

USGA Media Conference

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USA

Mike Whan

Randy Oostra

John Bodenhamer

Mollie Marcoux Samaan

Juli Inkster

Danielle Kang

Megha Ganne

Press Conference

STU FRANCIS: Good morning. On behalf of everyone at the USGA, thank you for joining us here today. We appreciate so many of you making the trip to New York City to celebrate with us on this very special day.

For more than 75 years, the U.S. Women's Open championship has been the one that has led the way, the one that players want to win, the one that is life changing to win, and the one providing places that the women want to play and the fans want to watch and attend.

Today I am very excited to welcome everyone here and those watching virtually as the USGA announces its plans to elevate the championship and the women's game to new heights. Thank you.

(Video played)

THE MODERATOR: Please welcome USGA CEO Mike Whan.

(Applause)

MIKE WHAN: I like that fist pump, Juli. This is going to be a fist pump moment today.

First, thank you and welcome to the first USGA press gathering of 2022. And I think the first time I've been at a press gathering sitting behind the podium that says USGA, so big day for me as well.

I wish we were here under better times, when masks and vaccination cards and boosters are a thing of the past. But



unfortunately, as we all know, we didn't get that lucky, and mother nature decided she really didn't want us to have this meeting either, with six inches of snow here in the city this morning.

Looking around the room, for those of you who traveled, many from all over the country, thanks for making this trip. I know it wasn't easy. For the 1,500 or so watching us online, thank you for finding your way to a computer because that's probably not as easy anymore either. You've had enough Zoom calls in your life. But I'm glad you added us to your Friday.

About 127 years ago, as Stu said, the USGA got started in the city of New York. And its very first year of championships, 1895, it hosted the Men's U.S. Amateur and the Women's U.S. Amateur. And you might think today in 2022 that's obvious, right? There was a men's amateur and a women's amateur. I'm pretty sure that wasn't obvious in 1895 in any of the courses they walked in to talk about.

So I've got to believe, in fact I will believe, that the USGA understood its role, its responsibility in growing this game from the very first day and making sure that women were part of that growth.

In July of last year, 126 years later, a highly caffeinated guy walked into the building for the first time, and I made a promise to the executive committee that brought me in and to the staff that was allowing me to be there that I'm always going to respect -- in fact, I'm going to cherish the history of this incredible organization.

I'm a golf kid. I started cutting greens and changing pins, if I was really honest, edging bunkers at a pretty young age. So this game is important to me. It's been part of my life. And I don't ever want to forget the organization that put golf in America on this stage.

But what I said to the committee and what I said to the staff is let's love our history, but let's not be afraid to make a little history too because sometimes when you love your history, it's hard to step away and make a little bit more. And today this morning, here in New York, we're going to do both. We're going to respect 75-plus years of the U.S. Women's Open, and we're going to make a little history at the same time.



Because today we're announcing for the first time in our 127-year history, we're adding a presenting partner to the U.S. Women's Open, first USGA Championship ever. Starting in 2022, this championship will be the U.S. Women's Open presented by ProMedica. And I'm going to talk a little bit about ProMedica, and Randy, my buddy from ProMedica, is going to talk about it too.

I'm just going to address the elephant in the room. I mentioned this to a number of people who said, really? You're adding a presenting partner to the USGA? That must have been uncomfortable. It was. That must have been uneasy. It was. But if it's not uncomfortable and if it's not a little bit uneasy, you're not making history. You're not pushing the envelope. You're not asking yourself how high is up?

So we did. We got together, and we started saying what if? And the answer came back pretty clear. Only if, only if we find a partner that is focused on mission, that's mission driven, value driven, that will help us deliver what we're all about, which is greater opportunity, greater dreams in this game, especially for young girls all around the world.

Internally -- I didn't plan to talk about this, but you guys know that happens a lot -- we talk about the three Ps. We talk about purpose. We talk about places. And we talk about purse. This championship, we want to have an even greater purpose in what happens inside the ropes and what happens outside the ropes. We want to take this championship to the places that young girls dream about today and will dream about 20 years from today. And we want to create a purse that captures your attention at the same time and sends a message to young girls all around the world that this is a pursuit, a career I want to follow.

When I first met Randy and the team at ProMedica, I did what I do a lot. Those of you who work with me know this. When I left the meeting the first time, I was on a plane. I wrote down -- I try to write down two sentences generally that captures the moment, the memory, the people that I met. And I wrote one sentence, and Randy will tell your team, I wrote ProMedica is game changing, life changing approach to health and well-being. And Randy will tell you more about that.

I'm counting on it, and I know you are too, that this partnership is going to create game changing, life changing approach to growing the game, especially on the women's side.

As our relationship evolves -- and it's going to be evolving for a long time because we decided to do this over a long term -- you're going to hear more about purpose. I'm sure

Randy will tell you more about purpose today and how we're going to create a greater impact, not just for the athletes that dream and actually achieve this goal, but we're going to create greater impact and purpose outside the ropes for millions of people who may not be as fortunate as some of us in the room today.

Now, if you follow the USGA or if you follow the U.S. Women's Open presented by ProMedica, you probably already heard about some of the greatest places that we're going to take this. We've already announced places like Erin Hills and Pebble Beach and Lancaster, Oakmont, Merion, Pine Needles. These are already some great names. Today we're going to add a few more great names to your list.

Today we're adding Riviera, Inverness, Pinehurst No. 2, and yes back-to-back again at Pinehurst, Interlachen, and Oakland Hills. And I've said this is a lot when I've been on the stage talking about golf, imagine having a young girl who dreams of pursuing a career in the game of golf, and you're able to say to that young girl that your dream should now include names like Erin Hills, Inverness, Oakmont, Merion, Interlachen. That's game changing, the places we play.

