

# Fortinet Founders Cup

Tuesday, March 17, 2026

Menlo Park, California, USA

Sharon Heights Golf & Country Club

## Juli Inkster

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, ladies and gentlemen we are here with Juli Inkster, one of the greats in the history of the LPGA Tour and one of our Pioneer honorees for the week. Start out, we are here in your hometown.

JULI INKSTER: Uh-huh.

THE MODERATOR: Welcoming the LPGA back. What's it like to have your colleagues back here on your turf?

JULI INKSTER: It's great. I think Sharon Heights is going to show very well on TV. It's a great golf course. Tree-lined, kind of old school, so I'm looking forward to how these ladies play this golf course. I think it's pretty tough.

**Q. You were one the players that has paved the way for getting us here today, getting the Tour where it is now. From the time you started on Tour throughout your career to today, especially as we celebrated the 75th last year, how have you seen the Tour grow from the time you started out to where we are now?**

JULI INKSTER: Well, I mean, they hit the ball forever. I mean, they're just fine-tuned athletes. I just was walking up and down the range and just the sound their ball makes is way different than our ball used to make.

But it's a game that's worldwide. We have a lot of different nationalities on our Tour. Most of us, we all went to college. A lot of these girls now are just coming right out of high school and going on the Epson Tour. I think that's a great thing for growing your game and getting to learn how to travel and being with your peers.

So I think that's been a great thing for the LPGA.

But it's -- I mean, it's a business now. We used to just play and travel together and have dinners together. Now I think it's just kind of a little more individual.

**Q. I'm sure you had time to get to know some of the Founders. To spend time with them over the years, what are some memories you have of those 13 women,**

**the ones that you got to learn from in your young time?**

JULI INKSTER: I was lucky. I got to meet a lot them. Probably my biggest screw up is I called Marilyn Smith Patty Berg and that didn't go over well. Yeah, I think I was a rookie. She goes, I'm not Patty Berg. I was like, oh, gosh.

So, yeah, I learned my mistake quick. But I got to play a little bit with Whit and I played a little bit with -- well I got to watch Patty Berg give her clinics. I look back and those ladies were fearless. They would just go out and travel in a car and they had a flag if you needed a potty stop.

It's crazy what they did to grow the game of golf. Here we are 75 years later and I'm looking at the range and it's amazing. I reaped that benefit. I reap the benefits from Betsy King and Pat Bradley and Carner and Patty Sheehan. I learned a ton. And Lopez. I learned a ton from them.

I played a little longer in my career than most people so have gotten to know the younger players a little bit, but I think that's the beauty of this game. Your clubs don't know how old you are.

**Q. You were kind enough to host the potential U.S. Solheim Cup team players down at Los Altos. First at your house for dinner. You, Pat Hurst, another great Pioneer of her own game, Brandi Chastain. What were your thoughts of those two days beyond the fact that food was really good?**

JULI INKSTER: Yeah, well, Angela came up with this idea that she wanted to have like a little team get-together. She didn't want it at a hotel. She wanted a friendly atmosphere. She asked if it would be okay to do it at our house, and I said, yeah.

I think it went really well. I think the girls really enjoyed it. I think Brandi had a lot of great topics about being a team, being part of a team and what that entails.

I think they were all engaged with that which I thought was



... when all is said, we're done.®

pretty awesome.

And then they played Los Altos, which my husband was director of golf there for a long time. You know, I think the girls really enjoyed it. It was very relaxed. They played best ball and alternate shot.

I think it turned out just how Angela envisioned it. She's going to be an amazing captain. She's got great assistant captains with Paula, B-Lang and K-Mack, so I'm super excited to be there and watch them roll.

**Q. I saw you were watching Auston Kim. What are your thoughts on her?**

JULI INKSTER: She's a great gal. I love her demeanor. I love her -- she's just got a great swing. She's not flashy. Just goes out there and does her work.

I think I did a -- when we were at KPMG -- no, Chevron, we did a talk and Auston was a rookie then. She kind of struggled. She was very outgoing and open about the struggles of being a rookie, and now you look at her now and she's -- I mean, I think the sky is the limit for her.

So I think I could see her confidence growing, which was great to see. I'm a big fan of hers.

**Q. Can you talk a little bit about your playing schedule this year in your own golf game? What you plan to compete in this year?**

JULI INKSTER: Well, I'm definitely going to play the USGA Seniors, LPGA Seniors, and there is a best ball tournament that Pat and I are going to play. Then I might tee it up at Dow with Angel Yin, so that would be kind of fun to do.

I haven't 100% decided yet. I think it would be kind of fun.

**Q. Is the competitive spirit the same as it ever was?**

JULI INKSTER: No. It's not even close.

**Q. Not when you're inside the ropes?**

JULI INKSTER: No, I don't know. I love to play. It's not going to make or break my career if I don't play well.

So I got Angel. I just ride her, and hopefully -- I'm all about having some fun and enjoying it out there and she's got some spunk which I love.

