

# Solheim Cup

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Gainesville, Virginia, USA

Robert Trent Jones Golf Club

**Stacy Lewis**

**Jennifer Kupcho**

**Lexi Thompson**

**Sarah Schmelzel**

Press Conference



ROBERT TRENT JONES  
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**Q. If I could just start with Stacy, I know every captain says this is the hardest part of the job. When did you know or when was it all finalized in your head that these were your three women?**

**STACY LEWIS:** It was really, I guess, play was almost over on Sunday, but we had to really let a bunch of scenarios play out because there were some scenarios where the who got in on points could change, who got in on Rolex could change, and not that it really changed our decision very much, but it could have changed the decision.

We had to let things play out for a while on Sunday. I was pacing my apartment that I was in all day, and I couldn't sit down. I was just trying to stay busy.

But ultimately we got to where I thought we would be a few weeks ago.

**Q. Sarah, if I could ask you, what teams have you been on in the past besides your college team that you could relate to what this feels like, and what does it mean to you to have this happen at this stage in your career?**

**SARAH SCHMELZEL:** I haven't played for a team before besides for the University of South Carolina, which is an incredible experience. I think that's why I'm -- one of the reasons I'm so excited to be able to do this is to be in a team format and to be able to play for my country. It's such an incredible honor.

I'm really excited for all the memories we're going to create.

**Q. Stacy, this team has two rookies. Last year had five. How different do you see this more experienced roster, taking on this go-around versus your first time**

**at the helm last year?**

**STACY LEWIS:** Yeah, you know, I got the group together on Sunday night, or what was left -- I got nine of them together on Sunday night, and just the dynamic of at this time now versus this time last year, just everyone knowing each other more and having spent more time together.

Just the becoming a team part and cheering for each other and wanting to be around each other and the amount of fun that they're having is nice and day from this time last year. So I'm excited about that.

There's no kind of getting over the hump there.

We had those five rookies last year, but those five rookies still have not played a Solheim Cup in the U.S., so there is still some unknowns there. They're still kind of learning what a U.S. Solheim Cup is about because it's very different than the overseas ones.

While there is some of that learning that's still going to have to happen, I'm not worried about the team dynamic itself. I think the team dynamic this year is going to be awesome. These girls are going to have a great time.

**Q. You pointed out having World No. 1 and world No. 2 on the team. Suzann called the roster last year the best European team ever. Where do you see this year's American roster stacking up to past teams?**

**STACY LEWIS:** I don't think we can answer that yet. I think they haven't had enough experience in a Solheim Cup. You can't compare this group to some of the teams with Paula and Morgan for all of those years. I don't know. I don't think we can answer that yet.

I think time will tell where this team stacks up. But I think over the last maybe three or four, I think it's probably one of the more talented teams we've had, and we just need to get them over the hump of getting to learn what winning a Solheim Cup is like.

**Q. Lexi, you are far and away the most experienced on this roster. I was hoping you could take me back to**

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**the beginning. Since this could be your final Solheim Cup, just from a bookend standpoint, can you take us back to your first Solheim and what you remember most about the anticipation of playing on this team and your most -- your biggest memory from the week?**

**LEXI THOMPSON:** Yeah, my first Solheim Cup was at Colorado Golf Club in 2013. Actually Stacy and I played together there, as well. So that was a memory on its own. I think we won that match, too. We got that.

But I would say my favorite memory of that, of course the team room, building the relationships with the teammates and the captains and assistant captains was so special on its own. But the first tee shot on U.S. soil with that much pressure and adrenaline and nerves, I didn't know what to expect.

You hear from other players what it's like, but to have that moment, I was nervous, but it was like an exciting nervous. Like that's what I practice for, that's what I train for, to be there, to be able to represent my country, and to be on that first tee, I feel like the ground was shaking because the stands were right on you at Colorado Golf Club.

To really embrace that, I was like, I need these fans to keep on cheering. As soon as they say my name, when I'm over the shot, when I'm hitting, I want them yelling because I don't want them to get quiet.

I had so much adrenaline, but that's what we play for, to be able to represent our country. There on U.S. soil for my first, it was a special moment.

**Q. Do you feel like you're a different player in your Solheim week than the rest of the year, a different person even?**

**LEXI THOMPSON:** I would say so. I think this brings out on energy and passion in all of us. For me, I love team golf. I did as a junior and amateur from Junior Solheim Cups, Ryder Cups, and everything like that.

Yeah, I think this brings out a whole 'nother passion in my golf game, and being alongside my partners and teammates, you build those relationships. You're there for one another and build each other up, coming together as one.

It's more important that week coming together. It's not just on you. It's about building each other up and being there for one another.

**Q. My last one. Stacy said that now the work of figuring out pairings, the puzzle comes next. She's**

**unique in the way she's used statistics, analytics to figure out her pairings. Also, she uses her gut. You played for a lot of different captains. How do you view Stacy's process in terms of how do you like it?**

**LEXI THOMPSON:** Yeah, it's great what she's done. She's so knowledgeable and she knows each one of our games probably more than we do ourselves with the behind the scenes work she's done. There is so much that goes into the matchups. The experience that she's had playing and of course on Solheim Cups is nothing but helpful and all the stat work.

She knows more stats about my golf game than I do. It's great to learn from her, and we have nothing but full trust in her and belief.