Lastly, I want to talk to you about purse. One of the reasons we want to get together was change purpose and impact. One of the reasons was to upgrade places. And the last was to make a lasting impression on purse. In 2022, when we play the U.S. Women's Open presented by ProMedica at Pine Needles, we'll be playing for a purse of \$10 million, which is up from our \$5.5 million purse just last year.

Beyond that, we're making the commitment -- at least I am because I'm saying it to everybody watching. We're making the commitment that \$10 million will become \$12 million over the next few years that follow. So we'll go from 10 to 11 to 12 in the near future. Purpose, places, and purse.

And, because I know you're all going to ask me, there's no Pro-Am at the U.S. Women's Open. I know people are thinking that that's what's coming. Thank you, Randy, and thank you everyone else, that we still want that week of golf to be your week of golf.

I was flying home from Raleigh, North Carolina, on Tuesday. Like a lot of you, stuck on the plane with wi-fi. I started Googling around, and I looked at the 2021 official money list from the LPGA. And three athletes in 2021 earned more than \$1.8 million over the course of their season. Then I thought, well, I won't look at '20 because '20 was an abbreviated year, and I know that because I

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

abbreviated it.

Then in 2019 -- let's take another look. In 2019, three athletes made more than \$1.8 million over the course of the season. Next year, if you're lucky enough to lift that up on a Sunday at Pine Needles, you'll make \$1.8 million that week. And that's the kind of change that I think can not only be lasting for the person who makes it, but can be lasting for the 6-year-old, 9-year-old, 12-year-old, 13-year-old raising that thing and realizing that her dream is different today than it was yesterday.

Most of you who know me know that my office is filled with quotes. I put these quotes on the wall. I don't know why. My dad started sending me quotes when I was in high school and then in college, so I'd keep them and make them into posters. So one of the quotes I really like I actually didn't put on a wall. But when I was at the LPGA offices in Korea, they had put one of these quotes that I said in a meeting on the wall. It meant more to me that somebody else put it up. I wish I'd have said it. It's a Korean proverb that says, if you want to go fast or faster, go alone. If you want to go further, go together.

If you know me, fast and caffeination come together, so I like going fast, but I want to go further. Randy, thanks to you and the team at ProMedica, we have an opportunity to not just go fast but to really go further.

So from the staff members from the USGA you see here today, from the hundreds of staff members that aren't here today, and more importantly, the thousands of volunteers that make up the USGA army and the literally millions of people that follow our championships, we just want to say publicly thank you ProMedica for what you're doing to make this championship more than it was before, and keep pushing us because together we believe we can go further.

Ladies and gentlemen, please thank him with me, thank the president and CEO of ProMedica, Randy Oostra.

(Applause)

RANDY OOSTRA: Good morning. Mike said we live in unprecedented times, and I think we all know that. We think about our last couple years personally and how it's impacted your personal lives, how it's impacted your family lives. Even we think about our work lives and health and well-being and our friends or families.

For a lot of people it's been a time of reflection. We hear about people changing careers, reflecting on priorities and thinking about life purpose. Also, I think one of the positives, it's really created a much more broader awareness of a lot of the social impacts that we see in our

country, especially as it related to COVID, and we've seen again that, depending on who you are, where you were born, the environment you're in, you may be impacted differently by COVID than others.

So it's really with that growing recognition that, if we're going to do things and we're going to live a higher purpose and really make impact, we really need to think about things in a very new and unique way. So really this partnership, the beauty of this partnership -- and Mike already talked about -- is two mission-based nonprofits that are both looking to do great things in their respective areas but again together has a really great opportunity to think about things a little differently.

So I know most of you have never heard of ProMedica. We call ourselves a health and well-being company, and we've done that for the last four or five years. And the reason we call ourselves a health and well-being company is really kind of celebrating a decade of work in the social determinants of health and that fundamentally changed who we were.

We are historically a hospital system. We have hospitals, doctors, insurance. But it was really this work in these social determinants that changed our outlook ten years ago. It's interesting, social determinants are defined as kind of those conditions where you work and play and learn and age, and those things, those social impacts, are much more important on your health and well-being than anything else.

So when we look at that, 40 percent -- as you got up today, 40 percent of your health is related to these social economic factors, 40 percent. 10 percent is related to the environment. 30 percent are health behaviors. 20 percent, only 20 percent is really related to traditional healthcare, having access to healthcare services. Yet in the United States, we spend \$4 trillion, 18 percent of our gross domestic product, and a number that's going to continue to increase, as you look at demographics, and now we're talking about 20 percent of the GDP. Yet largely we've ignored many of these social issues and the impact on health and well-being.

So what are those sort of things? Well, like having access to food. Food is actually a huge health issue in our country. Hunger is a major health issue. We don't define it that way many times, but it is. It's things like financial security, having housing, having utilities, having social connections, behavioral health. People who need childcare services, employment opportunities, education opportunities, training. Some folks suffering from domestic violence, intimate partner violence.



All those sort of things have a huge impact, not only as we've thought about it relative to patients, but also employees. So we've been screening and doing interventions in patients for a number of years, and now we do it for our employees. So those sort of factors are critically important, not only as we think about people in their lives, but also everyday life, especially as we think about our role as employers and the things we do.

The other thing we're really, really excited about is a few years ago we became one of the largest senior providers in the country. So we work in 28 states, and there's a lot of great information outside of traditional healthcare dealing with healthy aging and how we age in a healthy way. So the idea there is our life span is how long we live. Our health span can be quite a bit shorter, how long we live healthy.

