

# Ford Championship presented by KCC

Wednesday, March 27, 2024

Gilbert, Arizona, USA

Seville Golf and Country Club

## Nelly Korda

### Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: All right, I'll kick things off. We're here at the Ford Championship presented by KCC. Joined by Nelly Korda, the most recent LPGA Tour champion.

Just to kick things off, let's go back to last week. You posted sweet No. 10 win. What did it feel like last week as a whole?

NELLY KORDA: Honestly, just a crazy weekend with the weather. But, yeah, I mean, I always say I seem to make it very interesting when it comes to just how I finish off tournaments. My first win of the year was in Bradenton and that was interesting, and so was this one. But it felt really nice to get the W and get to double digits.

**Q. A little bit different weather this week. What has been your experience with desert golf and how do you switch between the major differences in the courses?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I think my first couple years on tour we played more in Scottsdale and it was always really warm weather. The ball was flying far and the scores were really low on this golf course.

Then I played out here last year and then the weather was just kind of brutal. It was cold and rainy. Then this year we're at a new golf course. I just played nine holes yesterday, rested on Monday. I think the weather is supposed to be pretty good.

I think golf is dependent a lot on weather, so if it's like this, it's beautiful out, sunny, warm, no wind, I think it's going to be a low one out here this week.

**Q. Strong start to your year, two wins, back to the World No. 1 ranking. How do you maintain that momentum for the rest of the year?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I think my goal is to stay very present, take it -- as boring as it sounds -- one shot at a time and go from there. Have good solid team around me, which I do. I'm so great full for. And just kind of stay in my



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own bubble.

**Q. Any messages from your sister, Jess, and the new little one after the win?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, she sent me that Greyson is very proud of me. First win as an auntie. My parents say I try to kill them every single time. I don't purposely try to, but, yeah.

**Q. Mentally what does it take to readjust to desert golf after playing in poana, thick rough, cold temps, wind last week?**

NELLY KORDA: Well, my body is really thanking me with the warm weather. Yeah, I don't know. I went out yesterday really early in the morning and it was pretty chilly. I think that's kind of this time of the year in the desert. The mornings get really cold, so it doesn't fly and it's a readjustment to the afternoon.

I made sure to play a morning round yesterday knowing I wasn't going to play on Monday and knowing I had an afternoon round today just to see how the ball was flying. Yeah, I feel like out here on the desert from what I learned in my couple years that I played out here that you really have to adjust to the weather, because it flies different in the morning versus when it's hot in the afternoon.

**Q. Just away from this event a little bit, Judy Rankin will be awarded with a Lifetime Achievement Award here in a couple weeks at the GWAA dinner. Just wanted to get your thoughts on what Judy has meant to the game, and have you had any interaction with her and what she's meant to women's golf as a whole?**

NELLY KORDA: A couple interactions. I think my first couple years she was still very alive in the both. She was doing a majority of the events.

I remember playing ANA or Chevron when it was back in the desert in Palm Springs and like the line for her was, it breaks towards Indio, and I think she said it like 100 times that week on broadcast, so we always joke about it.



I definitely had a couple interactions with her throughout my career, and every single one of them has been really pleasant. I know that it's been definitely an adjustment not seeing her out here every event or every year. I'm always wishing her the best.

**Q. How did you celebrate? Did you have a chance to celebrate?**

NELLY KORDA: With a nice In-N-Out burger and Animal Fries. Driving with Olivia Cowan to this week actually. We split the drive. I drive three hours and she drove three hours right after my round.

**Q. That sounds like proper way to celebrate.**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, m it was nice.

**Q. You won a lot of events via playoff as you alluded to, four LPGA events. A couple of them against Lydia. What was it like or what is it like squaring off against Lydia specifically?**

NELLY KORDA: Lyds and I actually have a really good friendship. She's been someone that I looked up to actually and also enjoyed playing alongside and competing against.

