekend of course made it even more.

I remember our daughter was really not into golf. She was like, Mommy, we made the cut. She couldn't really care less about all these things, but also it was "we." That's really what this is; as I've said before, it's a family effort. I look forward to playing with Madelene here in just a few weeks.

It's, I wouldn't say family, but we're very close, and it's going to be really fun.

MADELENE SAGSTRÖM: Well, I remember I think it was after Friday, and I was talking to Jack, my boyfriend, and I was saying, this is like what everyone dreams about. I get to play with my childhood star and just doing things that I never thought I was ever going to do.

I mean, I never thought I was going to play a competition -- tournament round first of all, and then obviously now play a team event with Annika. It was a dream come true to me.

And also super inspiring to see the journey that she has both done before and then to come back and play again. I was just very grateful and honored that weekend and even more so now. I'm really looking forward to this week.

GRANT BOONE: Madelene, if I would have told that



gawky teenager practicing in the freezing cold of Enköping, Sweden, back in the mid 2000s that one day she would not only meet Annika but play for her in a Solheim Cup, play with her at an event like this, and to have become a friend, what would she have said to me back then?

MADELENE SAGSTRÖM: Oh, there's no way she would have believed you. There's no way.

Obviously it's been cool, but it's been such a lovely journey because Annika is such a -- I look up to her so much, and even more so now, and she's really been letting me in and just helping me so much with my game and with my journey.

It's been bigger than I could ever imagine it to be in, and I'm just super grateful for the support and all the help she's been giving me over these last few years, so I can't thank her enough for that.

GRANT BOONE: Annika, let me ask you, you saw enough of Madelene as a rookie in 2017 to pick her for her Solheim Cup team there in Iowa. I think her play over the last few years, contending in majors, winning now on the LPGA Tour, playing in more Solheim Cups, I think her play has proven you to have been spot on. What was it that you saw then in Madelene, and what is it that you see in her now that gives you the belief that she could be a player to watch here over the coming years?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, I've always been impressed with Madelene. I didn't really know her early, but the more I spent time with her, the more impressed I get. She's a very -- she's just a lovely person to start with. She's fun.

I think I like her attitude probably the most. She's very focused and disciplined, but when the golf is over it's like, let's move on, let's do this. She really appreciates life, and I think that's a great attitude to have. Golf is important but it's not everything to her.

But on the golf course, I watched her when she won all those tournaments on it was called -- well, it's the Epson Tour now, but she was playing so well, so consistently, and I could just see the potential was there from the long game to the short game to her putting.

Of course like many players, it's a big transition when you get to the LPGA. You've got to learn a few things and kind of get a hang of the ropes or whatever you call it.

I enjoy playing with her. She says she appreciates me helping her. I appreciate her letting me be part of it. She inspires me and she gets this old body moving and

focusing and trying to work hard on my game wherever I am. I feel very -- I think it's a mutual feeling there.

Like you said, she's been so close the last few weeks in majors, the last year. She's just knocking on the door.

We played together, and this is not something I'm super proud of, but we were planning, and one day I invited her over and we played and I played decent. We were playing from kind of the back tees that we do nowadays, and I played decent, and she beat me, what, six or seven shots on nine holes. She came out there and shot 30. 30 on the front nine. And I came home and I told Mike and the kids, and they were like, what? I was hitting it quite well, but -- and then a few weeks later we decided to do it again, and when I left the breakfast table, the rules were clear: She's not beating me by six again, otherwise I wasn't welcome back.

I had to really put in an extra gear. She pushes me, as well, so hopefully I can teach her a few things. I look forward to playing as a team with her really close up. Her driving is spectacular. We played together at U.S. Open, and I know that it wasn't the finish either of us wanted, but Madelene, you're right there, and you know it in your heart, and it's going to happen.

MADELENE SAGSTRÖM: Let me just add, she did beat me that last time. (Laughing.)