There's a lot of science. There's a lot of great information available, not really consumer friendly information, that we can all talk about and use to actually live a much longer, healthier life. So we're really excited for the opportunity to talk about that.

Today Mike talked about kind of this unprecedented partnership. We're very excited that the USGA chose to partner with us. Again, you think about mission-based organizations in nonprofits. You may not put a healthcare organization and the USGA together, but really when you think about the opportunity we have together to not only champion golf, champion women's golf, but also to make an impact in a lot of the communities that we serve, it's really going to be a really exciting time, and again I think it gives us an opportunity to do a lot of different things.

We're really focused on creating more awareness of these issues, especially these social issues. We're very, very focused on thinking about solutions and advancing solutions. Again, a lot of these things that we talk about, like the social determinants of health, they're scaleable. We know they're scaleable. They work. We can make an impact.

Then finally, that's the last goal is to make an impact. We're not doing this to be nice, to educate people. We talked to the USGA, and we go to communities together, and we have one goal. That's a goal to make an impact relative to health and well-being.

We're excited to be the health and well-being partner of the USGA, and it's going to give us a great opportunity to talk about a lot of these issues more deeply, and especially as we go across the country. We're also very, very proud to be the official charity of the USGA Women's Open. That comes alongside the great work the USGA has done from

a philanthropy standpoint for decades and decades, and it comes alongside our ProMedica impact fund, something we launched a number of years ago, an eight-year commitment to raise a billion dollars to work in communities across the United States. And we're well on our way to do it.

And really getting at some of these core issues in communities and really using the opportunity to go to communities together and partner -- partner with companies, partner with communities, health systems, payers, funders, insurance companies. Whoever is interested in making these sorts of impacts are the ones we're really looking forward to work on together.

So really as we think about these sort of things, this is all about addressing these critical social issues together. Again, I think, as we think about our partnership, we're pleased again that the USGA chose to partner with us and really again sharing this commitment to really making a lasting impact in people's lives. Thank you.

(Applause)

(Video played)

THE MODERATOR: Please welcome USGA Chief Championships Officer, John Bodenhamer.

JOHN BODENHAMER: As you heard from Mike, in 1895 it all started, just after our founding, with three championships -- the U.S. Amateur, the U.S. Women's Amateur, and oh, by the way, the U.S. Open was a bit of an afterthought in 1895. It was about the amateur champions.

Really today represents the culmination of a four-year journey to really empower the U.S. Women's Open, and we're really proud to be with you today to share more about that with you.

Four years ago we began to contemplate something that was unfathomable just before that, a presenting partner for the U.S. Women's Open. Thank you, ProMedica, for helping us empower the U.S. Women's Open. It means the world.

It was also four years ago that during a championship committee meeting of the USGA that one of our executive committee members, someone I think you all know, or at least watched on television win multiple major championships, former world No. 1 player Nick Price, one of the greatest individuals I've ever met. We were talking about what are the great places to which we should take the U.S. Open and the U.S. Women's Open?



We had a robust discussion, and Nick looked over at me and just said something very simple that's become a bit of a guiding star for us. He said, John, it's important where players win their U.S. Open, men and women. As I said, we built a strategic approach around that. That is our guiding star.

We created a player relations capability. Jason Gore and Liz Fradkin lead that for us. We're having conversations with players like we have never had before, and we have asked them what are the special places at which you want to win your U.S. Open? And we found, we discovered that the ghosts of the past do matter. Those special moments, they make up something very special in when you do win your U.S. Women's Open at those sites.

So I have the great privilege today to just introduce a few of those iconic venues that are standing alongside all of us to elevate the women's game and host the U.S. Women's Open not only over the next decade, but over the next few decades. Think about that. That's pretty remarkable. Hold your applause until the end. I would like these individuals that I do mention to just briefly stand and let all the folks really know that you're here and have joined us.

Later this year at Pine Needles, we will add the history -- and you think about the honor roll of past champions of the U.S. Women's Open that have come through Pine Needles. Annika Sorenstam, Karrie Webb, and Cristie Kerr. It doesn't get any better. And we'll make more history later this year on that Donald Ross gem. This morning we have one of the principals from Pine Needles with us, Haresh Tharani. Where are you, Haresh? Thank you for all you've done.

In 2023 our national treasure that is Pebble Beach will host its first U.S. Women's Open. We all know Jack's 1-iron, Tom's chip-in on 17, the other Tom, Tom Kite, his chip-in on No. 7, Tiger in 2000, Graeme and Gary. All of that history, and for the first time the U.S. Women's Open will be on the coast in California. This morning we have Vice President and Director of Golf at Pebble Beach, John Sawin, and a new member of their team, Director of U.S. Open Partnerships, Sydney Burlison. I want to make special note of Sydney because she's played in nine USGA championships including the 2003 U.S. Women's Open. So welcome to the team, Sydney.

2024, we'll go back to Lancaster in Pennsylvania. William Flynn gem of a golf course. It really is magnificent. And in 2015 In-gee Chun won in record fashion. The roars you could hear all around the property as tens of thousands of fans lined the fairway as Lancaster, the community embraced the U.S. Women's Open like hadn't been seen in

many years. This morning we have general chairman Jerry Hostetter and his wife Anita, as well as committee member who's leading our media relations, Rory Connaughton with us. If you'd stand just briefly. Good to have you with us.

In 2025, Erin Hills, you saw them on the screen and you see them up there now. In 2017, a number of people in the golf community said Brooks who? When he won the U.S. Open. It wasn't very long that they said that. Everybody knows who Brooks Koepka is now. But we've carved out a wonderful championship partnership as Erin Hills supports the game and the USGA, and we're proud of that. They'll host the U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship later this year. Two members of their team weren't able to be here that are past executive committee members of ours, Jim Reinhart and Irv Fish. I know they're watching. Hi, guys. But with us today, Director of Competitions John Morrissett and Director of Operations Kris Schoonover are with us. Thanks for making the trip from Wisconsin.

