

CME Group Tour Championship

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Tiburon Golf Club

Commissioner Mollie Marcoux Samaan Heather Daly-Donofrio Ricki Lasky

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Welcome, everybody. Really happy to have this chance to get you guys to meet new commissioner Mollie Marcoux Samaan.

I thought it would be a good idea for us to quickly go around the room so you guys could all introduce yourselves. (Introductions.)

You guys don't want to hear from me. You want to hear from the boss lady here. Mollie, you've had a couple months with us now. It's been so exciting getting to know you.

You've been all over the country meeting the staff and the players and the partners and everyone that makes the Tour tick. What are your takeaways from these first couple months on the job?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAAN: As you know, I'm engaged in this 100-day plan. We're at probably day 75 with our math, which is a little creative math.

I've really had the opportunity to meet so many amazing people who are part of this LPGA family.

I think the first time you hear things, you've got to process, and then you hear it again and hear it again. I guess once I step back and look at where we are, I think that LPGA is in an amazingly strong position, but I also feel there's a huge opportunity for growth.

The way we've been talking around our world is this is our time. The momentum is with us. And we just think there's even more growth to come in so many different areas.

The other thing I'll say is that I've been surprised at how



really, truly unique the LPGA is. We're a professional sports organization that has the very best players in the world, but we also are very intentional with our work around spreading the game to those who might not otherwise have that opportunity, particularly to young girls and women around the world, through our foundation.

And the combination of our foundation work and the Tour allows us to have huge impact through sports, which I think all sports organizations aim to do. But I think we have the ability through the combination of the foundation and the TOUR to do that a unique way.

I think the other thing that's really unique is our value proposition is beyond the commercial value for our partners. I think the commercial value is really strong, but when you combine it with our actual values and our intentionality around changing the world, I think we have this very unique opportunity to continue to partner with the biggest brands in the world, which I think we're seeing on a daily basis that more and more of the global companies are investing in us in a pretty powerful way.

I would say the third thing that I really step back from is the LPGA is really a team. I mean, that sounds cliché, but it is the power of these partnerships that make us special. I think if you look around the landscape of women's sports, 10 percent of sponsorships or less than 10 percent of sponsorships are allocated to women's sports.

Our partners understand that needs to change, and they're all in with the LPGA.

Even going to last night's Rolex Awards dinner, it felt like a college athletics, end-of-the-year celebration. We're all one team coming together and celebrating the organization and the success of our athletes.

I think those are my biggest takeaways. It's a very unique organization that is primed for growth and continued impact on the world.

THE MODERATOR: Speaking of growth, we just put out the 2022 schedule, which is growing and growing and growing. I know you and the whole leadership team have been working so hard on that.

What are some of the highlights of this big announcement



that we just put out with a whole lot of recognition for these athletes?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Yeah, it's pretty remarkable. The thing I said to you last night is it's the best ever, and it's the best ever for a number of reasons.

First of all, our staff has done a phenomenal job in building this schedule. Obviously, the purse increases. I think we had nine different tournaments where we increased the purse.

We're a little less than 25 percent larger than we were last year, and a little bit under 30 percent than 2019, the last full season. Those are pretty remarkable numbers. So I think there's a lot of energy around that.

But in addition, we've been really working on looking at the flow of the schedule, trying to see how we can maximize geographic locations. Still some work to do in that area, but our partners have been really receptive to the idea that we're trying to make it as easy for our athletes to reach their own peak performance as possible.

I think partners have been really engaged around that. It's a pretty remarkable schedule.

I think Ricki told our players about it at the high level on Monday, and there was a lot of cheering and a lot of excitement leaving that meeting. So I think that's the biggest sign it's a great schedule, and the players are pretty happy with it. They haven't seen the details of it until just now, but I think generally they're pretty excited.

THE MODERATOR: One last question from me and then we'll open it up. You said peak performance from the athletes. I hear you say that a lot. I think it's fascinating you coming in with an athlete's mindset. What do you mean by peak performance, and what do we need to give these athletes to succeed as athletes on the golf course?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think at the core we're here to provide opportunities, and we're trying to allow our top players in the world to continue to reach their own peak performance.

We do that in partnership with our sponsors and our partners to look at the overall player experience. I don't think they're mutually exclusive to roles of the partners and roles of our athletes.