GRANT BOONE: It sounds like you've got the makings of a good team. We've got Karrie Webb and Marina Alex. Marina just won a month ago. I'm going to go ahead and put myself out there and say I think both not only are going to make the cut, I think both of those teams might even make a little noise, as well.

Jeremy, why don't we turn it over to you and see if we have questions from the media.

Q. Annika, every time we have one of these things, you make it perfectly clear that this is not a comeback. But we keep seeing you. When can we start calling this a comeback? Secondly, with Karrie in the field, how competitive do you think you two will be with each other?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well, you know me, I'm competitive whatever it is. But no, I actually look forward to seeing Karrie. I really haven't seen her -- I can't remember the last time. I guess Hall of Fame. Then we had different roles. We were wearing the blazers. It's not like we're wearing our golf shoes and golf hats.

Yeah, it'll be fun. I look forward to seeing her, look forward

to playing against her, of course. This is a fun format. Thank you very much, Dow, for doing this and including me and Karrie as veterans. I think this is super exciting.

You know me; it's just the way it is, I'm competitive, and I'm just trying to do the best I can every time I show up. It hasn't really been what I wanted but I haven't given up. I keep trying and keep grinding away. I'm going to try and make my partner super happy.

Q. I just wanted to ask you both, first of all, how this came about, this partnership, and when did it come about.

MADELENE SAGSTRÖM: I actually did ask Annika for '21 if she wanted to play. I was like, either she's going to say yes or no, and she said no. So then it didn't work out.

But then she did ask me at the end of last year. So we've kind of gone back and forth for a few months, are you sure you want to play, do you want to play, and we just really thought it was going to be a fun time and a good format, and it's a good place for both of us before, some big events, so we thought it was good timing for us.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, I was hoping I would get that rain check. You never know, right? Last year I think I had another commitment already. So I'm hoping she's found a partner she wouldn't want to leave, so I'm very appreciative of this.

Q. When you think about this partnership, what do you think this does for like the young golfer, the young lady golfers to see this and to inspire to be this?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, I mean, I hope -- as you know, that's what I've been trying to do the last -- since I started the ANNIKA Foundation for sure is to inspire the next generation to fulfill their dreams.

I would love them to see that this is a game you can play for life. This is a game that you can hang out with anybody and continue to play and pursue your passion at different levels.

I think that that's really one of the messages we're saying is never give up, keep on trying, follow your dreams and have a good time doing it. I think, again, Dow is celebrating, what, 125 years? It's been a long time, but it's just -- they still have a passion. They still have a mission. They still have that. I'd like to say I do, too, whether it's playing all the time or just being out there inspiring the next generation.

Madelene is kind of that generation that I have been

working with in the beginning. The Kordas have played in some of my events, and as you know, many of our ANNIKA alumnae have played in these events, so it's kind of fun for me to be back and be around them as I continue with my mission to inspire.

MADELENE SAGSTRÖM: I think for me, too, it's like we have a lot of girls looking up to us, but we still have our people that we look up to, and Annika being one of those people for me and just knowing that you can learn so much from each other and being humble to the learning experience. There's always something out there that you don't know already, and I think it's just -- I mean, it's a huge opportunity for both of us to show off our games where we're at. Like Annika said, just inspire the next generation to learn from each other and to continue to grow in the game, like you said. We're never done. We can play this game forever, and we're never going to be done growing it either.

Q. Madelene, can you tell me a little bit about the first time you met Annika, and was that a nerve-racking experience for you?

MADELENE SAGSTRÖM: The first time I actually met her was at -- it was a team event. It was in Sweden -- this was ages ago. But it was one of those team events like East against West or something, and we were there. She had clinic and we played a match against each other. That was the first time I met her. But then it was one of these, you're hiding in the back, you don't dare to say anything. You're just standing there, that's actually Annika, just being there. So that was the first time.

I think it must have been '09, '08, '07, something like that.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: You might have stood in the back, but your swing and your game did not.

MADELENE SAGSTRÖM: It's gotten a bit better since then, that's for sure.

