

Solheim Cup

Tuesday, September 19, 2023

Andalucía, Spain

Finca Cortesin

Team USA

Ally Ewing

Lexi Thompson

Danielle Kang

Press Conference



FINCA CORTESIN
ANDALUCÍA, SPAIN

2023

THE MODERATOR: Thank you everyone for your patience as we were dealing with some technical issues, but welcome, everyone, to the 2023 Solheim Cup. I'm joined here with Ally Ewing, Lexi Thompson, and Danielle Kang of the U.S. team. I'm going to kick things off with a question for each, and then we will open it up to the room.

Ally, welcome to Spain for your third Solheim Cup. In 2019 you took Stacy Lewis' place to play in your first Solheim Cup and this year she's your captain. How does that feel for you and how excited are you to be under her captainship this year?

ALLY EWING: Yeah, it's great. Obviously when Stacy was announced, huge respect for her as a competitor, as a golfer, obviously. Her resume speaks for itself. It's just an exciting time. We've got a great team and a great list of captains here that are going to work really hard and do our best to represent the U.S. and try to get the Cup back.

THE MODERATOR: Amazing. Lexi, this will be your sixth Solheim Cup appearance. Can you tell us what it means to you to have qualified for the Solheim Cup so many times and what your expectations for your sixth playing are this year?

LEXI THOMPSON: It means the world to me to be able to play on the Solheim Cup. I know every year that I know it's that year playing it's my No. 1 goal to be on that team to be able to represent my country. It's my favorite event by far. There's nothing like waking up, putting country's colors on, and going to represent and be alongside a team at that.

THE MODERATOR: Danielle, you're also a veteran on the team this year, and I know you love representing your country. How much do you love representing your country and being here on the Solheim Cup team?

DANIELLE KANG: Well, anytime you get to wear the red white and blue and represent your country at any level of competition it's a big honor. My entire team, and I can speak for, you know, everyone that we come out here to represent it as best as we can and we've been preparing for this, so just excited.

THE MODERATOR: Amazing. If you have questions please raise your hand.

Q. Ladies, I'm just curious if you could share your thoughts since Stacy's not using the pod system this year, your impressions on the new strategy and what your thoughts are since you've all played under the pod system before.

ALLY EWING: Yeah, I think it's a new approach. It's a great approach. I think, if anything, it's going to bring us together. It doesn't really cluster us or categorize us to certain people that we're around, for the most part, so I think we're going to see even more strength in the team room as an aspect of it. So I think it's going to be nothing but great for us.

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, I agree. Not that the pod system was a bad thing by any means, but I think Stacy has a great strategy in mind and just all keeping us together and not really breaking us apart. We all get along very well and we know each other's games well too, so that always helps. But I definitely believe that Stacy knows what she's doing, so we're excited for the week.

DANIELLE KANG: It's been pretty cool. When I'm late, I have everybody calling me instead of my pod, so we're good. (Laughing.)

Q. Lexi and Danielle, Stacy said that while making your picks, that the team was going to rely on you two heavily for your experience. Does it change your mindset at all for the week coming into that with that new leadership role and what's it like to embrace that and have it for this week, especially having five rookies on the team?

LEXI THOMPSON: I believe that we're all leaders in our



own way. We come into this week and we bring a strength of ours to the whole team and the captains and assistant captains. It's not somebody overpowering the other. It's all about just coming together as a team.

DANIELLE KANG: I didn't really quite understand the question.

Q. What's it like to embrace that leadership role on the team with so many rookies on it?

DANIELLE KANG: Oh. I didn't even know we had that many rookies. I think, if you look at it, I mean, throughout the entire year for two years everyone plays their own game and competes against each other, competes against the field, but rookies or veterans or not, I think our team is really strong and they have been playing really great golf. We've got multiple major champions this year.

I mean, it doesn't matter if you've been a rookie or a third time on Solheim Cup, they all act like their own leaders and they know how to approach their own games, and I think it's very inspiring to see, no matter who it may be, so I really get inspired by my entire team.

Q. Danielle, I think we're all interested to know if you've, A, got your golf clubs; and B, if you could run us through the scenario and don't leave out any of the gory details.