**Q. We know this is such a unique honor for the next generation of athletes to be honored in a way like we do at the Founders Cup. What does it mean to share**

**the honor with somebody like Meg?**

JULI INKSTER: Yeah, Meg, she's one of my best buddies. That's something that has grown overtime. So we have been friends for probably 30 years, and even though she lives on the east coast, we stay in touch, we talk, we communicate.

We both kind of laugh at the Pioneer thing. You know, I'm glad they're honoring her. Hall of Famer and she's done an amazing job growing the game of golf. Always out there and great with the fans.

**Q. We know you do a lot of mentoring of young athletes. Why is it so important to you to continue to act like a Founder even though you're playing more on the Senior Tour now?**

JULI INKSTER: I don't know. I just have such an -- I just love the LPGA. I just think it's one of the best organizations in the world. We stand alone. We don't get a lot of help but we keep making to work.

I think I have all my Inkster Awards here, but Natalie Srinivasan, so it's kind of cool to see how that developed with Workday and myself, just kind of the mentorship that is involved with this. Seeing Jenny Bae at the Solheim Cup dinner, how her game has grown, it's a big difference going from college golf to pro golf.

I just want to help them with that transition. They all have teams and coaches, but sometimes just another ear, another voice helps them out.

**Q. You talked about you reap the benefits of what the Founders did. How do you encourage those young athletes to carry the mantle themselves and continue this Tour into its next 75, 76 years of history?**

JULI INKSTER: Well, I just say golf is kind of what you do, it's not who you are. You got to -- you're going to have some up days and some down days. The fans are a big part of it. The sponsors are a big part of it.

The pro-am is a huge part of it. I do a lot of emphasis on the pro-am, that it's not their day to practice, it's their day to be with the sponsors and be with the clients.

So that's a big emphasis on what I try to bring across.

**Q. These recognitions give you the opportunity to reflect a little bit probably on your career and playing days. Anything you've been thinking about in the leadup to this week or any memories you recalled to the Solheim girls that you can share?**



JULI INKSTER: No. I just -- you know, I've been very fortunate to have a great career, but probably the biggest honor was being a captain of the Solheim Cup. Not only captain but playing for the United States, your country, being there with 11 other gals that all have the same goal.

I just -- I don't know. I just I guess I was brought up that way. I just love this country. I love representing this country. I just kind of try to convey that it's an honor and privilege to tee that ball up and be representing the United States.

**Q. Is it cool to see some of the women that you brought up in the Solheim Cup and even captained in the Solheim Cup become captains?**

JULI INKSTER: Yeah, it's really cool. You know, seeing Stacy do it, Stacy was kind of my No. 1 player for a couple years. You know, I relied a lot on her. It was never a dictatorship. I wanted feedback. I wanted to know what the players were thinking.

Now Angela, which I think she's going to be a great job. She's very organized. Super organized. Not like me. Right, guys?

But she knows what she wants and knows what she wants from her team. The team respects that. You got to lay out this is what I expect from you and don't throw them any curve balls. This is the way it's going to be, and go out there and enjoy it.

You know, I look back on playing and I think a lot of times it was just so stressful I didn't really get the chance to enjoy it. But the best part of being at Solheim is not the wins and losses, it's the dinners and the camaraderie and hanging out together with the caddies, and, you know, practice rounds and carrying the bag. It's awesome.

**Q. What does it take to win or even captain a Solheim Cup team overseas?**

JULI INKSTER: Well, players have to play. That's one thing. You know, I think with this team -- there is a lot of young players and they don't know any difference.

I think that's a good thing, that they don't know they're not supposed to win overseas.

I don't know. I just have a good feeling that our team is going to be ready to play. You know, they're going to be the underdog I think. Should be. That's a very good place to play from.

**Q. Our next player who will be in the chair after you is Natasha Oon, one of your Inkster Award winner, one of our rookies, San Jose State grad. You had the chance at media day to talk some about your relationship with Natasha, but if you don't mind telling us a little bit about how you and even Brian have been there for her over the last few years and help her get to where she was now?**

JULI INKSTER: Yeah, she's had a tough road. You know, she played great in Epson, finished second, was ready to come out on the Tour, and had a foot injury. Really held her back. Ended up having surgery.

So it's been a journey for her. She played the last couple weeks on Epson which I think was awesome for her. Played well. She's got a ton of talent, and Brian has helped her a lot both on golf course and off the golf course. I've helped her also.

But she's got a special place in the Inkster heart. Lucy, our dog, loves her. I'm just looking forward to her getting her journey going. I think she's going to build, build, build and be a great player.

**Q. Just curious, talking to Morgan last week about the Tour needing a rivalry. Just curious how much you think that adds to fan drama and interest to have a strong one-two punch?**

JULI INKSTER: I don't know. I don't really think we need one. You know, I just think good golf should showcase it.

I don't know. I never disliked my rivalry. Never disliked -- I wanted to beat them. I loved playing with the best players in the world, but I don't know, I always didn't want to lose a friendship over a golf game. I don't put too much stock in that stuff.

**Q. Could be a friendly rivalry, people going back and forth.**

JULI INKSTER: Yeah, I don't know. Yeah, not really. But, I mean, yeah.

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