

# Solheim Cup

Thursday, September 12, 2024

Gainesville, Virginia, USA

Robert Trent Jones Golf Club

## Team USA

**Morgan Pressel**

**Ally Ewing**

**Jennifer Kupcho**

**Rose Zhang**

Press Conference



ROBERT TRENT JONES  
GOLF CLUB  
GAINESVILLE, VA

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**THE MODERATOR:** Hello and welcome to the media center of the 2024 Solheim Cup at Robert Trent Jones Golf Club. I'm happy to join Ally Ewing, Jennifer Kupcho, Rose Zhang, and Morgan Pressel here in the media center.

We'll start with you, Ally. You're known for your energy. You've seen the environment here this past week. I just saw you on the 1st tee really getting the crowds going.

Can you just speak to the environment that you've seen so far already at the Solheim Cup?

**ALLY EWING:** Yeah, a Solheim Cup on U.S. soil is super special. Fans are very engaged, and it's so much fun just to walk around with some teammates versus being by ourselves on a week to week basis.

Just hearing the USA chants, it just really fires you up. So it's a privilege to be on this team and to be here in Virginia.

**THE MODERATOR:** Jennifer, this is your third appearance at the Solheim Cup. You've played in numerous team competitions. What is specifically special about the team aspect of the Solheim Cup?

**JENNIFER KUPCHO:** I think it's really just like compared to normal, everyday tournaments, it's fun to not be competing against all of the girls. It's fun to be on a team, in the team room, on the 1st tee, singing, dancing. It's just a great environment.

**Q. Rose, you were a rookie last year as well as on the Solheim Cup team last year. What did you take away from your first experience that you're hoping to use this year?**

**ROSE ZHANG:** Last year the crowds were incredible, and

it was really the first time I was in that sort of atmosphere where music was pumping, everyone was jamming, and everyone was super patriotic to their own teams.

I guess as a rookie it almost feels a little overwhelming, but this year at least I have a good sense of what that feels like. It's been super cool to just be with the team and really just jam it out as well.

I think that experience of just it being under my belt helped a lot.

**THE MODERATOR:** Lastly, Morgan, this is your second time as an assistant captain, and you follow these players on a weekly basis now in your role. What makes this 2024 team so special?

**MORGAN PRESSEL:** There's nothing like being part of the Solheim Cup. It's such an honor to be part of this team again for the second time as an assistant captain. Stacy's leadership is really unmatched. I think all the players, I'm sure, in their sentiments have agreed with that. It's been special to watch her work.

And to watch these players week in and week out -- someone asked me out there, is it harder playing or captaining? I said, what am I doing? I'm watching the best players in the world play. It's not that hard. These ladies are the best in the world.

They're given a stage appropriate to show their talents really. It was really cool today, we finally had the music pumping on the 1st tee, and I think everybody really enjoyed that energy. Today I feel like the energy is kicked up a notch on the golf course, and of course it's going to go up about 100 notches tomorrow.

We got a little bit of a taste of what to expect come the rest of the week, and it's going to be awesome. It's already been an awesome week and we haven't even started yet.

**Q. This is for all the players. How much input did the players have when it came to making the pairings?**

**ALLY EWING:** I don't know that I'll speak for everyone,

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but you all are very aware of Stacy's -- just her approach with stats. In the end, I feel like all 12 of us mesh really well together. We've got a really great group of girls that the games are just able to pair really well together.

There may have been some suggestions here and there, but as a whole, Stacy has used a lot of information, which makes -- you can't deny facts.

At the end of the day too, we know we feel comfortable playing with anyone. Yeah, that's what I think at least.

**Q. Was it mostly predetermined by Stacy, or did practice change anything this week?**

**JENNIFER KUPCHO:** I don't know if practice necessarily changed anything. I think we're all just ready to play with whoever. We all get along really well, like Ally said. I think we can play with anybody.

It's kind of just like figuring out your games with the other people on the team.

**Q. Ally, beyond what we can see out of Lexi Thompson, like her distance off the tee and her record of success, especially in alternate shot, what makes her such a good teammate in this event?**

**ALLY EWING:** Well, I think there are several factors. Lexi has been around the game for a really long time. She's a veteran. She's someone like, even though I'm older, I look up to her because she's been in the spotlight for so long.

She brings a sense of experience that can't be matched by many. Just as a whole, she's a very confident player. Having her in the team room, being in just every event that you can with Lexi is really special.

**Q. Do you see anything different in her this week than you see week in and week out on the LPGA Tour?**

**ALLY EWING:** I wouldn't say anything like major. I think we all act a little bit different just in a team environment versus when we're playing against each other week to week. There just might be some things here and there that are different versus when we're all in the team room together, we're trying to accomplish the same goal, versus on a week to week basis, we're trying to accomplish the same goal but we're playing against each other.