So we talk about sort of the big things and the smaller things. Some of the smaller things are just making their lives easier, less administrative work, more clarity on where the hotel is and where the transportation is and

things like that, more clarity in our communication.

So we're using technology to be able to facilitate better communication with them.

But it's also things like are they able to get the sleep that they need? Are they able to get the nutrition that they need through dining? Are they able to recover properly through our policies and our procedures? Those are just a lot of things that we can control internally.

So with an intentional focus on that, what we think it will do is allow our athletes to continue to be their very best, which is great for the LPGA. It's great for our partners and great for everyone. We want our athletes performing at the highest level, and we want them doing this, honestly, with a sense of wellness and wellbeing, because that's a part of how we serve our members.

I think working directly with our partners on this is a real goal of ours, our whole team.

Q. You mentioned potential for huge growth. What are the areas where you see that growth potentially?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I still think there's room for additional tournaments. At the end of the day, this is where -- and the tournaments that meet our goals. So I think, if you look at our priorities, it's trying to make sure that we continue to work on that schedule. We continue to make sure that we've got the right number of events with the right size purses. So I think there's growth there.

I think it's also growth with technology and data, which will continue to make the broadcast better, which will continue to allow us to get our athletes out there and people to know our athletes better and to know how good they are.

When you look at some of the data we've been producing through the KPMG Performance Insights, it's really remarkable how good and talents our athletes are.

The more we can do that and invest in that, I think the more the world will see how really, truly remarkable our athletes are.

Just things like investing in our people. We have an amazing staff, and they work, as you know, Steve, seven days a week and are completely passionate about what they do, but we're limited by the number of bodies we have, just in terms of growing our partnerships.

I think there are many more people who want to invest in the LPGA, and we need to go out there and tell them about what we do and get that word out more broadly.

So I think investing in people will allow us to spread the word and spread the engagement with our product.

Q. What is the value of the LPGA brand (no microphone.)?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think the value is that these are the best in the world, first of all. So the world can see that women can aspire to greatness by resilience, hard work, dedication, skill that they have.

And that, for example, within the world of pay equity, I think we show the world that the talent can produce tremendous success.

So our partners want to align with us because we are about empowering women and showing true leaders out in the world. So I think that value proposition is really strong for our partners. They can show their own company values through the work that we do.

I think the other thing is that sports build communities and they inspire leaders. So that's the value proposition. By putting these best in the world out there, I hope that we will inspire young girls to play golf at the highest level, but really young girls to know that they can do anything that they want.

Q. What is the status of the contract with Symetra Tour? Are they up this year?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: They are. We're working through -- we've got a couple of great potential partners we're working on right now.

Q. It seems, and you kind of alluded to this, but things are very ripe right now. Talk about our time and the momentum. Where did the momentum come from? How did this happen, I guess?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: That's a good question. I think it's by, first of all, having the best athletes in the world and the continued growth of the talent that we have within the LPGA, and people are taking notice of that.

I think people have also had an awakening around women's sports, and they said, Wow, this is an undervalued asset out in the world. We need to accentuate that value.

So I think generally, because of the world's focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion, I think people have looked at women's sports and said, That's an area in the world that there's not a great deal of parity or a great deal of

equity.

So people have looked at who have been the most successful professional women's sports organizations. We've been around for 71 years. We've been doing great work for those 71 years, and we're a proven commodity that has tremendous commercial value, but we also offer the value proposition.

Q. Do you get any sense that some corporates are under pressure for not sharing the wealth before, A? And B, do you get any sense whether it's CME or Cognizant or Aon, that what they're doing will get others to follow?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think what they're doing will absolutely get others to follow. I don't think the people who are our partners feel pressure. I think they feel a responsibility and that they're passionate personally about it and want to have impact and want to use our platform to inspire others.

I really think that is what their goal is.

Q. You mostly talked about kind of 33, 34 being this magic number that seemed to work and having breaks throughout the year. But from what you've said, it sounds like you'd be willing to add more and make this even a fuller schedule than there is now. How much more would you be willing to kind of add?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Well, I do think that's the sweet spot. I think we are strategically looking at all of that. I think it's more about kind of the flow of the events, the quality of the events.