In 2026 on the coast, Riviera Country Club, what a magnificent place. Ben Hogan won his first U.S. Open there in 1948, and it will surely be a special moment when we see our first U.S. Women's Open champion at Riviera crowned on that George C. Thomas masterpiece of a golf course. They're not with us this morning. They had travel issues. But president Megan Watanabe, general manager Jim Richardson, and member of their leadership team Mike Leemhuis, I know are watching, because I was texting with them last night and this morning.

In 2027 Inverness Club in Toledo, home of ProMedica. The USGA has a special championship history with Inverness, including four U.S. Opens. In 2029, as some of you recently saw, they will host the U.S. Amateur. Andrew Green has done amazing work to that Donald Ross golf course that you saw showcase itself so brilliantly in the recent Solheim Cup this past fall. Sadly someone who's been instrumental in all of this, John Swigart, isn't able to be with us this morning. I promise he's watching. Hi, John. President of Inverness Greg Kasper is with us. Greg, where are you? It's due largely to your hard work that we're here today. Thank you, Greg.

Now the two-fers. A couple of the two-fers. In 2028 and 2038, Oakmont Country Club in Pittsburgh will host. Simply put, some of the greatest names in championship golf, Hogan, Nicklaus, Johnny Miller, and Paula Creamer in 2010 winning the U.S. Women's Open there. We'll add two more U.S. Women's Open names to that trophy over the next couple of decades. Again, Ed Stack, president, couldn't make it this morning because of travel issues. Again, I know he's watching and rooting us on.



In 2029, as Mike said, the most frequent question we get, are you ever going to do the back-to-backs again? You have the answer now. We'll do that in partnership with our great friends at Pinehurst Resort and Country Club in North Carolina. Martin Kaymer and Michelle Wie did something special in 2014, and we celebrated that and we'll do it again on that Donald Ross masterpiece course No. 2 in partnership with Pinehurst. Here today to celebrate our partnership is my good friend, our good friend Tom Pashley. Right up front. Hi, Tom.

Then in 2030 a special year for the game of golf and the USGA, very special anniversary, the 100th anniversary of Bob Jones' grand slam. We'll take the U.S. Women's Open to a very special place in Minneapolis, Minnesota area Interlachen Country Club, where Bob Jones won his 1930 U.S. Open in historic fashion on the way to the grand slam. And also, by the way, the last time we had the U.S. Women's Open at Interlachen, there was a pretty well struck 6-iron on the last hole by someone named Annika in her final U.S. Women's Open, and she holed it on that 18th hole. It was magical, and I know magic will return in 2030. This morning we have Brian Boll, Carrie Eyler, and General Manager Joel Livingood with us to celebrate today. Thank you.

Then in 2031 and 2032, another double dip from Oakland Hills Country Club in the Detroit area. They've hosted six U.S. Opens, and we look forward to putting two more names on the trophy winning at Oakland Hills and having Women's Open champions tame the monster just like Ben Hogan did in 1951. This morning we have President Rick Palmer, past president Mike Dietz and future Championships Committee member Vince Thomas along with general manager Christine Pooler. Would you stand and let everybody see you.

Then finally, the ghosts do matter. In 2034 and 2046 we'll go back to Merion Golf Club. 2046, I get a lot of questions around 2046 and 2050 for future Opens, but it's going to be magnificent. The ghosts do matter. When you think about ghosts, they do walk those fairways at Merion. Bob Jones winning the grand slam in U.S. Amateur in 1930. Ben Hogan after his car accident in 1950. Just so much more. Lee Trevino throwing the snake out in front of Jack Nicklaus in 1971 and Justin Rose in 2013. Now two more special moments with U.S. Women's Open champions will be there. While John Castleman, club president, Bradbeer, Buddy Marucci, and Paula Kelly because of travel issues couldn't be with us, we know they're watching, and we thank them.

All of these venues are among the most iconic in the game, and we are taking the U.S. Women's Open there, and we are so proud of us. All of us at the USGA present the

heartfelt gratitude to all of you for standing alongside us and really making a strong statement to lift, along with ProMedica, the women's game. Let's give all of them a hand and say thank you.

(Applause)

Now it's my pleasure to introduce Beth Major, our Senior Director of Communications, to undertake our panel. Beth?

BETH MAJOR: Good morning, everyone. I'm not sure if everyone else in the room has done this, but I spent the last few minutes thinking how old will I be in 2046 and will the USGA still let me come and run the media operations? Such an incredible announcement.

Thank you to all of our host venues for your commitment to the Women's Open, to the USGA, and to all of the players who will have the opportunity to play these amazing venues for many, many years to come.

It's my pleasure today to welcome a few very special guests. First I'd like to welcome LPGA Commissioner Mollie Marcoux Samaan.

(Applause)

Five-time USGA champion, including the 1999 and 2002 U.S. Women's Open, Juli Inkster.

(Applause)

Two-time U.S. Women's Amateur champion, Danielle Kang.

(Applause)

And the 2021 U.S. Women's Open Low Amateur Megha Ganne.

(Applause)

Welcome to all of you. Thank you for joining us for this very special day and very special announcement. It's been fun to watch your reactions as you watched certainly your announcement and the videos. And I know each of you have very strong feelings around the U.S. Women's Open.

Can I ask each of you to describe what the U.S. Women's Open means to you. Mollie, can I have you start?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAAN: Listen, as a little girl, I was the little golfer who said four feet for the win for the U.S.



