

# Solheim Cup

Thursday, September 21, 2023

Andalucía, Spain

Finca Cortesin

## Team USA

Megan Khang

Nelly Korda

Jennifer Kupcho

Press Conference



FINCA CORTESIN  
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**THE MODERATOR:** All right. Appreciate everyone. Welcome back inside the media center here at the Solheim cup. I am pleased to be joined by members of the U.S. Team in Megan Khang, Nelly Korda, and Jennifer Kupcho.

I want to get things started with a couple questions for this U.S. squad.

Megan, you really solidified your place on this team coming from Canada after your win there. To be here and to fully experience this team after the last few days, what are some of the feelings going into tomorrow?

**MEGAN KHANG:** I mean, I think it's pretty obvious we're all very excited. This golf course is going to take a lot of focus, hard work, and definitely, like, pumping each other up out there. Obviously, getting here, the whole team getting here Sunday, it's been a lot of fun. There's some friendships that are getting even stronger, and so we're really looking forward to playing together as team this coming weekend.

**THE MODERATOR:** Nelly, what are some thoughts that you've had over the last couple of days of this course in general and just how have you felt being back here at the Solheim Cup?

**NELLY KORDA:** Yeah, I mean, it's great. Getting to represent my country, there's no greater honor and getting to do it alongside a great group of girls is even better.

The golf course is going to play tough, especially if the wind kind of picks up. It's pretty narrow with a lot of trouble on both sides of the fairway, so keeping it in play, and there's a lot of falloffs by the greens. Obviously coming from Florida, I'm used to Bermuda grass, so a little bit of maybe an advantage for me because I know this grass so well, but it's going to be a true test, especially if the wind

picks up.

**THE MODERATOR:** Jennifer, for you, we have heard from Stacy a lot about how she's really managed this team and has really been apart of this process. How has her leadership rubbed off on you and the rest of this team?

**JENNIFER KUPCHO:** I think it's one good thing that she is very organized. She always let's us know what's going on before it happens. That's been really helpful all week. It's such a stressful and long week, so to have that organization with Stacy, she's really helped us all.

**THE MODERATOR:** All right. We'll open it up here for questions.

**Q. Yesterday, Angela was in here talking about watching players bomb drives on the first hole. I'm curious what you guys all think about having a unique drivable par-4 on the first hole for an event like this.**

**NELLY KORDA:** I think it's fun. It's something that we don't get to do a lot of. Obviously there's a lot of trouble short. If you land it just short of the green, it's rolling into the water. I think it's a fun opening hole. I feel like also --

**MEGAN KHANG:** I need a downwind for me to go for it, so I'm a little different than them two.

**NELLY KORDA:** You're already going to be so nervous on the first tee and then that being your opening tee shot too, I think you're definitely going to be feeling it in your stomach on that first hole.

**MEGAN KHANG:** I feel like the adrenaline is going to help you, though. I mean, you guys are going to chariot it onto the green, perfect eagle putt. I love it.

**JENNIFER KUPCHO:** I think it's a really good, exciting opening hole for the Solheim Cup.

**Q. Do you think it's going to be a chance for you to put some added pressure on Team Europe since you guys will have the honor as well?**

**NELLY KORDA:** Well, maybe actually we have more pressure because we're the ones hitting the opening tee shots and they will see how we do. I don't know, it's going to be a tough one. We'll see how pace of play goes with it being a reachable par-4. But I think it's a really fun hole to start off the Solheim Cup.

**MEGAN KHANG:** I would say either way I think, you know -- obviously U.S. has the honors, but we're going to do our best to kind of get the adrenaline pumping and work in our favor and hopefully put a nice close one up on the green and really get that pressure on Europe. But we'll just have to see where we end up.

**Q. I feel like this team is kind of friends off the golf course already, but what's it been like to play practice rounds really bonding with each other? Is there a lot of ribbing out there, kind of poking fun at each other or matches maybe y'all have been playing or anything kind fun on the golf course?**

**NELLY KORDA:** Well, Megan and I got whooped by the rookies the first day.

**MEGAN KHANG:** Yeah, Nelly and I will admit, we played a match with Lilia and Allisen and -- we didn't get whooped, we lost 1-down.