I think we feel good with the number that we have this year for sure. And we're not in a race to get more on the schedule, but we are engaged in the strategic process with our whole team to say what is the ideal schedule, and how would this look?

Talking to our players, really hearing from them is really important. What makes sense to you to allow you to reach your goals? So I think that we're in a great spot right now. We're not, like I said, in a rush to grow the number of events, but we are taking a strategic look at that.

Q. Has there been any talk about trying to replace the UL International Crown? It's been such a great event, showcasing more players from around the world. Any replacements in the pipeline maybe?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Yeah, we really like that event. We think that's a really dynamic opportunity to, like



you said, to showcase our players in a different format.

So, yeah, we're having conversations with various companies who see the value in that as well.

Q. How much of a priority is it, Mollie, to get more network coverage and eradicate the tape delays that are throughout the sport?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Those of us who -- all of us love watching live sports, so that is a priority. Obviously, there are challenges with that. The Golf Channel has a lot of content that they need to put out.

But they're great partners. We've been working closely to try to find solutions to that, things like streaming. The 12th hole last week that Amy did such a great job on, we thought that was a really wonderful opportunity to have live content on for all four days.

I was watching intently. I was co-watching. Anything else I was watching, I was maybe listening in the car. But it was great to have it on all the time and to be able to find the LPGA really quickly on Peacock.

So I think we're looking at those opportunities moving forward, continuing to talk to Golf Channel about how important that is for our fans to be able to watch as much live content as possible.

Q. What's higher on the priority list, trying to get more live TV or expanding the schedule a little bit more?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Again, I think getting as much media as possible is a top priority.

Q. And you mentioned having more clear communication. Who would that ideal world look like between the players?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think the communication is really good. That's another thing that we pride ourselves on. Heather and her team do a phenomenal job of being very player centered, but I think there's technology that can help facilitate it, whether it's an app. There's apps out there on the marketplace that will just allow us to streamline it so they can focus on getting better at golf rather than managing e-mails.

So those are just investments we need to make. Not so earth shattering, but I think will help with the communication.

Q. Any of those apps you've tried out so far?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: There's some that I used in various -- at Princeton we had a great app we were working with, and Heather and her team are evaluating other options out there.

Q. Just to follow up on that, I'm curious to understand how all this works. When you get in these situations -- I guess you're in the same time slot or on a delay or things like that -- could you get to a point where it would be worth it to try to play, maybe not different days of the week, but playing in the morning on Saturdays so you're finished by 1:00 or 2:00, just to have that live element?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Well, I mean, I think it works a lot of different ways. There's another thing I found. There's not one simple answer to any of it because the schedule is complicated. What we're doing is going back through our strategic planning process and evaluating those questions. Putting anything up on the wall and seeing what makes the most sense.

To your question a little bit, what are the highest priorities? Where do we want to focus? We know we want the world to see our athletes as much as possible. There's always some trade-offs with those things because we always want to have the right schedule and flow for our players.

So we haven't answered all those questions yet, but those are the questions we're asking.

Q. (Regarding nine-year PGA TOUR deal.)

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: We're in partnership with them. They have our media rights, and they're great partners in helping us with that.

Q. Can you speak to the role that CME Group has played in growing the LPGA? How important will that be with the momentum you're talking about in carrying that forward?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think, again, what they've created here with this whole -- with everything that CMA has done with the points and the championship, it has changed the whole dynamic.

Just think of last week as people were aiming to get into this event, and to give a season-long competition creates more energy and more excitement. This tournament with the \$1.5 million first prize and moving up to \$2 million next year, that is game changing.

Then with the announcement this week too that every player will have a guarantee of \$40,000 if they make it into



the top 60, they'll be guaranteed \$40,000. For our players that's extremely meaningful. I think that is, again, part of the overall look at the pay equity.

I think Terry Duffy and CME believes in equity, and he's trying to inspire others to take on that same challenge.

Q. When Mike took over he had a different challenge. You've got a challenge yourself to carry the momentum that you mentioned. How different is that? And how much did you follow what he did to follow in his footsteps and carry that on?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Yeah, I think the challenges are very different. I think he did a remarkable job getting us to where we are right now, he and his whole team. So we're now in a position where we can take it to that next level. I think he's built an amazing -- he and his team have built an amazing platform.