Women's Open. So it's always meant so much to me. This is just a huge moment. I know we're going to talk about that more.

For the LPGA, for me personally, I don't know that people know the impact of something like this for women, women's sports, young girls. I think little girls and big dreams. This announcement today will just further that idea that, if you can see it, you can be it. So this is amazing.

BETH MAJOR: Juli?

JULI INKSTER: It took me a long time to win my first U.S. Women's Open. I think I was 39 when I won my first U.S. Women's Open. I think Johnny Miller told me I should be in the kitchen, which I probably was the next day. Winning at 39 and winning again at 42, it was always the one, being an American winning your National Championship is something I'll always strive for.

I never really accomplished it until I had two kids, and I just think I kind of relaxed and just said, you know, if it happens, it happens. To end up you can go anywhere in the world and say you're a U.S. Open champion, and everybody really gets that. To win two is beyond my dreams. But I'm very happy that I can call myself a USGA Women's Open champion.

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAAN: There's 2046. Good for you.

JULI INKSTER: I think I can do it. Do they allow walkers? I don't know if it's like a cart, but yeah.

DANIELLE KANG: If anyone can do it, Juli can do it.

For me, USGA is very special because funny enough I wasn't raised with a lot of golf history. I started up when I was pretty older, per se, 12, 13. U.S. Open was actually the first tournament I ever competed in, and I didn't know what it was, and I didn't know it was a major. I know that I qualified, and everyone said, are you excited to play the U.S. Open? I said, I don't know what this is. I didn't sign up. My brother did.

But that was the epitome of golf for me. So after the U.S. Open, I thought every golf tournament was the U.S. Open, and it wasn't. So every year I looked forward to any USGA event, any championship that I could play that said USGA on it.

For me, winning the U.S. Open is my dream. It's the apex of my career. I know she's won it a few times (indicating Juli). I'm trying to rub off on her and see if I can get that W at the USGA. I'm just very thankful, and the USGA is part

of history.

I know that I wasn't raised with history of golf, but the fact that I'm part of history now, like today it's historical to have a purse becoming \$10 million for the women's golf. I'm sure Juli wishes she could play for that purse. For the next generation doing our part. That's what the U.S. Open means to me.

BETH MAJOR: Wonderful. Megha?

MEGHA GANNE: I think it was covered pretty well, but what everyone said. It's truly the biggest dream you have when you're starting out playing this game. I just can remember a thousand times that I was up late on a putting green saying that this is to win the U.S. Women's Open. To think that I have so many more opportunities in the future to do it is unbelievable, and it's really what's going to keep pushing me to try my best and keep going.

With everything that's going on, new partners and all these great venues I just saw, increase in purse, it's nothing but really good motivation for all of us future Tour professionals out there.

BETH MAJOR: Wonderful. All of you, all three of you, are very familiar with USGA championships. As I mentioned, we have a total of five Women's Amateur victories and two Women's Open victories. But you've also played in Girls Juniors, Women's Amateur Four Balls, the Senior Women's Open now. Can you talk for a minute or two what is it about USGA championships overall that are so special and make them stand out? Juli, do you want to start?

JULI INKSTER: I think the USGA, they test all aspects of your game not only physically but mentally. It's the history of winning a USGA event, of being a USGA champion.

There's eight tournaments, or ten tournaments, USGA events that you have to peak for. We didn't have the Four Ball. I never played in a Junior. I was fortunate enough to play in a few Amateurs. But the USGA, they always challenge your game or mental aspect of it. It's not easy. You realize when you get done that you've really accomplished something.

So when you actually can say you are a USGA champion, you know that you have reached the pinnacle. I've made so many great friends from P.J. Boatwright all the way up, World Cup, Curtis Cup, being able to play in these USGA events, it's really defined my game.

BETH MAJOR: Danielle?

DANIELLE KANG: I was fortunate enough to play a couple

of the USGA Juniors. One of my biggest losses is after medaling, I ended up losing in the semifinals. I remember Doris Chen in 2010 making this crazy putt, and I was so upset. I never cry more than at USGA events (laughter). Because I'm just so obsessed with wanting to be a USGA champion.

Being a U.S. Women's Amateur champion has followed my career for the rest of my life. The events that you guys hold, the golf courses we get to play, the players that come from all around the world, we get to compete with the best in the world, and this is a National Championship. At every level, the U.S. Girls to the Amateurs to back in the day, they used to have the Public Links, now they have the team events and the best one of all is the U.S. Open.

So for me, just hoping to be an even better champion, to becoming a U.S. Women's Open champion is once again a dream. USGA has put up all that kind of venues, and all of these golf courses, the places we get to play is the most important as well. Making history, being in a historic place. Like Juli, I don't know if Juli is up there, look at that fist pump, we all know where that is, when it was.

BETH MAJOR: Crushing the outfit.

DANIELLE KANG: The '80s, I love it. Your hair, everything.

JULI INKSTER: You dream to look like that, don't you?

DANIELLE KANG: You know what, maybe I want to dress like you on one of the Sundays and just come out with the visor and all.

JULI INKSTER: I probably still have it.

DANIELLE KANG: My hair is halfway there. When I won the U.S. Amateur actually, you were commentating. That was pretty cool to have Juli Inkster commentate. You said you were fortunate enough to play a U.S. Women's Amateur, she won three. I don't know if anyone knows that, she ended up winning them all.

It's just such an honor, a lot of big honor, and blessed being a part of the USGA history.

MEGHA GANNE: Same for me. Juli commentated my U.S. Women's Amateur finals, and that was the highlight of my year. I truly measure my success based on my performance in USGA events and the Junior and the Amateur and the Open.

