

# The Chevron Championship

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

Houston, Texas, USA

Memorial park Golf Course

## Nelly Korda

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Okay, joining us ahead of The Chevron Championship is Nelly Korda. Nelly, you won this event before. Can you just talk about what coming back here as a defending champion means to you?

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, it's amazing. Obviously it's at a different golf courses, so it's going to be a fun and interesting test this week.

But coming back to this event is always so special. I think what makes this event extremely special is also the Champions Dinner, getting together with all the past champions and listening to their stories and hearing the history of this event. I think Mike and Julie Wirth and Chevron have done an amazing job with that, and I think that's another aspect to this event that I really, really enjoy.

**Q. You had the Champions Dinner last night. Talk about that and about Mao's menu.**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, it was unbelievable. Chef Keller does an amazing job. I've been to two of his restaurants in the U.S., per Se and Surf Club in Miami. The experience when you go to those restaurants and the food and the cuisine is just unbelievable.

For him to come in and create a Champions Dinner and for Mao to curate it the way she did, it was a very enjoyable night.

**Q. You obviously won here before and did the traditional 18th hole jump into the water. Wondering, would you do that again on the new temporary pool? Have you seen that?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I didn't really go over and look at it but I did see it. I think when it comes to what people think about it you're always going to be in a lose-lose situation. Once you kill a tradition it's killed forever.

If you kind of look at it maybe some people don't like it that it's at a different golf course, different venue. I still give props to Chevron to the LPGA for wanting to keep that

tradition alive.

I know that there is a bigger plan for it to be a better jump into Poppie's Pond. But at the end of the day if I'm hoisting the trophy, like I'm going to jump in, yeah.

**Q. You alluded to some of the stories that were told at the Champions Dinner. Any that stuck out to you this year? You got to spend some time with that wonderful group of women.**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, the tables that we sit at, you have so many different tables. I was at the current player table where everyone is playing and active. Then you have the legends at one table and they're all screaming and having fun. And just listening to their stories, Pat Bradley spoke, Lydia spoke, there are so many stories that people share during those nights.

What makes it so special is it stays in that room and that's what's so fun about it.

**Q. What's the assessment of the golf course? New venue here at Memorial Park. What have you seen of it so far? I know the weather is not ideal. What have you liked or need to adjust to fit this golf course so far?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I saw the weather for the week and I played 18 yesterday. It's definitely a second-shot golf course. Greens are pretty tricked out. Just depends on how it's going to play with all the rain that they got. It can play really long where it's not go to go run out or play really soft. Just depends on kind of what we're going to get weather-wise.

But from what I've seen, the par-3s are really long. I've had like two hybrids, five irons in, so obviously you're at the end of the tee box because they're trying to preserve the tee box for the tournament, so you don't know where they're going to put it.

Par-3s are pretty long. Par-5s are --s ome of them are pretty gettable. Overall I think the defense of this golf course is probably the contours of the green and being -- it being very sectional.



**Q. New venue, new course. What kind of learning are you doing now in the days leading up to the tournament specifically around the greens to get dialed in for this week?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, completely different golf course, and with it being a major championship you're definitely doing a lot more work around the greens, kind of assessing the risk factors of pin placements, where to hit it, where not to hit it.

There are parts of the greens where there is no chance that you can get an up and down if you do hit it there in the bad part of the green. I mean, it's all about at the end of the day your second shot in here, where if you do miss-hit it you're hoping to miss-hit it in the safer area so you have a good opportunity to make an up and down.

It's also really about assessing the risk factor of going for it or just playing in the middle of the green. Some of par-5s are definitely gettable, so I think you'll see a lot of girls trying to make up a lot of their shots or birdies on par-5s and playing very conservative on the par-3s, and having like making a par on these par-3s all four days in a row is going to really shoot you up the leaderboard.

**Q. As far as the course being soft, you can hear the rainy conditions are going to make things.**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

**Q. Where is that the biggest advantage or disadvantage this week?**

NELLY KORDA: Just honestly at the end of the day it's how they set up the golf course. You know, they can push it far back. I don't think they will because it's going to be soft. If they do push it far back that's an advantage to the longer hitters. It's all about what the rules officials do when they set up the golf course.

