

Solheim Cup

Wednesday, September 20, 2023

Andalucía, Spain

Finca Cortesin

Team Europe

Linn Grant

Caroline Hedwall

Maja Stark

Press Conference



FINCA CORTESIN
ANDALUCÍA, SPAIN

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THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon. We're joined by Team Europe's Linn Grant, Caroline Hedwall, and Maja Stark. Starting off with questions from me before we open it up to the floor, and as usual, any questions in the chat, just put them in and I'll ask them as we go.

Caroline, first off, first Solheim Cup since 2019. How do you feel to be back on the European team?

CAROLINE HEDWALL: Well, it's just so much. I mean, it's such a great atmosphere and we're having a lot of fun on the team as well, so just a pleasure to be here. I'm just really looking forward to the golf starting on Friday.

THE MODERATOR: How have you found the course when you've been out there playing it?

CAROLINE HEDWALL: I mean, it's a tough walk for everyone, especially the caddies, but it's in great shape. I mean, it's a really good test, a good golf course. So, yeah, I'm looking forward to it.

THE MODERATOR: Linn, a rookie on the team this year after a phenomenal first two years as a professional. How are you finding it this week being on Team Europe for the first time?

LINN GRANT: Obviously, really excited. Like Caroline said, I think we have a great team. We're all trying to become one united group. I think we have a lot of fun and I think the week is just going to be more and more fun for every day.

THE MODERATOR: Maja, same question for you, how are you finding it as a rookie this week in Spain?

MAJA STARK: It's a lot of fun. It feels like you're not any different than the other people on the team. Yeah, it's just

fun. I don't know what it's usually like, but this has been great.

THE MODERATOR: Obviously you've all played pretty well in Spain before. Caroline having won here last year in the Spanish Open not too far away from here. How good is it to be in a country where you've done well previously?

CAROLINE HEDWALL: Well, just coming back to this area obviously it brings back great memories. So, no, I'm feeling really comfortable and, like I said, I like the course a lot and it's just great to be here.

THE MODERATOR: Linn also played consistently in Spain. I know you have lots of friends in the area. How many people are going to come out to watch this week?

LINN GRANT: I think we're going to have a lot of Swedes, a lot of Spaniards, but there's going to be a lot of Scandinavians for sure. We've already seen a lot of them out there cheering us on already which is really exciting.

THE MODERATOR: Maja, obviously your second LET win came in Spain, northern Spain, but still how much are you looking forward to this week and having your family here?

MAJA STARK: I'm really looking forward to this week. I haven't really thought about it that much, the fact that my family is going to be here. I don't know when they get here. But on Friday, for sure they will be here. I haven't really thought anymore about that.

THE MODERATOR: I'll open up the floor to questions.

Q. Maja, obviously you got to have that experience alongside Caroline at the International Crown earlier this year. Going into that experience and now going into this experience, what did you maybe learn at Harding Park that you're applying to this week about being a rookie and in this scenario?

MAJA STARK: I didn't really do anything different than I have before when I played match play. I think, yeah, I just learned what I usually learn during a round of golf, I guess. I didn't really see it as anything different.



Q. Caroline, there's so many Swedes on this team this year. Just to see kind of the growth of Swedish golf, what does that mean to you to have this many Swedes on a Solheim Cup team and see how golf in Sweden is growing with the two players sitting next to you?

CAROLINE HEDWALL: We've had a lot of Swedes playing on a Solheim Cup for European and we have a lot of them coming up as well. We have three Swedes on the Junior team now, so I mean, I think we're just going to keep coming, to be honest.

Obviously, going back for me, I watched a lot of Swedes play in Barsebäck in 2003 and it was always a dream after that to play Solheim, and I think Linn and Maja have a similar experience watching it on TV and just wanting to be there one day. So obviously it helps a lot to have a lot of role models to look up to.

Q. Linn and Maja, you have a great history together in foursomes. How much have you lobbied Suzann to try to play together this week?

LINN GRANT: I think we've just been letting her know that we've been playing really well together and we're comfortable with each other, especially coming into a situation like this where it's new. We're going to be nervous. It's going to be a lot of pressure on our shoulders. We just said that we're comfortable together if she wanted to play us together.

Q. What's a fun memory that you've had playing in a foursomes match together?

MAJA STARK: One was brought up yesterday that was pretty stupid. We played the European Championships and we played in the final against England and we were leading by a lot, and then we switched the order around because we -- I think we won a hole pretty -- like, we had just hit our tee shot and then we pretty much got the hole straight after that, and then I teed up after that as well, so we just said during the rules meeting yesterday, remember to not do that again. That's probably the dumbest memory. But there's been a lot of good ones.

