

# Meijer LPGA Classic

Wednesday, June 12, 2024

Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA

Blythefield Country Club

## Nelly Korda

### Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: All right, pleased to be joined by Nelly Korda. Before I open it up, just in general for you, what's it like to be back in Grand Rapids?

NELLY KORDA: I love Grand Rapids. So many great memories here, and it's actually one of my favorite places to come and compete. I feel like the whole town gets behind this event.

And, yeah, just I know that the weather is supposed to be nice, and that makes playing it that much better.

**Q. Birdies are available here; scoring is always low. You have to go out there and get them. What's the freedom as a player to be on offense at a golf course like this?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I don't know the weather they've had here, but not getting to play last year, there is no first cut anymore. The greens seem a lot bouncier this year.

I just feel like it's playing a little bit different than it was maybe compared to the other years. But, yeah, I mean, majority of the par-5s are gettable with irons here. And then it's a type of golf course that even if you make a bogey, you know that there is a possibility to make a birdie on the next hole.

So you definitely have to be a little bit more aggressive out here, or you can be aggressive.

**Q. As you look at your stats and your great success this year, you feel like there is any part of your game that's just been a little above the rest?**

NELLY KORDA: I mean, I think overall I'm always just trying to improve every aspect of my game. There is some weeks that are better -- some parts of my game is better than the others.

Overall if my ball striking isn't that good that week, I've had a good week on the putting green, too where I've made more putts than maybe I would when I've hit it really close.

So feel like this year my game has been pretty balanced when I've played and gone into events. Overall when I'm looking at my game, I'm trying to improve everything overall.

**Q. You've had so much success here and everybody talks about coming to this event. This is one of the marquee events. What makes it so special for you and all the golfers?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I've had success the past few times I've played. Last time I played I lost in a playoff. It was one of my first events coming back from an injury.

And then the year before that, I won.

And then obviously I think just the -- how I said the entire town gets behind this event. I know last year they had record-breaking attendance, and hopefully they break that record again this year.

It's just really nice to see everyone in this town support this event.

**Q. How much do you notice the fans and crowds that are out? Is it really much more noticeable than another average tournament?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, you notice them. I try to kind of keep my head down and focus on what my process is and what I'm about to do. You still notice them. You still hear them cheering you on. It's really nice to hear.

**Q. Can you talk about overall having a very good season, six wins. How are you feeling as you're preparing and getting ready for this tournament right here?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I feel good. You know, I've had a pretty good year obviously. I've just kind of stuck to my process and I've stayed in my bubble in a sense when I'm at tournaments.

My team plays a very big aspect in that. They travel with



me week in, week out, and I'm very grateful for them, getting to live this life with them. They kind of keep me grounded.

**Q. Obviously had some time off. Have you been practicing a little extra? Catching up on rest? What has it been since the U.S. Open?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, took a couple days off after the U.S. Open and got straight back into it, hit the gym, hit the golf course. Your typical off week, yeah.

**Q. And one last question: Obviously you won the championship here a couple years ago. When it comes to preparing for this, do you always look back and think about what made you do so well in winning that championship and you want to implement that here and even success over the last couple years?**

NELLY KORDA: No, I mean, you try not to kind of compare. I think it's very bad because, one, the course conditions can be different, the weather can be different.

There is a lot of variables that can play a part. In year it's just different. So when you compare, it's never going to kind of turn out the way you want it to be. It's just going to add more pressure on yourself to try to mimic the thing you did before instead of owning what you have right now and taking it a shot at a time.

**Q. You and Leona have always kind of gone toe to toe in this tournament. How exciting is it that you get to start together tomorrow and what's your relationship?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, Leona and I have gotten to play a couple times together here. Kind of coming down the stretch the two years that we were in the hunt.

Then we've also got to play against each other in Solheim Cups and other events. So she's a very fiery competitor, such a good competitor. It's always nice to play with someone like that.

**Q. Just what are some of the biggest challenges that this course presents?**

NELLY KORDA: I would say that it's a little tight off the tee. The rough is pretty thick this year. If you're in the rough off the tee it's quite tough to get it on like a -- get it on a bouncy green and for it to hold the green.

Again, the rough is pretty thick around the greens, too, so making sure you're striking the ball well is going to be a good key out here.

**Q. When you won this event three years ago I guess it's been now.**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

**Q. You mentioned that on Sundays when you're in the final group sometimes you forget to smile because you're so zoned in on perfection.**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

**Q. How do you go about changing the process -- what was the process of changing that mindset over the years to not try to be as perfect?**

NELLY KORDA: I think perfect is just impossible. You're going to drive yourself mad trying to be perfect, so you just got let it go.

I just learned that you make more mistakes when you're trying to be perfect, so I think the way I try to look at it is it's okay to make mistakes and it's okay to bounce back.

But if you're scared to make mistakes you're bound to make even more mistakes.

**Q. Do you look at that win here as kind of a turning point for you mentally in that process?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah. I mean, I played in -- 2021 I won at Lake Nona and played pretty solid golf up until U.S. Open where I missed the cut.