Q. Tell me about what you've heard from other golfers on the Tour about this tournament. What do they enjoy the most about it that kind of made you take notice?

MADELENE SAGSTRÖM: Well, I actually played last year with Bronte Law, and I thought it was a fantastic event. We had so much fun. The format is really fun, and it's something different that we don't do every day. When it came up again, I really think that mine and Annika's games are really compatible in this format, and I think we can do a really good job, so it was -- I just knew how fun of a week I had back then, and I know how much fun we will have now.



It's fun, but it's a different kind of format and a different tournament.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, as you know, I haven't been there, so I really look forward to it. It's a beautiful place, beautiful time of the year, and obviously appreciate the support from Dow.

I think just listening to other players, I'm not out there every week, so I don't hear all the things, but certain things have sprinkled back, how great it is. I look forward to experiencing it. I'm sure it's as good as people say.

It's going to be fun.

Q. Chris, obviously a successful start to this tournament, but just how big of a deal is it to have someone with Annika's credentials coming to play for you guys this year?

CHRIS CHANDLER: Yeah, obviously huge. I mean, to put on an event and have arguably the greatest player ever to come play your event is obviously very exciting and a huge honor. We look forward to yesterday's announcement, today's call, and really hope that I think there's an immense buzz already in the community after yesterday's announcement.

I've gotten hundreds of text messages and social media stuff of people saying, wow, unbelievable that Annika is coming to play. Yeah, just huge news for our region and hope that the fans really come out and support.

GRANT BOONE: Annika, this is a busy stretch for you, isn't it? You're going to be playing at least three events in a row, aren't you.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I am, yes. You're right. I'm playing here in Tahoe next week, and then we fly to Michigan, and the LPGA Senior is in Kansas. Yeah, there's no summer vacation here for me. The kids have summer break, but I said, you guys are coming with me.

But it's fun, we do this together, and being here in Tahoe, it's not that big of a stretch, but there's a lot of golf. I'm going to pace myself.

It's fun, though. Yeah, I'm enjoying it.

Q. I wanted to ask you both just from a Swedish golf in general question, what you thought the impact of Linn Grant's victory at your event had on Swedish golf and will have. What are you hearing?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well, as you know, I was on-site, and I played with her the first two days, which was just amazing. It's funny, I came from the U.S. Open, and I had played with Ingrid Lindblad the first two days, and she played amazing. Ingrid has played is an ANNIKA alumni. She's played in several of the events that we host, and so does Linn. Linn has played in several of the ANNIKA Foundation events.

So I've seen them grow up and mature and taking the game to different levels. From a Swedish golf perspective, we've had a few good weeks I would say for especially women's golf to see the young talent and this next generation come out there and just play so beautifully, so fearless and so strong in these big events.

Linn just played amazing, the weekend especially. I was curious to see how she would do coming into the weekend, playing with the guys, and then playing in the last group. She just put another gear in. It was amazing. It was like she was at the top and then she found another gear and she just kind of left everybody else in the dust. It was really an amazing finish for our tournament.

You can imagine, second year of the Scandinavian Mixed. First year we had a male winner, and then to have a Swedish female winner, it just puts our tournament, I think, in a different spotlight in a certain different -- I think people view it a little differently now and see that this is really a cool concept. It really works. I'm very happy for Linn. Just watching on social media, watching the exposure, so thanks to everybody on the media side for giving her that spotlight. She deserves it. It was really incredible.

I'm hoping that this will continue to snowball. I'd like to say that she's one of several that I've seen through the ANNIKA Foundation and Swedish golf that has a lot of potential, and Maja Stark is one of them, Beatrice Wallin is one of them. I can probably mention quite a few. We have a good group of young girls that we have seen in the foundation for probably since '17, '18 and '19, from a national amateur to college golf, as you know, and then the professionals. So huge boost for sure.