I mean, \$85 million, almost \$86 million in purse is a remarkable amount of growth. There is just more demand and more interest in what we're doing. So our opportunity is to capitalize on that.

Q. I'll give you one guess what tournament I'm asking about. (Laughter.) Canadian Women's Open is obviously one of a handful of international events that are coming back to the schedule. What is it like to work with governments and international health organizations over the last couple years and moving forward as well?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Heather probably could answer that question better. It is -- obviously we're a global tour and we're working with so many different world organizations. The protocols have been different everywhere. Our team has done -- I will say our team has done a remarkable job of trying to understand all of the different requirements and protocols everywhere, and it has not been easy.

I think now that we're largely through that, hopefully we can go back to focusing on the growth we've been talking about and getting our team back kind of mission central. I don't know, Heather, if you want to take that question.

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: Sure. It was certainly -- navigating two years in COVID was a challenge here in the U.S., but that was multiplied any time we went across borders.

We were able to successfully do that because of the partners that we had in those countries. Maybe if you think about how we were able to go to Thailand and Singapore,

we were one of the first sports organizations following COVID to go overseas.

Every tournament is different because you're working with a different government authority and health authorities, and we have rules. We would typically have a couple of pre-tournament calls before a tournament. Now we're on nightly calls to get our athletes and staff and caddies safely over there and holding our breath every time anybody was testing so we didn't leave anybody behind.

Really, we were able to do it on the strength of our partners. We had Thai sponsors that were committed to helping us process orders. Our partners with IMG are very connected with the relationships they built in those countries over the years really was a key factor in getting to cross across borders.

We are very much looking forward to coming back to Canada.

Q. Can't wait.

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: Frankly, a lot of that is beyond our control. It's beyond our partners' control and our sponsors' control, and it's in the hands of the government.

So we're looking forward to getting back to normal in 2022 as best we can, and hope to get all of our international events next year.

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: If you think about it, in addition to the work that our team has had to do and that's distracted us from some of the other things, just think about all the protocols that the players are had to figure out. And, again, that's a distraction from them focusing on their own growth personally through their game.

I think everybody is feeling a sense of we're going to be back to normal next year and be able to focus on the things we all would love to do. Certainly looking forward to coming back to Canada. Marcoux, the last name, that's Canadian (Laughter).

Q. Just to follow on that, the importance of superstars for this Tour. Again, the tournament director at CP told me they already have a thousand volunteers signed up. They have a wait list for the tournament for like 12 months. It's crazy. That has to do with it being in Brooke's hometown. For this tournament, how important are people like Brooke Henderson and other superstars?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think they are important



because we want more people to know about our players and to know how talented they are. People love talent, and they love the stars.

I think we have a very deep bench of talent, and there are people who are interested in -- people who are focused on one type of charity or have certain values. We kind of cover the world, first of all, since we're so global. We have superstars from all different countries. They inspire people within their own countries. They inspire people in other countries.

So we feel like we have this really rich content to be able to share with the world. So we want to be able to do that, and that's a part of our investment too. How do we get that content out more aggressively? That just takes investment in our own team to be able to do that and our partners.

Q. My question is about the relationship with the college golfers, the top college golfers and the LPGA right now where they kind of have to choose. (Indiscernible.) I'm sure you're probably aware the top five players have status (indiscernible.) Have you thought about that, or is there any kind of priority to maybe do something like that?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I don't know -- I do know about our rules and our policies, and I had conversations with Heather about it. I think that's on our list in the off-season, to look at all of our rules and requirements and to see if something different would make sense.

I think there's been a lot of time spent on that over the years, and I think we've changed our policy a couple times. But I think it's important to think through opportunity because this is such a big opportunity. So to think through all levels of how someone gets their card to be on the LPGA because it's such a coveted place to be.

So we'll go back during the off-season and look at that and evaluate it and see if there's a better way than what we're doing.

Q. How on board is it to get those big stars on LPGA right away? With Rose Zhang at Stanford right now. How important do you think it is to get those players on the LPGA right away and bypass the standard protocols?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think we have a process and a pathway. We've seen also tremendous success from people who have played on the LET or the Symetra Tour. So I think we have a very good pathway to the LPGA, but we constantly evaluate it.

I think it's important for people to be there when they're ready, and there's plenty of time for that. So we have lots of ways that they can get there, and we'll continue to evaluate them. But I don't think there's a particular rush to get there.