Then just had myself a reset before this event. Didn't really have any expectations going into this week. Just wanting to go out and have fun, because I felt like when you're struggling, that happiness is in a sense drained from you because you're just trying to play so well out here against all these girls.

And I just told myself, like I'm doing what I love for a living. Like I'm going to amazing places, playing in front of amazing crowds. There is no point to be miserable out there. Go out and have fun. Even if you're not playing well.

Sometimes you have to build a bridge and get over it. Yeah, then the next week I won my first major and it was obviously a dream come true. I do love competing here.

I think, yeah, it gave me a little bit more pep in my step I guess, this win.

**Q. Just looking at this season alone, what do you feel**

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**has been your biggest area of growth personally through it all?**

NELLY KORDA: Personally, I think mentally I've just grown the most. Having Jamie in my corner as well. He's helps me a lot in my game, but he has helped me a lot mentally as well playing in the weather I've played in and everything that I've kind of gone through this year.

I think my main growth has been maybe mentally and what I've kind of took on.

**Q. Was there something he said specifically after the first round when you guys were on the range? You were kind of sitting on the ground. Was there anything he said that sticks out for you for that, for getting past that first week?**

NELLY KORDA: What week? U.S. Open?

**Q. At the Open, yeah.**

NELLY KORDA: No. I mean, there is not much you can say at that point. That was just -- it was one hole, right, that kind of messed up my entire tournament.

But all he was saying is keep being positive, keep fighting. He didn't have to say that. That's just who I am. I'm always going to fight until my last shot. I'm going to try and see if there is a way I can make the cut.

At the end of the day you have to kind of say it's what it is. I'm human and I make mistakes. You know, it was just a crazy thing that happened.

**Q. One hole aside from the U.S. Women's Open, how do you assess your game and how you played for those two days?**

NELLY KORDA: How do you reset my game?

**Q. No, how do you assess your game outside of that one hole?**

NELLY KORDA: I mean, I'm not going to say that I was happy with the way I played. I was happy with the way I fought. I fought really, really hard to make the cut.

I think that was probably the proudest I was of myself. Actually throughout all of the events I've played in year, is how hard I fought after making that 10 on the par-3.

Yeah, I knew I needed to work hard. Like last week, it's hard when you have only one week off and you kind of want to put a little bit more of a grind in your game. It's

tough to do that with one week because you don't want to burnout, but you do want to put in a little bit more time.

Last week was a good week. At the beginning of the week I just kind of decompressed, got my mind off golf, and then really worked on all aspects of it.

**Q. In kind of a weird way, does it make you even more motivated when you've had so much success but then something like that happens and you've got something you can focus on and gives you an edge?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I mean, I love when golf humbles me. Not to that extent, but I do love when golf humbles me. Sometimes you ride the highs, but it's always in a sense nice to know where you can improve, too.

**Q. You mentioned that this course is playing different this time.**

NELLY KORDA: Uh-huh.

**Q. Is that going to make things a little more difficult, because so many golfers like you have played here so many times and knew the course so well?**

NELLY KORDA: It can, yes. Just all depends on like the weather out here, the bounces that you get, pin positions. There are just so many variables that play to how tough the golf course will be playing.

Yeah, I've definitely seen a difference in there not being first cut, so you don't have that cushion of that first cut. It just rolls straight into the rough or you're on the edge.

I've definitely seen an improvements in the rough thickness this year. The greens I wouldn't say are fast, but they're bouncy. They're po greens, yeah.

**Q. We know you like the fans and the weather. What about the course itself do you like?**

NELLY KORDA: I mean, I love the golf course. You can be aggressive out here. You can be aggressive on the par-5s. I just feel like I can play my game.

**Q. Is there a little more pressure when you know everyone else is also playing aggressively and making these birdies?**

NELLY KORDA: I feel like if I think that way then I'm looking too much outside my bubble and not focused on my process and what I'm trying to do.

**Q. It is an Olympic year.**



NELLY KORDA: Yeah.

**Q. How much are you looking forward to that and does this tournament help you prep at all?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, I don't think it'll help me prep at all, but getting to represent my country is always a huge honor.

I never say anything is a done deal until I'm officially on the team or on the Olympic team, but getting to do that in 2021, represent my country in Japan, was such an amazing experience. I'm always hopeful to do it again.

Clinching my spot at the Solheim Cup this week was also a dream come true, yeah. That'll always be fun to hopefully maybe get the Cup back.

**Q. Is it exciting knowing you've been there, you've medalled, and now you know what to expect if you go back?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah. I mean, it's a completely different golf course, different country. So not really -- I don't really know what to expect, but I'll be proud wear red, white, and blue.

**Q. Obviously clinching Solheim Cup, no one asked what earlier, but I just want to wrap with that one. When you got the call that you had clinched so early, what were the emotions you had and how are you feeling about being able to represent the U.S. come September?**

NELLY KORDA: Yeah, Solheim Cup is such a special week. The atmosphere is unbelievable. Getting to represent my country, getting to play for the girls, my captain. You know, I have been -- I'm 0-3 for Solheims, so hoping the fourth one is coming back to the U.S.

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