Q. Annika, what was more nerve-racking for you, seeing it up on the PGA TOUR back in the day, or was it returning to competitive golf in the last year or so?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, that's a good question. Obviously both got me a little nervous. I think 2003 I was extremely nervous. I've mentioned this a few times. I didn't even know if I could keep the ball on the tee, my hands were shaking so much. At that time I was -- that's all I did, played a super season, and that's what I did all the time, and now to come in and take that long break and

start over, you really don't know what you've got or how you're going to behave at a different age.

I'm starting to see that my mind is probably a lot stronger than my body is. In my mind I feel like I'm right there, and then the body just doesn't do always what I want it to do. It's just the reality of it.

But I enjoyed teeing it up at the U.S. Open. It wasn't the finish I wanted, of course, but I really put in a lot of time to get ready. I've enjoyed that journey with my family, and Madelene and I, we have had some good practice sessions, and I do enjoy that.

Yeah, it's a different type of nervousness. Once I'm kind of leaving the course, my mind is not on my game, it's other things. It's about the kids and my businesses and my foundation, so I can quickly just switch, which makes it easy when you don't play well. It's like, well, it's not that important; I've still got to host an ANNIKA Invitational or the kids still want to do so-and-so. I have a lot of distractions that keep me focused on really what's important.

But it doesn't mean that -- once I'm at a tournament, I try to do everything I can. It's been an interesting balance, it really has. Glad to be able to experience it, but it's not as easy as I was hoping or made it feel like and seem like a few years ago.

GRANT BOONE: Annika, the very first LPGA event that I ever called for Golf Channel was March of 2000, the Takefuji at Kona Country Club, and Karrie and you went to a playoff, and this was six years before there was such a thing as a Rolex Rankings, but both of you were clearly the top two players in the world and it went extra holes, and I forget who won. But let me ask you if I could to take me back to that rivalry when the two of you were going at it. We saw a little glimpse, a little echo of that with Nelly and Jin Young last year, Nelly winning four times plus the Olympic gold medal, Jin Young winning five times and just edging her out for Player of the Year. Take me back to those days 20 years ago when you and Karrie it seemed like every week were there battling each other and nearly winning every tournament.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, it was a lot of fun, no doubt. It was so cool. I have a lot of respect for Karrie. She pushed me. There was no doubt. I wanted to be the best player, and I knew that to do that, I had to beat her.

Whether it was on the driving range or in the gym or whatever, I just -- I just got to take my game to a different level. I don't know if you remember the LPGA commercial they made, I don't know what year that was, but it was kind of funny, she would hit golf balls with my face on it and

then she had a voodoo doll where she put a needle in me, and I think I put a little sticker on her back or -- it was really a friendly rivalry. I mean, I still think of that today. It was a good one. I thought it was good for the game and certainly good for us.

Then Se Ri Pak joined in about 2000, and I had a fun time with her, too. It was interesting because you've got one from South Korea, one from Australia and then Sweden, but we were all playing in the U.S. It was just great, and then the World Rankings came in.

But I think that was the beginning of probably some of the things that started to develop then thanks to the rivalry and kind of the excitement it all created for everybody.

GRANT BOONE: Then Lorena came in and it was even more fun and she took it to the next level.

Chris, I love the cross branding here with Dow, a global leader in environmental sustainability bringing in these two legends whose careers were among the most sustainable of all time as they just kept stacking these stellar seasons on top of one another for 15 years. We can't wait to get back to the Great Lakes Bay region. It'll be here before we know it.

CHRIS CHANDLER: Yeah, can't wait to see you guys, a week and a half. It'll be here soon. Thank you all.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Thank you.

JEREMY FRIEDMAN: Everybody, thank you for joining. As mentioned, I'll send out the recording of this to everybody afterwards as well as a transcription. We will be announcing this week and next additional teams and the full field. The roster is looking really, really good. There will be more announcements coming this week and then early next when the field closes.

Any questions, let us know. We're happy to help. Grant, Chris, Annika, Madelene, all my friends in the media, thank you for joining, and everybody have a great Wednesday.

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