Q. What's the most nervous that you've ever felt on a first tee and do you think it will be the new experience this week? Do you think you'll be the most nervous you've ever been?

MAJA STARK: The most nervous I was was the Junior Solheim in 2017, and I remember I just hit this really hard high-five with my playing partner, so I couldn't feel my right hand either. We got the older players coming down from

the clubhouse as well to watch us tee off. I couldn't feel my hands on the tee shot. But it was fine. It went well.

Q. Linn?

LINN GRANT: Probably playing in, like, any other team events I've been in. I think it makes a huge difference knowing that you're playing for so many more people than yourself and you want to do good for not only yourself, but for the team and your captain and for the crowd coming out to watch. So I think this will hit the top of my list when we're done after the week.

THE MODERATOR: You've all played in the Ping Junior Solheim Cup before. Obviously the Europe juniors won back-to-back yesterday for the first time ever. Just talk to me about that tournament and how much it meant to play in that, and obviously, for Linn and Maja, it was only six years, to be here now and, Caroline, obviously you've played in so many Solheim Cups since then.

CAROLINE HEDWALL: Yeah, being a junior, I mean, that was a big goal for me to qualify for the Junior Solheim Cup when I was -- I think I was 17, and just to get my European bag with my name on it, that was huge. I mean, it's basically the same experience, like the big Cup. So it was just great preparation for the big one. I think everyone that's played the Junior Solheim they've loved it, like when you play the big one.

LINN GRANT: Yeah, I think the best part for me playing in Des Moines in '17 was probably coming out on the first day of the real Solheim and watch and kind of see that it's not that far away and could potentially be here one day. That kind of sparked, like, some more motivation. I think that's really good with the whole event.

MAJA STARK: I think it was very important for me to actually see that the older players mess up too, because when you see it on TV, you only see the good shots, pretty much. So it was nice to see some bad shots and some rage sometimes. It was, yeah, good to see that -- yeah, like Linn said, we weren't too far away.

THE MODERATOR: Finally, from me, just how excited are you for the next two days? Obviously you've got lots of obligations, but how much fun are you having as a team this week?

MAJA STARK: What was the question?

THE MODERATOR: How much fun are you having?

MAJA STARK: Oh, a lot. It's been great. Obviously, coming in here being a rookie and not really knowing

everyone I was pretty nervous. But it's been great. Everyone is so nice and it's, yeah, just very relaxed, I think.

CAROLINE HEDWALL: Well, like we said before, I think we just have a great atmosphere in the team room and everyone's just enjoying it. I mean, it is a busy schedule, so you just have -- having fun helps a lot. So, no, we'll have a great week together, I'm sure.

LINN GRANT: Yeah, I mean, even though we have a busy schedule I think you get the feeling in the team room that it feels like everyone's a part of the team and doing their part. It's not an obligation to be here or an obligation to do other things. At the end of the day, we're just sitting around and having a good laugh and enjoying it.

Q. Maja and Linn, as rookies, what's the best piece of advice that you received about being a part of this experience?

MAJA STARK: I haven't gotten any advice. Well, I just heard that we won't have time to do much this week that we want to do.

LINN GRANT: I think the best advice is probably just be like, around the players who have been here before and kind of take it all in, see what they do, ask the questions you need. Like, just to be able to be on the team for a week and get closer to all players that have more experience than yourself, and maybe, you know, get close enough to actually ask the questions that you always wanted to ask. I think that's going to be a huge part of this week for me.

Q. What's one question that you've always wanted to ask?

LINN GRANT: Just like being a rookie, I mean, even though you try to do everything as good as you can I think there's always going to be mistakes. It's always going to be, you know -- and I think a lot of players makes the same ones. I think if you can kind of get your head around working it out before anything too stupid happens I think that's good.

Q. For Caroline, you've been a couple of these teams over the years. Pettersen said that she thinks this is the strongest team. I'm curious your thoughts on how you feel like this team compares to others that you've been on?

CAROLINE HEDWALL: Can you repeat? I didn't hear the last part.

Q. How do you feel like this team compares to the

others that you've been on throughout the years?

CAROLINE HEDWALL: Well, it's just, I feel like it's just a super strong team. I mean, we've had so many Europeans doing so great this season, Maja, Linn, Celine and Charley. It just seems like a lot of the European players are in form. I think it's going to be a great match.

THE MODERATOR: Perfect. Thank you. Good luck this week.

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