When I think back on the last four or five years, I don't remember every single tournament I played that well, but I

never, ever forget any shot that I hit at any USGA championship. For some reason, they're so strongly ingrained into my memory. And I just think that's because it's the name associated with it and the champions associated with it and how much history there is.

And the courses we get to play is just so challenging and require the best emotional resilience and physical strength and everything that you can possibly imagine you would need to play well in a USGA event. So I'm really thankful that we have such a big test every year that we get to look forward to.

BETH MAJOR: Megha, I noticed you, while Juli and Danielle were speaking, taking a peek at the photo behind the panel here. Are you used to seeing that yet from those big moments on that huge stage at Olympic? Has that really fully sunk in yet, or are you still really enjoying the moment?

MEGHA GANNE: I was just looking back because usually I'm not next to Juli and Danielle. That's the new part here. I hope someone can take a picture of that.

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: Rising star.

JULI INKSTER: That's right.

MEGHA GANNE: They're two players I've looked up to for a long time. So to be here is a little bit mind blowing, but it's awesome.

BETH MAJOR: Megha, you have been a member of a few programs that are near and dear to the USGA's heart, including the First Tee, LPGA*USGA Girls Golf, Drive, Chip & Putt. As we talk today about impact and how we can have more of an impact on the course and off, can you talk about your journey through the game and what being a part of those programs has meant to you along the way.

MEGHA GANNE: Yeah, I think I've definitely taken advantage of -- every program the USGA is affiliated with, I think I've participated in at one point. They're just really well run organizations, and they just bring a lot of people together.

For me, I've always liked the social aspect of golf, so I loved being part of the First Tee and Girls Golf. So it was a really good time to get to know people my age, not necessarily for the golf part, but just the connections you make, and those are my main friendships that I have today.

The Drive, Chip & Putt was incredible. I don't think people realize how big that is when you're 10 years old. Honestly, the pressure I felt at Drive, Chip & Putt was comparable to

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what I felt on the 1st tee of the U.S. Women's Open, which is incredible to think it is. Any of those kids playing in that, if they can do that, they can do anything.

BETH MAJOR: Mollie, you have been around women in sports for many years, first as an athlete and your years in athletic administration and now Commissioner of the LPGA. Can you talk about what an announcement like today has in terms of an impact for women's sports.

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAN: Yeah, I don't think it can be understated. As I woke up this morning in this beautiful city where I lived for many years and thinking about this day, I just was thinking about an announcement like this has an amazing impact for the LPGA, for women's golf, and really for sports, as you said.

I sent a message to our team saying I hope everyone can take a deep breath today and reflect on what's happening and really feel that sense of pride and the work that they've done to get us to this point. Not just the women in golf, but I sent the same note to the coaches I've worked with and some of the women's sports advocates out there.

I think the idea that our women are playing for \$1.8 million in the first prize or a \$10 million purse, many years ago when I was a kid, that wasn't even something when I was trying to make that putt to win the U.S. Open, I might have even been thinking was I winning the Men's U.S. Open. Now the stakes are so much higher, the impact is so much bigger, so I just don't think it can be underscored how important something like this is.

I really want to thank Mike. I don't think anyone has been a bigger advocate. He'll go down in history as one of the greatest advocates for women's golf and really for women's sports.

For Randy, ProMedica has been a tremendous partner of the LPGA, not just with this announcement today, but supporting our Drive on Championship in 2020, being an anchor partner to the Solheim Cup this year, and I love the purpose and the mission that you care so deeply about.

I just believe that sports has the opportunity to change the world and to change society. An announcement like this just raises the stakes and gives those girls something else to dream about. I think it shows a tremendous amount of respect for the talent that these women have and that our game has.

I just woke up with a huge smile on my face and just can't underscore how important this is to the LPGA to thank all of you, thank Stu Francis, who's been a friend for a number of years, and the entire USGA for the impact they have.

The purpose is really important. So thank you very much, you guys.

BETH MAJOR: Juli, I did a little research, and I think you played in your first U.S. Women's Open in 1978. Does that sound right?

JULI INKSTER: Yes.

BETH MAJOR: The purse that year was \$100,000?

JULI INKSTER: Did I win?

BETH MAJOR: You were too young. You were waiting. But the champion took home \$15,000 with the victory. Can you talk about, particularly given the number of Women's Opens that you've played in and the journey that you've had along the way with the championship, can you talk about the significance of today's announcement overall, but certainly the purse part of the announcement?

JULI INKSTER: Well, I don't think anybody -- I don't know, but I think I can speak -- I don't think any of us really play for the money. We play for being a USGA champion. But as Mollie said, this is a huge step for women's sports all over the world.

Our players work really hard to be competitive, to travel the Tour. We do it in -- they rent their own cars. They do their own travel. They work really hard. Sometimes you feel like you do it and you're not getting rewarded for how hard you work. ProMedica is giving these ladies an opportunity to play for a lot of money and also to have the USGA championship. I mean, this will make or break their year, their life.

And not only that, but going forward this might help not only the LPGA but the WNBA and the tennis and even a volleyball player or field hockey player, lacrosse player. They play because they love it. They play because it's a passion of theirs. To be rewarded financially is a bonus.

I've been fortunate that I've played a long time, and I played because I love the game. I was able to make a living at it. But a lot of these girls, they love the game as much as I do, but they have two jobs. They're trying to play professional golf and trying to support themselves out there. So this is a huge jump for not only LPGA but for women's golf and for women's sports in general.

Thank you, Randy, ProMedica, for really stepping up. It's going to be amazing.

