

CME Group Tour Championship

Monday, November 17, 2025

Naples, Florida, USA

Tiburón Golf Club

Angela Stanford

United States Solheim Cup Captain
Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: We are here at the 2025 CME Group TOUR Championship with our 2026 U.S. Solheim Cup captain Angela Stanford. This is the last week of the season, the last week before we head into the Solheim Cup year. I know you've got an announcement, but first I just want to say, how are you feeling? It's been more than six months now since you were announced as captain. Is it finally real?

ANGELA STANFORD: It's been awesome. I feel like I'm living a dream every single day. Everything I do, it seems like I do something for Solheim Cup every single day, and I love it.

I feel like I've been talking to more players lately, getting ready to roll into next year. But yeah, I still feel like I'm living a dream, and I've loved every second of it.

Q. You talk about having news or doing something every day. Today you've got some fun news to announce about how your team will literally look next year. What do you have to tell us?

ANGELA STANFORD: Yeah, we're fired up to announce that B. Draddy and Zero Restriction will be the outfitters for the 2026 United States Solheim Cup team. I'm thrilled. I can't wait. B. Draddy is extremely high end. I'm looking forward to seeing the launch of their ladies' fall line this year.

Zero Restriction kind of speaks for itself. They've been keeping people dry and warm for a long time. They've done Presidents Cups. They're very familiar with our team aspect. I think it's going to be a lot of fun to work with them.

Q. I know the last couple years you kind of let Stacy and the team handle the uniforms. What's this been like this so far having to deal with that side of things?

ANGELA STANFORD: It's been a little difficult for me



because usually I know what I want, but sometimes what I want and what it looks like aren't the same thing.

Fortunately I've had Paula's help quite a bit. Paula has been a life saver in this, not only because Paula has fashion sense and I do not. She's been helpful there. But she's also a player.

The things that we've talked about, of course we want to look good. I want more of a classy, very simple look. But Paula and I are on the same page when it comes to the functional aspect of it. You have to be comfortable out there, but you also -- you can look good and be comfortable at the same time.

Q. You were up at the ANNIKA last week. We've had so many different winners on the Tour this year, 28, a good number of Americans, a number of strong players coming up for you. How are you feeling about the makeup of the U.S. Team as we now look to wrap this '25 season?

ANGELA STANFORD: I love it. I think there are a number of different ways this could go next year. I think we could have a very similar team. We could also have some new parts, new people, new players, and I love it either way.

I think our mentality, our mindset is going to be the same. We understand we have a huge challenge going over and playing in Europe, and I think that's been the fun part for me right now is to start talking to the players about things that I think are important and just preparing them for what I want and what I expect of them in the off-season.

I feel like I might be a little bit different in that respect. I don't really remember captains asking things from me in the off-season. But I just think there are things that we can work on all the time, and I think our mentality is going to matter when we get there, and I think you can train those things. I think you can work on things, so that way when you get there it's not one big surprise.

I've loved it. I've loved seeing them the last couple days. Saw a couple players today. Everybody seems to -- early on when I saw them, we saw each other in Boston, but there was a different vibe yesterday, at Pelican and then today.

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I think thinking about going into next year, it's back on their radar. So yeah, this is been nice to see everybody.

Q. B. Draddy, obviously, like you said, kind of matches your own personal vibe, but what have you seen from the company so far in those talks that made you want to work with them at this pivotal point in your own career?

ANGELA STANFORD: Yeah, I like how classic it is. For me, I think they can do both. They can be trendy and they can have a classic element to them. I'm not real trendy. I think Paula is probably really good at being trendy. So it's nice to have the capability to do both.

I think we can be trendy in some aspects and then keep it real simple and real classic when it's time to play golf.

I think my style and their style will match up really well.

Q. Obviously you had so many experiences playing on Solheim Cup teams, now captaining and assistant captaining a few Solheim Cup teams. What were some of your favorite looks that you got to wear for the other captains you played for, or least favorite?

ANGELA STANFORD: Yeah, I keep things really simple. I think a lot of patterns on the bottom were never really for me. We had a couple years where we had some wild patterns on our skirts and pants. I'm not much of a pattern person.

I think if anything, people will think that I'm being very simple with our design, but at the same time, I want the ladies to feel like they're comfortable and they're going to go out there and people are going to talk about our play, they're not going to talk about our clothes, in that respect where I think we're going to do some things early in the week that they're going to talk about our uniforms, and I can't wait for that stuff to work its way in. When we get there, it'll be a really cool aspect of the week.

Q. Your thoughts or your plans; are you going to take some people over as you think about your schedule for next year, to play the course, to have team bonding over in Europe? What are your thoughts about that?

ANGELA STANFORD: I think we're going to have a team event in the spring on the West Coast. If players want to go over and play Bernardus before, they're more than welcome. I'm not going to ask them to do that. I understand their schedules are usually pretty packed, and they have a lot of things that they're committed to.

If anything, I would hope that they would play the Scottish.

I hope they would play AIG. I know they're going to play AIG. But anything that -- I feel like Bernardus has a Scottish links feel to it, so I'm going to encourage them to think about playing the Scottish if it's not on their schedule.