I think every time we have played together it's been so much fun. When you play in playoffs you kind of have to put that aside and always have one goal in mind, and that's to lift the trophy at the end of the playoff.

So as friendly as you are, when it comes to a playoff you just have to put that aside.

I do enjoy very much playing with her, and I would say that she's one of my better friends out here.

**Q. And then if I could ask one more about the Hall of Fame. Lydia said early on in her career it wasn't a goal because she didn't think it was realistic. Now obviously she's only a point away. Can you just kind of sum up what her career has looked like to you since you've been on tour and then what the Hall of Fame means to you?**

NELLY KORDA: Honestly, absolutely amazing. Jess has been on tour since 2011, so I've seen kind of her dominance at the beginning. I think she's super resilient. I know golf and sports, there are so many ups and downs and she's always bounced back.

I would think that she's super resilient and hard working and super dedicated, and I definitely wish it upon her to be

in the Hall of Fame.

**Q. Is that a goal of yours?**

NELLY KORDA: I don't think I ever think of that actually. As I said, I just think of everything in my present time and just take it one week at a time. If I get there, then great, but that's not something that I think that I put on my goal sheet.

As I said, I think small goals then eventually lead to your bigger goals.

**Q. Nelly, you mentioned Lydia being one of your closer friends on tour. How did that friendship start? Do you remember your first interactions and how has this friendship grown over the years?**

NELLY KORDA: Actually, I don't really remember the first time that we actually talked, but Jess and her were really good friends as well back when Jess was still playing week in, week out. I kind of -- it was funny, we always said like her friends were my friends. They kind of adopted me.

So everyone out here back then when I first got on tour was super nice in accepting me, adopting me to the friend group. Lyds was one of them.

**Q. And you talked about wanting some of your wins in the future to be a little less interesting; ten wins, No. 1 in the world. What parts of your game do you look at that you need to improve to make some of those wins a little less interesting going forward?**

NELLY KORDA: I think every part of your game. I feel like every single time you play under pressure you learn more about yourself and the way you handle it.

Obviously my last two wins were a little dramatic in a sense. Then again, I wasn't in that position for a really long time lifting the trophy, so when you're not in contention and going through injuries and such, I think you kind of forget how to handle yourself during those situations.

I think that's the main thing that I learned when I'm in contention is how to handle myself and how to calm myself and how to, you know, just take that moment on.

**Q. I'm curious, there is talk of a mixed event coming to the Olympics. Is that something you thought about, and how do you feel a mixed event on a stage like the Olympics could help the game?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, definitely heard about it. I think I read about it mainly on social. I think it would be really

good for the game of golf. I don't know how logistically they would handle it. I would say since the Olympics happens every four years you don't want it to be just like a regular event in a sense. You want it to be something different.

So I think that would be really fun, if there would be a team aspect involved as well as the individual.

**Q. Would you want the Olympic golf experience to be just a team event or do you like the individual and the team event?**

NELLY KORDA: No, I don't want to take away from the individual part of it. I think it would be fun to add in a team event. Again, I don't know how they would logistically do it because that would be a lot of golf, but I think it would be fun.

**Q. Last one on this: If it did happen, wouldn't this time, but '28 at Riviera. That might be a cool place for a lot of Americans to debut that. Have you played Riviera? If that were to happen -- what do you know about Riviera?**

NELLY KORDA: I've never played Riv. Yeah, actually been on grounds only once for a practice round back in I think 2022.

**Q. My question is: In a round where no matter what you do nothing is going your way, what do you normally do mentally to compose yourself and relax?**

NELLY KORDA: When nothing is going my way, so I would say that I would say it is what it is and I'm going to try to make the most of it. Sometimes that moment will try to swallow you. I would say the best thing that you can do is just to stay calm and know that there is more golf to be played, that this is not your last opportunity.

Because you're going to have ups and downs and you just can't have that moment swallow you.

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