Q. I'm just curious, looking at the marketing of the Tour and increasing the exposure that the Tour gets, I feel like people talk about that all the time. Do you have a plan or a vision to create a robust marketing department for the Tour to try to increase visibility? I guess on a broader scale, just plain old add more positions to kind of boost the staff overall. Is that something you're looking at doing?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Yes. I can say that definitively. I think we are looking at investing in ourselves. We believe in ourselves. We believe in our team. We think now is the time to build a bigger team. Similar in quality and an increase in quantity.

I think one of the areas of focus is definitely on our marketing and our content because I think that's how the world will see our tremendous athletes.

Q. How would you describe the marketing department currently?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: How would I describe it? In what way?

Q. Is there one? Are there people dedicated solely to marketing?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: There are not people with the title marketing on their business card, but there are many people who are doing marketing. We have a very talented communications team and we have a very talented partnership team, and they're constantly focused on sort of engaging and activating with our partners in marketing.

But our communication team is very, very good. We just need more of them. So, yes, Roberta is sitting here, and she, unfortunately for us, is retiring at the end of this year. Will never leave us, but she is retiring officially, and we've been talking very strategically about what marketing and communication will look like moving forward.

We do think that there's an opportunity for growth there.

Q. And I was going to ask about Roberta. I didn't realize Roberta was in the room, so I'm glad you just said that. I was going to ask about Roberta's position going forward and if you feel like that will be -- how are

you going to replace Roberta, I guess is my question? Are you looking at one position, two positions? How do you see that looking going forward? I don't know that you can replace Roberta.

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: It would take an army. You can't replace Roberta. We are literally at the goal line of putting out a job description for Roberta's replacement, and that will be out in the next week or so.

Again, we're looking for someone to lead with the same enthusiasm, energy, and skill as Roberta to take this to the next level, which includes not just communications, but as you mentioned, sort of marketing.

Q. Thank you. And hi, Roberta.

ROBERTA BOWMAN: Beth Ann, I'll just say it will be the best job in golf.

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: It will be the best job in women's sports because we're in this moment of growth and opportunity and our content is so rich. I mean, it's just so rich. When you hear our players talk, not only about their golf game but all the things they're doing off the course.

I had the privilege of doing a panel with Madelene Sagstrom and Maria Fassi last week at Pelican, and their perspective, particularly for how young they are, on the world and why they do what they do, and I was blown away by it.

I think there are many other players on our tour that have that same perspective. They are dedicated, strong, remarkable athletes, but they also know they have a platform to inspire others.

That content is what people want, and we have it.

Q. Mentioning our time is now, we should be able to capitalize on that. Where do you see the equity gap in five, ten years?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think we're constantly looking at all levels of the Tour, sort of how do our top players do, financially, how do the middle players do, how do the bottom players do?

We look at pay equity.

We look at the deltas between the PGA TOUR and the LPGA Tour, and the delta gets bigger as you go down the money list.

I think if we can close that delta, and also if we can make sure that the top players in the world can make a living commensurate with their talent, I think that is a real big goal of ours.

So we're studying that and we're trying to find ways to close those gaps, but also to make sure that people can make a good living because these are, like I said a million times, the best golfers in the world.

Q. Just going over the rules of qualifying for the Tour, are you also considering going over the qualifications for the Vare Trophy?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Absolutely. I think we've seen this year -- I don't think we thought 2020 would be an anomaly, so we were surprised this year. But it's not the first time that's happened. I think over the years there have been top players who have not been eligible for the trophy.

So we're going to step back and look. Now that the players, the purses are bigger, the players can play fewer events and still make a really good living.

So we have to step back and evaluate. Are those the right numbers? Are we allowing our best players to win this really prestigious award? So we're really open to evaluating that in the off-season.

Q. I want to go back to the nuts and bolts of television. You never realize until the Olympics are aired how many different channels there are. Would we be better being streamed on Peacock, or would we be better live on USA?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think those are really good questions. I believe in the streaming market, and also to supplement what's on the network. I think you need a multi-tiered strategy. We want to be on broadcast television. We want the world who are just flipping channels to see our product and to be able to find it easily.