**Q. Listening to Hannah's schedule, she took a red eye, got here at 6:00 a.m. on Monday, and then planned to come out in the afternoon but decided she was too tired. I remember last year being such a tough turnaround going from LA to here. Could you give us some insight into how you decided your schedule for this section here and when you came in? When did you fly in?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, it was a hard decision because Walter and Shirley Wang, they put on such an amazing event in LA. But our finishing time is 6:00 p.m., and to get back to the east coast -- and it's also an hour from the

airport in LA -- so getting here at proper time is really hard; almost impossible.

You're always hoping to be in the final group or in contention, right? So I just told myself I didn't feel very good last year. I got in exactly like Hannah did, early in the morning; Monday was a complete wash.

Luckily enough I played that golf course last year a couple times. I knew that the weather was going to be fine Tuesday, Wednesday, so I just made the decision to play JM Eagle last year.

This year I knew we were going to be at a new golf course so I really wanted to make sure that I played it on Monday, because you can't really practice during pro-ams and then I don't really love playing 18 on a Wednesday before I play 18 on Thursday, the start of the tournament.

It was a hard decision but at the end of the day I thought it was a good decision for me to be best prepared for this event.

And to answer the last question, I got here Sunday night.

**Q. And then today what has your schedule been like today?**

NELLY KORDA: Just hung out with Jess, Greyson, and my parents in the morning, which was really nice. Kind of just waiting it out, refreshing my emails a lot, seeing what we were going to do.

**Q. Last one: I know there are some cool perks that come along at this event. Just curious, are you driving the Bentley this week?**

NELLY KORDA: No. I'm driving the Escalade this week. Yeah, I knew that my sister was going to come in so I needed a bigger car.

**Q. Did you watch any of the PGA TOUR event here or talk to any PGA TOUR players, get any advice, tips, et cetera?**

NELLY KORDA: No, I did not talk to any PGA TOUR players. I didn't watch too much of the event. We were playing that week so it was quite hard to watch and also compete.

But I know that my caddie, Jason, did. For me it's hard to kind of -- I like it suss out a golf course myself and make my decision myself than relying on someone else's input. Then I have too much information in my mind and I feel like then if I have their information versus what I scope out on

the golf course I start it doubt my information and then I'm not 100% confident in what I'm doing.

So that is kind of why I tend to not always ask for too much information about another golf course, especially from a male to a female, because they have different clubs coming in, the apex of the ball flight is a lot higher than ours.

So just from what I was told though is that it is kind of like a bomber's paradise. You're trying to hit driver on every hole pretty much, get it as close to the green, because it is very sectional and it's crucial to have probably shorter clubs in to these greens when it is firm.

**Q. It seems like I don't know if this is fair, you're showing more personality on social media. Do you feel like that's the case, and are you having more fun putting stuff on there, whether it's your dog or something else?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I'm a little shy. I am very introverted. I usually stick to my core people. I do like to give people a glimpse of who I am. Maybe sometimes people are surprised that I'm funny and I do sometimes have a bubbly personality.

You know, on social media this thing is trending, like there are some people that get a subscription to your VIP personality. That's kind of how I am, but I am trying to kind of showcase my personality and show people a little bit more of a glimpse into my world.

**Q. Lastly from me. With Stacy Lewis, what's your kind of description of how you've felt like her career has gone and what's been your favorite thing about getting to know her?**

NELLY KORDA: I've really enjoyed getting to know Stacy through Solheim Cup and how amazing of a leader she is. What I've been honestly really impressed by is how much she cares about the Tour and how much she is invested into it.

For a career, seeing her as a mother, Solheim Cup captain, advocate for the LPGA Tour, I mean she's had such an amazing career. I know that she's not stopping there, so it's been an honor to play under her and I can't wait to see what else she does. I know that her ambitions are high.

**Q. Everything has been asked. I'm going to go in left field for a minute here. You've won probably 20 plus times had your career.**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

**Q. A lot of times the player who finished second has been in the last group. You ever thought back to how they accept finishing second? Handle it well? Poorly? Has anyone ever impressed you with the way they finished second?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I've gone through it a couple times where I stormed off the golf course finishing second, and then there is times where I'm like, okay, I'm proud of myself for finishing second and I've put myself into that position.

I think it's about growing, growing into the person you want to be, growing into the athlete that you want to be. But I wouldn't have figured that out if I didn't put myself into that position and gone through those emotions.

I think it's okay to lash out sometimes and not act the proper way. Then you find out, okay, I don't want to act like that. I should be proud of myself. I put myself into that position many, many times. I worked so hard to put myself into that position. Eventually it's going to crack if I continue doing that.