DANIELLE KANG: It's been an adventure. If it wasn't a dramatic entrance, it wouldn't be my life, so it's okay. It's all good. My captain, Stacy, has been absolutely incredible. The entire U.S. team has been helping me. Everyone's on top of it. They have been tracking my bag to Vegas to Amsterdam to my sponsor Titleist is making up a second set. That's flying in temporarily tonight, and then Ping has made me a temporary set today that I got to play with, so we can at least test out the golf course. It is what it is. You just kind of roll with the punches. It's life, it's golf, you know, it's okay.

Q. Are you saying you still don't have them?

DANIELLE KANG: No, sir, I still don't have them. But I'm here and we're good. (Laughing.)

Q. Is it true you travel with your putter, with a putter with you?

DANIELLE KANG: I do travel with my putter separately, yes, in a rifle case, because my putter is a different model, so we don't have the bending machine for it, and it bends a lot during travel, so I put it in a separate case to travel with because I don't have the means to get my putter checked

every week and, yes, the clubs do get bent on the plane and, yes, they matter, to all the people wondering.

So thankfully the putter didn't get lost. But it's okay. The other 13 are coming. It's coming. We have faith. Stacy is on it. I mean, she's putting out fires, and I'm pretty sure I'm the only one causing fire right now.

Q. Tell us your thoughts on the course so far.

ALLY EWING: It's great. It's obviously in spectacular shape. I don't know how much play there's been recently or, you know, over the course of the year, but it's in really good shape.

It's really hilly. You're going to hear that from a lot of players and caddies. So the recovery off the golf course is going to be really important. It's a long week as it is, so taking care of our feet and our bodies off the course is going to be really important.

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, the course is unbelievable. It's in great shape. I don't know if there's been much play, but I feel like I'm the first divots out there. But it's a tricky golf course. At the same time, it's a really good layout and risk-reward golf course as well. But I think we're all very excited to go out there. It's not an easy walk, so making sure that we pace ourselves along the week.

DANIELLE KANG: The course is very grainy. I'm from the West Coast, so I'm not really used to this much grain. But yeah, so far what I've noticed, the course is grainy, there's a few holes that are very undulated with greens, so the greens speed varies a bit here and there. I think you're just going to have all around good golf all the way to tee to green. I see how they kind of set it up. Suzann kind of likes the really, really long tough holes to be about the short game and then the short holes where you have to capitalize, so I can kind of see how she did that, and it's going to be a fun match.

Q. Lexi, 72 holes stroke play is obviously a different beast to match play. I know you probably haven't been playing as well as you might like, but just wondering how does that change your mindset going into this? Does it ease the pressure a little bit knowing that it's match play and a bad hole is just one hole or is it more responsibility having to maybe try not to let down your partner or support your partner?

LEXI THOMPSON: Well, I don't think match play has anything to do with it. Match play, stroke play, you still have to play your game and golf. But, yeah, might not have been the year that I wanted, but this is this week. I'm not focusing on the past. I'm here with my team this week

and going to represent my best.

DANIELLE KANG: It's like Justin Thomas said, any shot, any moment can change your game. Can't rely on an entire player's career on just how she's been playing lately, right?

Q. I guess for all three of you, if you're interested in answering. This is the first time we've really had statistics to kind of look at when y'all are building up your partnerships. How cool is it, to the three of you have played in an era of pre-statistics, to now come to a Solheim, have that information to rely on and help build your all's routine matchups this week.

LEXI THOMPSON: Yeah, it's something I guess that we haven't really done in the past. I think it's a great source for us that we've been able to really look on in being able to team up our matches. Not that we've done that, but we kind of have a really a better idea about it. So I think it's definitely a little bit of an advantage, for sure. We're pairing up the best that we can with whoever we're paired with.

DANIELLE KANG: I actually really like it because when Stacy calls me and tells me that my make percentage is whatever, I'm like, Yeah, great. My up-and-down rate is -- it's like Danielle, your percentage of whatever, whatever, and then she gives me the stats, and I go, Numbers don't lie, man. One plus one equals two. I love it. Just keep telling me my stats.

So I personally like it and I can really trust numbers and factual things on that. So I've really appreciated the statistics coming in.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Well, thank you so much, ladies, and good luck this week.

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