But the world is changing, so how do we get creative with that? How do we work with Peacock to do things like we did last week, maybe a bit more aggressively? How do we get content that's not live content on Peacock? People are on these devices all day long.

So we're working with Brian and his team and looking at all the options because we think that's the wave of the future.

Q. I would never recommend this, but if you go on Twitter, which is a sewer, that our biggest criticism is not being able to find us live. What do you say to the people who make that criticism?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Yeah, we understand that, and we appreciate that they want to find our content. So all we can say is it's a finite resource when we're talking about broadcast windows. We just have to keep showing our value to our partners on why we should be prioritized in those windows.

We believe in it, but -- we say we want to be on as much as we can be on as well. What we'd also like to do is here's some other options for you. Here's how you can watch it digitally. Thank you for your engagement.

Q. Where does gambling fit into your growth strategy moving forward?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think it's a really interesting opportunity for people to, once again, get to know our players, follow our players, be engaged with our players. They're always more interested in the content when you have something on the line.

So we are, I think, going to be able to announce some really unique things we're going to be doing in the coming weeks.

Q. How do you view the equity in terms of closing the gap, making up ground when it involves kind of the difference between the corporate world and the entertainment world? Have I made any sense yet at all? In terms of fan base, in terms of live holes, and things like that, in terms of closing the gap?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Closing the gap through eyeballs?

Q. There's part of me that's always wondered, there's a huge gap that needs to be closed. Does it need to be equal, or do you need to first get equal attendance, equal viewership, equal marketing, all that stuff?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think it's going to be -- I think they can close the delta by partners who believe in that and continuing to invest in us and seeing the value in what we do.

But I do think it's a chicken and egg. You have to get more eyeballs in order to get those bigger numbers for our players.

So I think we have to have a multi-tiered strategy around that and focus on growing our fans and growing our eyeballs, at the same time working with partners to give them other value in their partnership with us.

Q. And then is there any movement on any type of competition involving the TOUR?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think everyone would love to see the men and women play together. As you all know for years, people have played with different ideas. There's some hurdles and challenges. We are all for it, and I think there's conversations brewing with a number of entities to see how we can get that done.

I think both from the men's side and the women's side everybody thinks it would be great to put the best athletes in the world together at one time.

So I'm 100 percent behind it, and there's certainly some good things brewing on that.

Q. I've always been struck about this Tour in particular, being around for 70 years without any help from the men. Is that something that needs to be told more? You've been on your own since 1956.

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Yeah, and we're really proud of that, to be honest with you. We're a really strong and successful organization that's been around for 71 years as a standalone women's sports organizations. So that's a sort of pride.

The PGA TOUR has been very helpful to me. Jay Monahan in particular has been really supportive with his time and his knowledge. I think they want the women's game to continue to grow as well. So I think we're talking about ways we can work together more aggressively.

Q. Is there some kind of Lawrenceville connection?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Yeah. My daughter goes to Lawrenceville, and I actually used to work there. So we have a lot of mutual friends from our Lawrenceville connection. And Seth went to school there too. They've all been -- I would say the whole golf community has been very welcoming to me and have offered on numerous occasions like how can we help you? What do you need? We want to be in partnership together. We want to grow the women's game.

So it's our job to kind of present some opportunities and some ideas, and I think that they have already been helpful.

Q. What kind of opportunity does Lexi present this year? What does that get for women's golf?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Yeah, I mea, again, whenever, however we can showcase our athletes, we

think we're going to grow from that. She's wildly talented, and I think by people seeing that in the environment that they're used to seeing makes a big difference. So I think it will be great.

Q. I just was hoping to get a little background on JTBC being involved in so many events on this year's schedule and how that came about.

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I can actually turn that one to Ricki to answer it. We have a significant partnership with JTBC, which includes them sponsoring three tournaments. So the details of that, I'll turn over to Ricki.

RICKI LASKY: Beth Ann, they've been partners with us for quite some time on the media side and have been an integral part on the tournament side as well.

With our new deal, they have the opportunity to title three events on our schedule, so those are the three events that you see that we just released.

Q. And then on the listening and learning tour, what's the most important thing that you've learned so far?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I mean, it's hard to say what the most important thing is. I think there are many important things, and that's one of the things that I've learned, is that it can't be a singular approach.

It's far too complicated for that. I think we have to be good at everything we do. We have to be focused every minute on that growth strategy.