**NELLY KORDA:** We got whooped.

**MEGAN KHANG:** Lilia was just on something. She was like -- she was bringing the heat Monday, start of the week, and I was like, whoa, save some for the real matches. But she's like, I got plenty in the bank.

No, it's fun, though. For me, I got to play one-on-one with Rose, and I don't think I've ever played with Rose in the past. So I got to know her a little better and we had some funny jokes out there. So I know for me, it's been pretty nice getting to play with some people that I don't actually play with on a regular basis.

**Q. So that match, were there any bets on that match or, like, friendly wagers, nothing super crazy?**

**MEGAN KHANG:** I had on a one hole match with Rose on 18, and I won.

**NELLY KORDA:** Woohoo.

**MEGAN KHANG:** Put that rookie in her place.

**Q. Nelly, do you like the closeness between the Solheim Cup and the Ryder Cup in the golf schedule?**

**NELLY KORDA:** I don't really think anything really of it. I think it's just going to bring more attention to golf having it kind of back-to-back. I know next year we're going to have back-to-back Solheims, so I think that will be fun too and a little different. But I think fans are going to have two great weeks of golf.

**Q. We heard yesterday some of the leadership talk about how it was an opportunity maybe for the game to come together a little bit. I'm wondering what that might look like, if the two events were played next to each other.**

**NELLY KORDA:** Like, if they're always back-to-back?

**Q. Yeah, if they were to consistently be.**

**NELLY KORDA:** Yeah, I mean, I think that's -- I would have to see maybe the statistics of it, but I think for two weeks having something that they don't see every year, a match play event, would be fun to see, especially I think it will bring more eyes and more attention to the game of golf.

**THE MODERATOR:** For Jennifer and for Nelly, a question from the zoom. Both of you are missing partners that you've had success with in the past. How does something like that maybe affect your strategy or affect -- does it affect you personally?

**NELLY KORDA:** Yeah, I'm definitely sad to not have Jess here. First Solheim Cup without her. It's definitely been a little different. But I think the bigger picture, whenever I get to represent my country it's been so much fun, and I get to experience new players and bond with other players too, which is a lot of fun. But, yeah, sad face not having Jess here.

**THE MODERATOR:** Jen?

**JENNIFER KUPCHO:** Same for me as well. Very sad to not have Lizette here. But it's been great with these five rookies and really our team all together this year. We've all gotten along really well and so many matches can be made. So it's been helpful having that.

**THE MODERATOR:** We'll go to questions in the room.

**Q. Nelly, to follow-up on what you were saying about your sister, what was it that Jess, you felt like, brought to the team and that you miss having most in not having her here?**

**NELLY KORDA:** One, I mean, she's a veteran, so a lot of knowledge. For me, it was just a sense of being calm or a

sense of comfort when I played with her, especially, you know, I got to pair up with her in my first match at Solheim Cup, so that, you know, with all the nerves that you feel on the first tee made it much easier.

At the end of the day, I got to play with my best friend. She has a spunky, very outgoing personality, so I think she brought that to the team room, just like Megan.

**Q. This might answer my next question. How else are you trying to find, then, that sense of comfort and calmness, maybe Megan is helping a little bit with that?**

**NELLY KORDA:** Yeah, I mean, having Meg or just getting to know the girls really well. I mean, throughout the years, I've gotten to know some of the girls really well, so being okay, being vulnerable enough to lean on one another, I think, is what I've learned most throughout these Solheim Cups.

**Q. Just a question about home matches and away matches. What's the essential difference for those two experiences? What is it that's different this week to a week at home?**

**MEGAN KHANG:** I think it's pretty obvious. The crowd typically tends to favor the home team, but I will say, I've seen a lot of red, white and blue out there. We love to see it. It's pretty fun to see all these fans kind of travel across the world to come watch us play. It's a huge honor to be one of the 12 -- or 24 women that are representing the Solheim Cup.