If they want to go play Bernardus, I would love it. But I think I've seen it both ways, and I've done it both ways. Early on in my career, I went and played early in Sweden a couple times. I think it's good to get your bearings and know where things are, but really when we get there, they're going to be so focused on learning the golf course and playing that I think we're going to get everything we need to out of those four days before.

Q. You said you do stuff just about every day as we approach the off-season here. You're sending Christmas cards. How will you stay in touch over the next few months?

ANGELA STANFORD: I do this weird thing that -- so I love texts and email and all that, but I love face to face. I love talking to people in person. I guess I'm old school in that.

I'll probably send them a few videos. I did that early on to the core of our players on this team, just to -- I don't know, I think there's something about sending a video to somebody and talking through it. I think you can read things. When you read an email you're not really getting -- I don't know, it's just different. I'll probably send them a couple of videos.

I'm really going to dig into stats this off-season. Going to start thinking about how specific stats fit Bernardus, go hole by hole. I'm going to dive pretty deep into this and just see if we can find the perfect match when it comes to players for this golf course.

Q. Obviously we had a lot more wins last year by Americans with Nelly and Lauren, et cetera. This year not as many. We've seen the emergence of Japanese golfers in terms of winning. Obviously a lot of Americans have played really well but the wins haven't been there like the past few years. Is that a concern at this point?

ANGELA STANFORD: No, not at all. I'm very aware of the ebb and flow of seasons, Solheim years and non-Solheim years. I know they're all trying as hard as they possibly can.

But I also knew when I was playing that when it became a Solheim Cup year, I wanted to win those years, but I was also trying to earn points to make a team. When you get into that mentality, you start seeing better finishes, whether they're thinking about it or not. I always did personally.

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But I'm not worried about it. I just think it's kind of the ebb and flow, and people are in different stages of their life.

For Nelly, not many people have ever won that many in a year, much less in a row. That's something that I can only imagine is really difficult to follow. I kind of felt for her in that everybody just expects if you can do it once, you should be able to do it again.

I think Nelly handled it really well this year. She played amazing all year. Winning is hard. Winning is really hard. Personally I think that shows; we had 29 different winners; is that right? 27 or 29. That shows how hard it is to win out here.

I'm not worried about the Americans.

Q. How big do you consider your core group? You mentioned core. And when you get out next year and start having little face to face run into, how deep doing go? How many players?

ANGELA STANFORD: My core group this time was about six of them, and I just went off of how many had played three or four in a row. I think it's important to keep those players together and keep them informed.

I think we'll go to 19 or 20 to invite to the event on the West Coast, fittings, different things like that because this may be -- this is just my personal take on this, but it's not just about next year; it's about growing an American team for years to come.

I always thought it was an honor to get invited to team events. I thought it was an honor to get emails from a captain. I thought it was a big deal.

Q. Back when you were younger?

ANGELA STANFORD: Yes. I remember I went to functions in 2004 and 2005 for Nancy and I didn't make that team, but I made '07, '09, '11. I want these younger players that get invited to these things to want to be there. It's a big deal to be there.

I think it's a big deal to grow American golf. I love thinking that it's not just about 2026. Yes, we would like to win and we want to put together the best team we can, but I also want the '28 team to be good and I want the '30 team to be good.

I feel like the more they can be exposed to Solheim Cup events, even just talking to them, hopefully it makes them want to make those teams and be a part of making

American golf better and better on this tour.

Q. Do you feel like we're in or approaching a bit of a transition period on the U.S. side of things?

ANGELA STANFORD: I seem to think that every time. It seems like we keep getting to a point where we feel like, oh, this team is going to be way different. I think it just sneaks up on you. I don't think it's something that -- now you think about it, you have Nelly, you have Megan, you have Kupcho, we're going to have Angel, Yealimi played in '21. All of a sudden it feels like this is a core group. You realize that you're like, what happened to all those players -- I think it just kind of sneaks up on you.

I think we thought that for '23 there was going to be huge turnover, and I don't think there was, and that just speaks to American golf.

I think the stronger we can get from 1 to 20 or 30 or 40, it never feels like we have a huge turnover.

Q. I just wanted to ask you, can you share a couple moments? You played in six Solheim Cups. Can you share what your most memorable moment might have been out there on one of those matches?

ANGELA STANFORD: By far, 2015 in Germany. Every time I get the chance to say I got to beat Suzann, I like to say it because not many people got to beat Suzann. Just that whole Sunday, coming back in singles. We were down 10-6. It was the greatest comeback in Solheim Cup history. That's definitely the one that stands out.

Winning in 2007 in Sweden, that was kind of on the tail end of Annika's historic career. We're playing in Sweden again -- we played in 2003 in Sweden and I was the one that got waxed by Annika in singles and they just drilled us in 2003 in Sweden, and that was Annika at the height of Annika's career. Then to come back in '07 and get to beat them in Sweden, I thought that was pretty cool. That was a tough week. It was cold and rainy. I thought Betsy did a great job of kind of keeping the team together.