So it's hard to pick one thing that is the most important thing. I would say having that tournament schedule, as I said before, be the best tournament schedule that we can put together that allows our women to reach their peak performance and make sense for all of our partners as well.

Q. I'm curious what the growth of what we're seeing in so many events increasing their purses. I realize you haven't been a part of this process, and Ricki you might be able to speak better to this, but how have you seen the attitudes change among the partners? Are they calling you up, I want to increase? What is it they're seeing now? You've all known for so long what a great product is the LPGA, but what do you think it comes from?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: From what I've seen, it's different for every partner, and depending on what their goals are and what their financial situation is and the value we can provide to them. So each conversation is unique.

But I think, as we talked about before, people are seeing that there are both commercial benefits from the partnership, but also significant value association and brand association benefits from the partnership, and that together we can actually help them accomplish some of their other goals that they maybe hadn't seen before.

I think, like I said, for example, Terry Duffy really just wants to lead in this area and wants to -- and equity is important to him and he wants to make a statement. So that's really coming from him saying this is what I want to do. He's pretty aggressive and pretty innovative with that.

RICKI LASKY: Our partners that have been there, the conversation has shifted from just titling an LPGA event, and once they come in, they understand the value. But now they're talking about not only the entitlement, but everything under the umbrella of the LPGA, which has significantly changed since ten years ago with how can I help women's golf? How can I be a part of what you all do as a whole? Now that you have this global platform that we can be a part of.

And to Mollie's point, every deal is different and every CEO's vision is different. The great thing about the LPGA is that we're able to listen and create what they want versus maybe some other entities that are a little more cookie cutter.

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Very customized to their needs. The other thing that we talked about before is people are aware of the need to push towards equity, and the more they can increase those purses, the more money our players can make.

So I think giving them the data and showing them what's important to our players, if you make the cut, how much money do they make at the cut line? Can that pay for their expenses? That's a really important thing for us to analyze, and I think sponsors and partners are seeing that.

Q. You said it's a multi-tiered strategy to achieve. What are those tiers, and which ones are the top priorities?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: First of all, obviously, growing the purses of the events at the appropriate speed and cadence. I think we are grateful for the partners that we have. So I think that just alone, by continuing to raise purses like we have, that's going to reduce the difference and the delta.

I think we can go back over the off-season and look at our purse distributions. We can look at strategies around that.



Then we can look at other creative ways like the Aon Risk Reward Challenge. That's a remarkable program that is equitable.

They're offering the same prize for the men and women. So a woman on our Tour has an opportunity to make a million dollars. That goes a long way.

These big increases, like going to \$2 million as the top prize, that's a big deal. So as I said, it happens in lots of different ways.

I think we can be creative with other opportunities like the Aon Risk Reward Challenge. Are there other opportunities throughout the year that we can partner with people on that can continue to drive incoming revenue for our players?

Q. What is the appropriate speed for purses to grow?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Again, we're so customer focused and so partner focused that there's not a timeline specific. It's when people are able to get there. As we look at our long-term strategy, how do we build demand from a large pool of partners that, as events cycle in and out, we can replace them with bigger events.

It's hard to say there's a specific cadence to it. I think we need to do it at the appropriate speed and time.

Q. I just want to wrap it up with an oddball question. Mollie, if you had to work for you, what would make you excited, and what would make you nervous?

(Laughter.)

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Oh, my goodness. What I hope makes people excited is that I just love being part of a team. This is by no means -- like I said before, the LPGA is a team sport. That's broadly with our partners, but that's specifically on our team.

None of this happens without the great work of the people around this table. So I believe in my heart there's no way any of this happens without a big team of people. It's not a one-person show.

So I hope people are excited about being part of something bigger than themselves and having a big role in that.

What would worry them? I would say at previous jobs I had people would maybe say we move too quickly and there's a little bit too much energy, like, Hey, I've got to slow down a little bit. Not with this team. I don't think they're worried about that. They're used to moving fast and furiously. You can ask them. (Laughter.)

HEATHER DALY-DONOFRIO: She seems to be a morning person. All I know is the e-mails are coming too early in the morning.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you so much. Really appreciate your support. Let us know if you need anything else from us throughout the week. Let's go out and watch some golf.

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