There's just a little bit more ease in the atmosphere just being around each other and trying to accomplish the same thing.

**Q. For Rose, what would you say your level of**

**confidence is, comfort level being back in the D.C. area, given you won the Women's Am at Woodmont, a year later won the Girls Junior at Columbia? I imagine the positive vibes are pretty high for you.**

**ROSE ZHANG:** Yeah, it's nice to be on the East Coast, and I'm definitely close to the areas where I was able to take my USGA titles back when I was an amateur.

I don't know if it's the grass or if it's the air or if it's the crowds, but it's been pretty incredible to just be out here. The weather has been treating us really well too. We've all been enjoying it.

**MORGAN PRESSEL:** She said a lot of people come up to her and say, hey, I'm from this club. Hey, I'm from Woodmont. I think it's been cute to have them come up to you. It's got to bring back good memories.

**Q. Hi, I'm Elizabeth, and I played on the winning team this year for the Junior Solheim Cup.**

**ROSE ZHANG:** Yeah, you did.

**Q. Rose and Morgan, what were y'all's favorite memories from when you played on the junior team when you all were younger?**

**ROSE ZHANG:** I played in the one in Des Moines, Iowa, back in 2017, and I played the one in Gleneagles in 2019. Both are a little bit different because one was on U.S. soil and one was in Scotland.

I'd say it was just so fun being a part of -- because those were my best friends at the time. We grew up playing junior golf together, and we just had so much fun in the buses, just blasted music. I'd say it was a really good time to bond with them.

Like Ally said, we all have this collective goal of just winning the cup and being patriotic to our country, putting on the red, white, and blue. That's when I really felt so connected with every single one of my closest friends who are now not only are they playing Division I golf in college, but some of them turned pro.

You really have these relationships that last a lifetime.

**MORGAN PRESSEL:** I have a picture with Rose from Gleneagles. I showed her the other day. I dug up some pictures.

**ROSE ZHANG:** I was tiny.

**MORGAN PRESSEL:** There's nothing like really the



Junior Solheim Cup as a steppingstone for players like you and like me and like Rose, who dream of one day being on that 1st tee at the Solheim Cup hitting that shot.

I mean, I think it was, the very first one that I went to at Interlocken when we were watching in the practice round, and Juli Inkster and the group she was with brought us out inside the ropes and said, come walk with us. I think Paula even carried her golf bag for a little bit.

Memories like that definitely stand out. That's what these players are doing now, inspiring that next generation, who whether they're watching on TV or wanting to come in person, just wanting to be here and wanting to be you.

**Q. Rose, you mentioned it can be a little overwhelming as a rookie, the atmosphere and the music. What have you done to kind of get focused or get used to that different atmosphere? Is there any tactics that you have?**

**ROSE ZHANG:** Yeah, I'd say the first thing is actually understanding what it's like and going through it. You have to really experience it to understand how to cope with that or find a tactic that works with you.

I think the biggest thing is really just embracing that moment, especially on the 1st tee. You've got the adrenaline pumping, and every single person has that exact same feeling.

Me personally, just simple breathing, just having fun, enjoying it really helps, I guess, cheer me up, liven me up, and get ready for the round that I'm going to play.

**Q. Do you guys have input on the music that's played on the 1st tee and then deciding if you're going to hit through it? How does that -- I feel like you did that, Ally. I know Danielle Kang did that where the music plays as you hit.**

**JENNIFER KUPCHO:** I don't think the music was playing at Inverness. I don't think the music --

**Q. Just the crowd?**

**JENNIFER KUPCHO:** I think I just had the crowd stay loud. I didn't have the music. I don't think they keep the music playing while we hit.

**MORGAN PRESSEL:** I don't know about the control. I'm not sure who controls the music on the 1st tee.

**Q. No walkout songs or anything?**

**JENNIFER KUPCHO:** We did have walkout songs at Inverness, but I don't know if we have them this year.

**MORGAN PRESSEL:** I haven't heard anything.

**Q. For Jen, I know Stacy, when she selected you as a captain's pick, she said this golf course really suited your game particularly. Did you feel that when you saw it this week?**

**JENNIFER KUPCHO:** Yeah, I think to my eye it's definitely a ball striker's course. Obviously I hit it pretty straight and pretty high, like you said. Yeah, definitely, I think that's true.

I also think my favorite type of grass is bent, and that's what this is. So that also helps as well.

**Q. Does it feel any different for you this year being a veteran kind of on this team now?**

**JENNIFER KUPCHO:** Yeah, I think the last couple of Solheims I've been a bit overwhelmed. You kind of just go through it and learn what you can do best. I think for me it's been really important to be able to have my me time like I always have, just really making sure I can get it in at night, whether it's reading or watching a show, just so I can kind of settle down when we are in such a high, intense environment out here.