I guess most of my memories come from away Solheim Cups.

Q. On the Saturday night before they make the singles matches, can you just tell us a little "Inside Baseball" about who wants to go out first, who wants to go out last? Based on what you know, what position do you think probably would get the most pressure as the day progresses on a Sunday?

ANGELA STANFORD: Yeah, it's always kind of tough



because it depends on -- specifically that Sunday in Germany, we had to win them all. It also depends on what the score is, where the points are going into Saturday night.

If we need four points to retain or win the Cup, then we're probably top loading, like let's get those points and get it over with. I think the strategy is always -- you always have an idea of where you want your players to be, but if we have a chance to go out there and clinch it quick, let's just send them out and get it done.

I think it all kind of depends on where we stand Saturday night.

Q. Nerves: Six matches, what was your most nervous moment?

ANGELA STANFORD: I think I was nervous, I remember, in Chicago, 2009. This is one of my greatest regrets, also. I was paired with Stacy Lewis, and we were standing there on the tee -- I'm sorry, it was '11. I was nervous in '09 at Rich Harvest Farms, but '11, and it was Stacy's rookie Solheim, and we were deciding on who was teeing off first. I kind of just pushed Stacy to tee off first. That's probably one of my greatest regrets is that I just did not hit that first tee shot.

Yeah, I was nervous there. I learned a lot there. I certainly did not step up to the plate, and like I said, it is one of my biggest regrets.

Q. We've got about 10 months left. You're going to be asked this question, but, Solheim Cup players: Has there been any discussion at all about being paid for the services you perform in a week and this is overseas? You know what happened with the Ryder Cup players. Do you want to share any information about that?

ANGELA STANFORD: Well, I think the beautiful thing about our players is that nobody has ever asked to be paid. Our ladies love it.

I think we understand being a part of the LPGA Tour, we understand what it means to act like a founder. How do you make the game better? Sometimes you don't always get paid for that. But when it comes to Solheim, those ladies love showing up for it.

We get stipends that take care of our families and friends, and I think everybody that goes that week knows that it's for something bigger than just ourselves. We've just never really talked about it. Nobody has ever really brought it up because it's like, we're getting to play for our country.

We're getting to play for each other. We're getting to grow women's golf. We're getting to play on this wonderful stage. Everybody in the world is watching us. We're getting some cool uniforms. We're getting to -- all the great things that come from that week.

Personally, I don't think you can put a price tag on it. Then you would have to figure out, well, how much. So we've never talked about it.

Q. I think Stacy still gives you grief for that moment in 2011, right?

ANGELA STANFORD: I know.

Q. The last time the world saw you, you were on the first tee at the Ryder Cup. I know that you are a student of other leadership, other teams. What were some of the mental notes you made as you watched the Ryder Cup this year?

ANGELA STANFORD: I really paid attention to the captains. I watched how they were moving. I'm very aware -- and Stacy has helped me with this. Stacy has told me that I need to be more aware of when I'm just standing around and need to be aware of how I stand. So I watched the captains, watched the players.

I did talk to Paula and the other assistants afterwards. But more so with Paula in that there were things that I saw that I just want to make sure our team is aware of, just the way we handle ourselves. If things start going south, how do we react to that.

I did watch the American team all weekend, and I was also watching the Europeans, just trying to -- anything I can learn to make us better, I'm trying, and that falls into that every single day. Every single day I'm trying to think of ways that we can give ourselves an advantage.

THE MODERATOR: It was a beautiful last couple days. You got to see a lot of golf. Overall, just again to wrap up, how excited are you for the opportunity you've got coming up next year in September?

ANGELA STANFORD: I was just going to say, are you all sure you don't have any more questions? I could sit here and talk about this all day. I literally could. I love it.

Q. When I looked up your resume, it said in 2024 you announced your retirement. Golfers don't generally announce retirement, professional golfers. The question is are you officially retired? Did you announce that you were retiring? How does a pro golfer evolve into retirement?

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ANGELA STANFORD: I'm still working on that. I think for me personally, I use the word "retire" because in any mind, it was from the LPGA Tour, meaning I felt like I got to a point where -- I think I could compete here and there, but I felt like I was doing a disservice to myself and this tour if I couldn't give it everything I got for four days week in and week out. That's me personally.

My life has changed quite a bit in the last couple years, so just off the course there were things that were more important, and that's fine. I'm at an age where that's okay.

I'd really, really -- you never lose that competitive drive. I'm really, really trying to help grow the Legends Tour. I wish we had some more opportunities.

I love going out and competing there. That's been awesome. So that competitive drive doesn't go away.

But for me personally, I just out of respect for the Tour and the high level of golf, I just felt like it was time for me to move on, and I wanted to be Solheim Cup captain and I wanted to be -- I'm kind of one of those all-or-none people, and I knew to win, to give ourselves a chance to win overseas, I have to be 100 percent committed to this. Honestly, I have not regretted that because it is going to take everything I have and everything we have to give it our best shot in Europe.

THE MODERATOR: It's going to be a great week in Europe. Thanks so much, Angela. We'll see you next year.

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