BETH MAJOR: It certainly is. And an equally important part of today's announcement is the incredible venues that



will host the Women's Open over the coming years. Danielle, I'll start with you. What's your reaction to adding Inverness? Somewhere you played in an incredible Solheim Cup last year. Can you talk about what it's like to play the Women's Open at Inverness.

DANIELLE KANG: ProMedica was actually the sponsor of the Drive on I won. Toledo is very good to me. I'm excited to go back there for the U.S. Women's Open. I was saying this is more of a U.S. Open golf course, the way the golf course is run, designed, the venue, the condition of it. Everything just shouts major championships at you.

During the Solheim, it was playing like a major championship. So normally you probably shouldn't go at pins if it's a major, and I couldn't help myself but to go at certain pins with 9-irons. Inverness just shot back at me with bogeys. I thought to myself, if USGA ever hosts a U.S. Open here, I think I know how to play it.

JULI INKSTER: You'll still go at those pins.

DANIELLE KANG: I still will.

JULI INKSTER: That makes you you.

DANIELLE KANG: Hopefully it will work that week.

As Juli said, ProMedica has taken a huge step in raising this purse. In women's sports in general, you can't do it alone. Every golf course, every president that's here, committing to all these venues for the next -- what is it, 20 years? It's incredible. I think we all need to recognize that in growing the game, growing women's golf. So thank you very much for making it a dream.

As once again Juli said, we play because we love it, and money is a bonus at that point. But it's still a job. We talk about whether it's equal pay and what the pay differences are between men's and women's, but for me I want girls to grow up -- in order to look at this job as a dream. U.S. Open itself is a dream come true if you win. Now being able to hoist a \$1.8 million purse along with that trophy, that's pretty cool.

JULI INKSTER: Double dream. Triple dream.

DANIELLE KANG: That's a cool thing we can accomplish. It's something I didn't even know was a possibility at one point, maybe in the future. We're here, especially for now, and I wish you could have played in that. She's going to still play anyways. She'll probably be playing in 2046.

Yeah, so in being part of the history, thank you again. Thank you, Mike Whan.

BETH MAJOR: Juli, you have, as I mentioned earlier, you played in more U.S. Women's Open championships than anyone in history, 35. As such, you've obviously seen a lot of venues over your 35 playings, but I would imagine that two have very special meaning for you, Old Waverly and Prairie Dunes. Can you talk about where you win, what makes it so important, and what in the future, winning at the venues we've announced today will mean to the players in the future.

JULI INKSTER: Prairie Dunes, like her Toledo, Prairie Dunes has -- I won the U.S. Amateur there in 1980, went back 22 years later and won the U.S. Open there. It's a special place to me.

And Nick Price is right. It really matters where you win a U.S. Open. My dream was always to play at Pebble Beach because of the history and I'm from there. I'm just so thankful that these girls are going to be able to experience the history of these venues, you know, Merion, Inverness, Interlachen, Oakland Hills. These are all venues that have made history in the men's game. And to be able to bring the women there -- because you know what, these girls are darn good.

For a fan base to say, oh, my God, the girls are playing Pebble Beach. Let's see how they do. You're going to be impressed. They're going to play very well. I hope the weather is a little foggy and a little breezy, so I hope it shows its teeth. You're going to be impressed how well these ladies play golf. I think it elevates the fan base when we play historic golf courses like this.

So it's huge. And I just thank all you guys, like Danielle said, to really believe in women's golf because they're good, they work hard, and they have a passion for the game. For them to be able to play these iconic courses means a lot.

BETH MAJOR: Juli, you're right. I think we got a bit of a taste of that last year at the Women's Open being at the Olympic Club. When we headed into that week, the buzz around just having the Women's Open at Olympic Club to actually then go and have the championship was icing on the cake. But there was just such a buzz around having the Women's Open at an iconic venue like the Olympic Club.

Megha, you certainly benefited from that buzz. Can you talk about certainly a highlight or two from that week, but also what it means to you to look at the list of courses that you'll be able to contest the Women's Open at over the coming years. You, I know will be there in 2046. I don't know about the rest of us, but I feel good about you.

MEGHA GANNE: The Olympic Club is definitely going to have a special place in my heart for the remainder of my career. I remember right after I qualified I went and texted my friends obviously. The first thing that they said is, oh, my God, you're going to get to hang out at Olympic for a week. It really has a whole different meaning when you play a venue like that.

I know people came up to me afterwards and said they tuned in to the week just because it was at Olympic and they want to see how the women play on that golf course. I think we all did great because some of those scores were really good.

I can't wait to play at such historic courses, and I know that some of them are going to be really rough on me and some of them I'm going to play well on too. I can't wait.

BETH MAJOR: Wonderful. We are very, very excited to see you continue your path, Danielle continue too and eventually claim that Women's Open title, and Juli to continue to celebrate the ones that you've had. A senior Women's Open victory might get you back to Pebble Beach. We'll throw a little additional love your way.

I know we've talked about it a little bit, but I just wanted to, before we close and open it up for Q&A, I did want to one more time talk a little bit about the impact that this partnership with ProMedica will have. Mollie, obviously, they've been so incredibly supportive for the Tour, both for the Drive On Championship and for the Solheim Cup. Can you talk about what makes them such a wonderful partner and why this will be really transformative for the U.S. Open and for the women's game.

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAN: The support they've shown over the years has been truly remarkable. I'm new to this, but I heard about them the minute I took the job. I know when Mike needed help, ProMedica was there to step up and help with the Drive on Championship. Solheim for me, that was my first Solheim Cup as the commissioner, and I was wowed by the environment. It only happens, and really the LPGA only happens with tremendous partners like ProMedica.