**Q. Ally, for you, you're another player that's really taken a veteran role on this team now. What has it meant to you to kind of be one of those leaders in the team room and really cheering on your teammates?**

**ALLY EWING:** Yeah, every single one of these is so special. From a younger age it's what I highlighted that I wanted to be a part of because there's just no greater honor than representing your country.

Yeah, to now be a veteran, apparently there might be some mama bear type of remarks made towards me. So I'm definitely feeling the older role, which is great. It's an honor to be a part of four of these, and I'll take whatever that gets me.

**Q. Rose, obviously it's been a whirlwind for you over the last two years, playing in two Solheim Cups, doing what you've done on the golf course on the LPGA Tour. What have you really learned about yourself from at least your first Solheim Cup experience that you're bringing into this week or maybe something you've learned about yourself that's helped you when you're competing just as a professional?**

**ROSE ZHANG:** Something that I really learned about myself, I guess not just from last year's Solheim Cup experience, was I feel like I'm a pretty just chill person in general. Sometimes when I'm in very high, intense environments, I become less chill in my own way.

It's just an important reminder for me to just be myself a little bit, give myself some room, make myself understand where I am, be present, and stay patient out there no matter how highly intense the competition is or how much is on the line.

Most importantly, it's just really enjoying the game again and staying as present as I can be. That's helped me really kind of just go out there and have a good time, but also play the game with competition and that competitive drive.

**Q. Jennifer, I wanted to ask you about another one of your teammates. Lauren Coughlin talked about playing against you in college. What are your impressions of her rise from outside the top 100 to No. 14 in the world and the only other American besides Nelly to win twice on the Tour this year?**

**JENNIFER KUPCHO:** She's played some incredible golf. Yeah, I played against her in college. She went to Virginia; I went to Wake Forest. Our famous head-to-head was always the ACC Championship, where she won last minute and her then now husband proposed to her, and I was like, you're welcome.

No, she's great. She's a great person. She's always been a great player. It's awesome to see her break through and play so well. It's definitely been out there all along. She just needed that breakthrough and now she's got it.

**Q. Over the years your captains have talked about you being a valued presence in the team room or a really important part of the team. What do you think has led to the difference between your value as a veteran versus your 3-8-1 overall record?**

**ALLY EWING:** Yeah, golf is hard. At the end of the day, you want to win a point. I've been in Solheim Cups and have played some really good golf. So from what I take away from the three that I've been in, I know I played solid golf.

But at the end of the day, we want to get points. It's just all got to come together, and I certainly don't feel like I've lost confidence because of the record, but I certainly want to put more points on the board.

I'm not going to do anything different to do that. It's just still

going out and playing golf with my partners, and then in singles, trying to take care of my own business.

**Q. For all you guys, anyone who wants to take it, you talked about the patriotic feeling, the excitement of playing for Team USA, the support from the fans. Knowing that you're not too far from the nation's capital here in northern Virginia, how special is it to have that event here this year and to have the honor of competing in it here?**

**MORGAN PRESSEL:** I'll answer. It's awesome. I mean, I've played in a lot of Solheim Cups, and I've never played in D.C. or just outside of D.C. I mean, we had an amazing day on Monday, an incredible tour of The Pentagon, went to the top of the Washington Monument. We had a visit from President Obama at our dinner.

Those things don't happen unless you're here in the nation's capital. Of course it was September 11th yesterday. It's quite the week to be here. And we visited the September 11th Memorial in The Pentagon as well.

It's just kind of the reminder of why we're here and how important it is to wear the red, white, and blue and USA on our hat. It's what it means. It means so much more than golf. It means so much more than points and the final tally.

Representing your country is the greatest honor in sport, and to do it in the nation's capital, just outside of the nation's capital is pretty special.

**Q. Ally and Jennifer, you played really well at the Dow Championship. We don't know for sure if you're going to be paired up, but it's definitely a possibility for us. What do you think makes you two such a good pairing and how you complement each other's games?**

**JENNIFER KUPCHO:** I mean, we get along so well. I think we also really trust each other's game, I think maybe more so than we trust our own game. So it's really great to have a partner like that, and I think that's really important in alternate shot. That's why we play so well with it.

**ALLY EWING:** I think our games are very similar. We try to drive it pretty straight, hit a lot of greens, roll in some putts. Outside of that, it's just being there for each other on the golf course.

Especially when you look at every format, you want to be able to contribute good shots, but then you also want to be a good teammate. It was a nice little test for us at Dow, and it paid off really well. We came up just short, but we'll see what the week has to offer.