**Q. Is lashing out bad?**

NELLY KORDA: No. I mean, there is some people that fuels some people. Everyone has a different personality. At the end of the day we're all human beings. The thing that's different about athletes versus someone that's not is like sometimes we're under a microscope so you see everything. Coco Gauff, she was slamming her tennis racquet. She thought was in private, and you have video cameras there. At the end of the day I think sometimes we're under a microscope where you see all our actions, our emotions.

It's hard, but you learn so much from that, of knowing, okay, this is how I want to act and this is not how I want to act. Let me reevaluate how I'm putting myself into that position. And if I'm being a good role model to kids as well.

**Q. How long have you been on Tour before you realized there was cameras pretty much everywhere? Did you see Max last week, Max Homa?**

NELLY KORDA: I did not see him, no. For me, it changed probably in 2021 when I won my first major, the Olympics, and then obviously in 2024 when I won seven times that year. I saw more cameras on me and I saw more girls come up to me, more people saw how I acted. I've always tried to be very calm.

My two role models in life have been Roger and Nadal

where in Roger [Rafa] you have that fiery kind of personality of never giving up and like being an entertainer, and then you have -- which I'm definitely more on the calmer side.

Then you have Roger Federer who's very calm and he just flows through the air, elegant. Those have always been the two that I admired and looked up to and wanted to kind of blend those two to kind of make that myself.

**Q. Any golf role models?**

NELLY KORDA: My sister. Always. Yeah, I looked up to her from a really young age. I admired her. I wanted to be here since she joined the tour in 2011. Obviously Tiger Woods, because my sister always says like our generation, that's kind of like Tiger's kids. We watched him dominate the game at that time.

I would say those two in golf, yeah.

**Q. You have had experience going into major seasons throughout your entire career. Do you feel maybe as settled as you ever have with your golf and with life heading into the 2026 season?**

NELLY KORDA: Definitely with life. With golf I feel like you can never -- like you can put in the work. Like I always say control what you can control, and that's am I working hard? Am I putting in the effort every single day mentally and physically. Other than that, I can't control anything. I can't control the weather. I can't control what other girls do, what other girls shoot. I can't control if I hot a good shot and I'm in a divot.

Like there are so many things on this game that you just can't control. I try to just take that all out of my mind and be like, Okay, I am going to focus on what I can control, and that's it.

Like if I get into a situation where I've left myself a difficult chip or difficult shot, I'll figure it out. I'm not going to walk off the golf -- it's not going to be the end of my day. I'm not going to walk off the golf course. Like I'm going to figure it out and assess the situation from then on in.

It's just how I'm trying to look at golf right now. I feel much calmer when I do look at it that way out there, because when you start to think about what can go wrong and all the Xs that you have in your yardage book, you just stiffen up and you're not really playing your own game.

As in my personal life, I'm super happy. I have the greatest support system and I get to do like what I love every day.

**Q. You referenced 2024 and came in last year, you had won the five straight tournaments, world No. 1. You were the overwhelming spotlight coming into this tournament last year. This year, different deal. Do you feel like you're coming in this year with maybe less pressure or less weight on your shoulders entering the first major of the year this year?**

NELLY KORDA: If I'm being honest, I'm just coming in trying to play golf, trying to contend. I'm not really thinking about what other people are thinking of me, what my past results were. It was a different golf course, different weather, everything was different.

So when it comes to like, yeah, is my confidence higher from the finishes that I've had? Like I was in every final group so far this year on Sunday, which I'm very proud of because I've put in a lot of work.

But like when it comes to my expectations of this week, my expectation is to hit the first shot on Thursday and see how it goes.

**Q. What would you say you've done well through this early part of the season?**

NELLY KORDA: What have I done well? I would say the work that I've put in on my body, making sure that my schedule is planned out well. So instead of let's say going to JM Eagle because I know let's say it's a higher purse, instead I just took that week off, made sure that I rested my body. I made sure that after those three weeks that I played in a row I gave the first couple days at home my body a complete break.

I didn't touch a club for about four days. I was in the gym and I made sure that my mind was refreshed.

**Q. So this work you talk about putting in do you feel like it's been more so on your body and having the rest and balance versus work you're putting in physically on the golf course?**

NELLY KORDA: Both. If I'm rested then I can give 100% to what I'm doing on the golf course. I can put in extra hours instead of being out there and being like, okay, I finished this. Time to go to the next thing. Checking things off instead of working on my craft and being out there and losing myself in it.

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