**Q. But as a team, do you bond in order to sort of stand up to that crowd? Do you actually feel that? Is that a vibe?**

**NELLY KORDA:** I think you listen more for the USA chants, right? Just try to feed off that energy and you try to feed off your teammates and your captains and the people that are there rooting for you.

**MEGAN KHANG:** Yeah, I mean, I think at the end of the day, being overseas you tend to lean on your teammates a lot more, your entire team. You're kind of looking at each other like, hey, it's essentially, like, an us against the world type of thing.

So that's huge. You know, you get those few USA chants that get you going, and we kind of feed off of that and really try to do our best to represent.

**Q. Among the players, who is the leader of this group? Who is the ring leader?**

**MEGAN KHANG:** Stacy. (Laughing).

**NELLY KORDA:** I actually don't think that there's one player that has a bigger leadership role than the other. I think we're all trying to be equals on the team. We're all trying to play the same part. Yeah, I don't think -- obviously some players have more experience than the others, but I think as a team we all have an equal partnership.

**Q. Secondly, obviously, you see these teammates out on tour all season long, but in a new setting, is there anything about one of them that's surprised you that you didn't know about before?**

**MEGAN KHANG:** I'm just going to say Rose, just because she's so new to the tour. We actually came a little early -- her and I both came in Saturday, and so I had the chance to spend a day with her just one-on-one and I was like, How old are you again? And she's only 20.

She was kind of saying some slang words that I felt like I was old, and I am only 25. So she's pretty outgoing. I thought she was a little quiet, but I think it's just because she's relatively new and I think she's come out of her shell this week.

**Q. Because the team events are so rare for you guys, I'm curious if there's anything that you have learned about yourselves that you would not have learned during an individual event that you learned during a team event.**

**JENNIFER KUPCHO:** I think it's more so just like working together. Golf is such an individual sport that once you get on a team, you're really leaning on each other versus leaning so much on your caddie all the time. You're leaning more on your teammates.

**Q. What would an example of leaning on your teammates look like to us?**

**MEGAN KHANG:** I feel like a good example is, you know -- thankfully a lot of us came prepared (laughing). But like leaning on each other. Like, oh, let's say, like, we don't have many bus rides this week, and so we had like a 30 minute bus ride a couple days ago to go do like a team dinner with all our caddies and the assistant captains and everything. So obviously it's, like, a little tiring. We're all kind of on jet lag. So we brought a speaker on the bus and kind of pumped each other up to like get us in a mood, like, Hey, we're in Spain, we are here representing our country being, let's get it going. So just kind of like bringing the mood up, letting everyone know that we are here to crush it out here and just do our best and have fun while we're

doing it, and let's kind of keep like the positive energy going from the start and kind of finish out the week that way.

**NELLY KORDA:** Probably being able to vent to someone on the golf course too, right. We're the opposing team, the majority of the crowd's going to be against us. So sometimes that gets to someone. Knowing that you have a teammate in your corner that you can vent to, say anything to, and then obviously trying to lift them up.

**MEGAN KHANG:** Definitely. Even today, like Morgan came out and walked with Angel and Lexi and me. There were some missed shots we hit, and Morgan is right there telling us, like, Hey, it's okay. Like, Let's hit another one. Let's do this. Let's do that. Like telling us and reassuring us that it's okay today to have these missed shots. Like missed shots are going to happen. Knowing that your assistant captain, your partner and your captain, your whole entire team is going to be like, hey, we're all trying our best. I think that's definitely a huge part in this environment and team golf that we don't get to play often.

**THE MODERATOR:** I will wrap with one question here for anyone on the team. Stacy said yesterday that she feels that Team Europe is the favorite this week. Do you feel like underdogs?

**NELLY KORDA:** I mean, with the crowd, for sure.

**MEGAN KHANG:** With the crowd, yes. Honestly, I think both teams are stacked very well. I know -- I think we have a little more rookies on our team, but it's going to be a good week to watch some golf.

**NELLY KORDA:** Our rookies also have three major championships.

**MEGAN KHANG:** I mean, I wasn't going to say that. (Laughing). I joke that our rookies aren't really rookies. You look at them and I think they have all won this year, right?

**NELLY KORDA:** I think it will (no microphone.)

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