**Q. Stacy, I want to ask, I noticed in the release you mentioned in selecting Jennifer that she was a good fit for this course, for the Robert Trent Jones Golf Club. How much did that factor in not just picking the best players you had available for your captain's selection, but also people that would fit this course well?**

**STACY LEWIS:** It was definitely a part of it. When you're doing captain's picks you're weighing a lot of options. I weighed in, too, those that made an effort to go play RTJ ahead of time. There were a lot of different things I weighed, and golf course fit is a big one.

This is very different than we played in Spain, so what I think is going to be -- what type of player is going to play well here, what's most beneficial, you know, the more I played it I was like, man, somebody that hits it high, straight and high, is really going to have an advantage on this golf course.

Playing with Jen and watching her play, she fits that mold to a T. So then it was just kind of helping trying to get her to the point she was going to make this team. I felt like she was somebody that even an captain's pick she's going to be a big part of this team and our success.

**Q. Stacy, between now and the time we get things going in a few weeks this September, what do these next few weeks look like for you? When will you first meet with everybody and begin this process of coming together as a team and getting prepared? What does that look like?**

**STACY LEWIS:** Yeah, so we got together on Sunday night at the British and we celebrated everybody making the team and that was the last time we were going to celebrate that.



So we're already working on pairings. That's what my next week or so is going to look like. Let the players play that are in Boston, and then the following week in the off week I'm going to get everybody together over Zoom, talk about the week, the schedule, inform them where we are with pairings.

It's really getting them ready what to expect for the week, what it will look like. So we'll do that I good he is in the off week next week. Everybody will arrive in D.C. on Sunday and we'll hit the ground running.

**Q. Jennifer, Stacy talked about how your performance alongside Ally was certainly a part of you getting the captain's pick. What did you learn playing alongside Ally this week as a potential Solheim team session partner?**

**JENNIFER KUPCHO:** A lot. I think me and Ally obviously are a great team, especially in alternate shot. But I think more importantly, like she's a very positive person, which is super helpful for me on the golf course.

I tend to get down on myself a little bit. It's very helpful for me, and I think it's just a great team of me and her together.

**Q. Lexi, you've obviously got the most experience on this roster, and the U.S. is going through this period where they haven't won since 2017. If the team does not win this year, is there anything you've seen that you think the American program might need to consider changing to end the drought?**

**LEXI THOMPSON:** Well, we're not going to focus on that. We're going to focus on coming into this year as prepared as possible, knowing what we have to do. We have to bring our A games against the other team, and just get to know the golf course as best we can.

That's all we can do. I don't think that there will be something that I say to look back on the years we didn't win. We're focusing on this year, coming into this year with the best attitudes and energy we can coming together as a team, knowing what we have to do.

**Q. For Lexi, I was talking to Lauren earlier and she was saying that she is trying to prepare for what it's going to be like playing in front of so many fans. What would you say to the younger players that may not have played in front of this many fans to get them ready for that kind of environment?**

**LEXI THOMPSON:** Yeah, it's unlike any other experience on the golf course. First tee experience especially on U.S.

soil, so many people. The adrenaline, the rush you feel, it will probably be the most nervous you feel on a golf course.

But I think the main thing is about just embracing that moment and not being scared of it. It's about going out there knowing that you deserve to be there. It's just a thrilling moment. I think as athletes we want to put ourselves in that position of playing for our country, being in front of that many fans, especially U.S. fans, hearing the chant.

We want them so loud because we want to be intimidating. We know what we're there to do, and to be able to represent our country the best we can.

Yeah, it's hard to explain, but you just have to put yourself in that position of that first tee and go through it. Words can't describe the feelings that you feel.

**Q. Stacy, kind of the same thing for you. As the captain how do you get... (indiscernible.)**

**STACY LEWIS:** The question kind of went out. I think you were going along the same lines of Lexi, just trying to prepare these players. It's talking about it. It's getting them to know what to expect and have perspective to it of it might be great and might be terrible. Either way you're going to move forward.

I remember my first tee shot in Ireland. Angela somehow gave me the first fee and I popped her up into the left weeds and off we went. So everybody is going to have a different experience there. Just embrace it. You're going to pull off golf shots in these moments that you never thought possible but you're going to hit some bad ones. That's the game of golf.

It's talking about it, sharing experiences like I just did. And that's what our players that have played, we're going to rely on them to share that with our younger players.

**Q. Question for Stacy: Thinking about this year, which many have called the biggest year ever for women in sport and arguably for women in golf.**

**STACY LEWIS:** Yep.

**Q. How are you looking at Solheim as sort of a capstone to all of this rounding out of what has been such a monumental, almost seismic year for women in sports?**

**STACY LEWIS:** Yeah, I think we are at the LPGA always -- we've been trying to take advantage of this for a while

now. We're seeing it. We're seeing it in our purses week in and week out. Solheim Cup is our biggest and best opportunity to grow the game of golf. This is when we get more people watching us versus our casual fans that follow us every week.

So we have done a lot of things behind the scenes to grow this experience. We've got a really cool thing that I can't announce yet where we're going to be able to take fans more behind the scenes and see who the players are and what the week is like and really try to continue to grow Solheim Cup.

It's truly our biggest event. If we can have great success here and use this as a springboard to improve our other events, to increase sponsors, to increase viewership, it helps the game of golf in it general.

So I'm looking forward to this year. I think this should be one of our biggest Solheim Cups ever.

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