

Cognizant Founders Cup

Thursday, May 9, 2024

Clifton, New Jersey, USA

Upper Montclair Country Club

Nancy Lopez

Quick Quotes

Q. ...honor of the Founders of the LPGA. There are the Founders and there are the icons. Nancy Lopez, World Golf Hall of Fame member and such a decorated resume, and one of only three players in LPGA history to win five in a row. Now getting front row seat to what Nelly has got going on. You said Chevron week you didn't even think she has yet realized all her potential. What did you mean by that? What else is left?

NANCY LOPEZ: Well, I saw it a lot earlier than Chevron when I was her pod leader in the Solheim Cup as an assistant captain to Juli. I watched her play, and of course I love Nelly. I knew her sister, Jessica. Captained for her in the Junior Solheim, so I got to meet Nelly through her.

And then being her pod leader I get to watch them all the time. Nelly is a great player. I knew it then. I told my husband, I said when Nelly figures out how good she is, she's going to -- I said I think the LPGA Tour, she's a great player, great putter.

She seems really even keeled, which you need that out here. There is so much pressure and so many great players to play against.

Q. It's one thing to have the talent, to have the skill, to carry it across all different kinds of golf courses, playoffs, match play, how she's gotten it done, including most recently is at a major. What specifically about her game? Seems like the misses are on the proper side. Just how she dissects the course. Is it a different IQ level?

NANCY LOPEZ: Well, when you start playing that well and start winning a lot, the golf course and the golf tournaments seem a little bit easier to play in and to win.

I always say the fairways for me got wider. Greens got bigger. Holes were bigger. And you never thought about hitting a poor shot.

If you did, you just kind of sluffed it off and went on to the next shot knowing you're playing so good you didn't have



to worry about it.

Q. You have been very busy. Been doing your own media tour as someone who's really grabbed the torch with the LPGA, and Nelly making an appearance at the Met Gala. I know some people at home, all right, we talked enough about the Met Gala. Have we really? Seeing her on Monday was quite a surprise. What was going through your mind?

NANCY LOPEZ: When I saw her I said, oh, my gosh. That was a beautiful dress she had on. It was fun when I got here because I talked to her about that. I said, your dress was awesome and she showed me the other two choices that she had.

Q. You go the to see them?

NANCY LOPEZ: I did. I did. One of them was just beautiful. It was black and long. But I told her she needs to make it white and wear it when she gets married. It was a beautiful gown to get married in.

The other one I didn't like as much. The one she wore was the perfect dress.

Q. Look at this pre-planning. We are already getting some lessons and insight from Nancy on what possibly could be worn walking down the aisle. You were at Golf With the Greats with a lot of icons across the game of golf, men's and women's. And now here, some of the Founders as we honor them and some greats in the LPGA side. What has the last couple weeks been like for you as you're coming off a rotator cuff surgery and finally hitting some shots, even though the doc might not like that?

NANCY LOPEZ: For sure it's been frustrating not being able to play. I've never not played golf. I mean, since July 25th I've been doing physical therapy, so to get back out there, it would be nice to be able to play a little bit again.

The Greats of Golf was really fun. It's me and Annika and Pat Bradley, who's being honored this week, and Juli Inkster. Those three ladies are fun to be around. Then the



guys, Hale Irwin was one of my partners. It's funny, because when you're on the LPGA Tour and they were on the PGA TOUR when we were on the LPGA Tour, we never saw each other.

Now as we get older we get to do more events together and it's really fun. The stories are what are really great. When we sit down and talk about their tour, experiences, the funny stories we all have, it's really a fun event.

So I got to hit some shots last week. My doctor doesn't want me to take -- I don't take quite a big a divot as Lexi but I took big divots. It's more of just chipping right now. I got to hit my driver for the first time. When I was in the fairway I just tee'd it up a little bit because he did not want me to hit the ground.

So I was swinging really easy. I'm sure, boy she's lost a lot of distance, because I wasn't trying to hit it hard. It was just fun being out here swinging again and walking the fairways.

And then coming here, this is a great event. We honor the 13 Founders that gave me the opportunity to play this great game and to be able to win, make a living. You know, it's especially then, and to honor the pioneers of golf is really special, too.

I hate that we don't have any of our Founders anymore. Marilyn Smith was always at this event. They just told great stories, too. I think we've got a lot of that on video in the movie, which I think I everybody should watch that. It will open their eyes to what they had to do to give us opportunities like we have now.

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