I think for our women, when Mike sent them a beautiful e-mail this morning talking about this announcement, just a personal e-mail, and I think the money's great. But I think they love the opportunity to be role models and to be playing, as I said before, with these stakes being so high is really important. I think that they also will feel a tremendous sense of gratitude.

That's one thing that I've found being part of this wonderful

organization is that the women are truly grateful for the support and partnership of so many people around the country, around the world, within the golf industry.

So I think this impact that we can have on society through these partnerships -- the purpose, the places, and the purses all really do matter, as Mike said. Really, again, grateful to ProMedica and to all who support the LPGA. I know the women are going to wake up feeling very happy about the purse, but I think they're all going to be grateful about the role they play as being role models.

BETH MAJOR: When we talk about the partnership, when we talk about Women's Open and ProMedica, it is all about impact, both on and off the golf course. Glad we're starting to get that message out. I think there will be a lot of excitement. Certainly, if we talk about our purpose, our places, our purse, but most importantly ProMedica and everything they will help us do in terms of elevating the championship and the women's game.

Thank you all very much for being here today. Really appreciate you joining us.

(Applause)

We'd now like to open it up for question and answer. I'd like to ask Mike and Randy to come back and join us on the stage again.

JULI INKSTER: Mike, you might have to change your three Ps to four Ps, ProMedica.

MIKE WHAN: I was going to say I'm always up for another P, but that doesn't come out right.

BETH MAJOR: As I mentioned earlier, we have many, many folks joining us virtually today. We'll welcome questions from both inside the room. Also, Julia is manning our WebEx presentation in the back.

Q. First one for Danielle. Mike Whan highlighted purpose, places, and purses. Can you discuss why these are important to you and your peers?

DANIELLE KANG: Oh, the three Ps, the fourth P, ProMedica too, those are all very important aspects in our careers because, once again, the venue is really important. Like Juli said, where you win, and like Mike said, where you win is very important.

You look back on all these golf courses, and there's so much history. Golf is built on history, and we're going to keep building history. With that being said, Pine Needles is a special place because that's my -- I was 14 years old

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when I competed there at the U.S. Open. I had my dad with me. I had my grandparents with me. There's something that you look back, and you're like I really want to win there.

When Juli won the U.S. Amateur and you go back ten years later and you win, it's something you can't write any better in your life. So venues itself is very important.

Also, purse -- I know the social media. I posted on social media that I was doing coin laundry, and I didn't know that was a big deal. We do coin laundries almost every other week, I think. It's just a normal thing. I have to do laundry. I don't have people giving me free clothes every week in and week out. I don't have people traveling with my suitcases. It's real life. We rent cars. I drive myself to golf courses. I have to figure out food. It's out of my own pocket.

With that being said, there are players that make, as Mike said, the top players that make over a million dollars throughout the entire year. During 2020 I won twice, and I think I finished second on the money list and probably made like \$800,000, I think. But you still have to think about the following years, how I'm going to travel 30 weeks out of the year.

Having ProMedica partner with the USGA, increasing the purse to \$10 million, it's not just the tournament, it gives an opportunity and an open door for other tournaments to increase purses and make it better and further our experience and our dream. So I really want to say thank you again for creating the opportunity and opening that door and taking that big step with us.

Partnerships are so important because without partners, like anybody, all the presidents stepping up in hosting these events, this won't happen. It takes more than one person, more than our commissioner, our old commissioner to the new commissioner, all of this, it takes a big team to make our dreams come true in order to create awareness and making everything bigger and better.

It's each of our jobs to come here and to represent what we want to be better. Even Juli, she's been there every step of the way in women's golf in making this better and bigger and creating opportunities. I looked at that as my job. I joke around that Mike called and accidentally answered the phone and ended up being in New York today (laughter).

But to be honest, I'm here because as the next generation, we have to do our part. It's bigger than me, bigger than us. It's all women's sports. And believing in us and raising awareness. So thank you guys so much in creating this

opportunity.

MIKE WHAN: Can we use the term former commissioner as opposed to old commissioner? (Laughter).

Q. Next one for Juli. What are your recollections of Interlachen, especially the raised greens, and also your memories of playing in front of fans there?

JULI INKSTER: It was awesome. We killed it there in the Solheim Cup, for the U.S. Open too. It's a great golf course. It's old school. We're going to get great fans.

Again, it's an iconic venue. When you win at Interlachen, you've accomplished something. So I have nothing but great memories. I'm pretty sure I didn't play the weekend, but I got to play the weekend on the Solheim Cup, so yeah.

Q. Next is for Mollie. What will the impact of today's purse announcement mean to the LPGA as a whole?

MOLLIE MARCOUX SAMAAN: I think we touched on it before, but with this announcement, we'll be over \$90 million in purses for 2022, which is really, if you take a step back again on the women's sports conversation, that's pretty remarkable. I think people should really reflect upon that.

I think all of our partners seem to want to use the LPGA, like Randy, to have impact on the world. And the health and wellness initiatives that you guys put forward and the health determinants are really what we're about, using the platform of the LPGA to change the world for the better.

This announcement just gives us that next step up, that next platform. To be able to go out and say we're playing for \$10 million and we're playing for \$90 million over the course of the season and women can truly live their dreams through golf and be able to maybe not go to coin laundry and be able to have the performance behaviors that they need to reach their peak performance.

That's really what's important because, as Juli said, this is a competitive environment. People are passionate and love what they do. They're playing for that love. But they're also the best players in the world, so the compensation should be commensurate with their talent. I think this is just another step towards that.

Q. For Randy, why did ProMedica want to be part of this, the U.S. Women's Open specifically, and how has that relationship with Toledo and women's golf grown over the years?

RANDY OOSTRA: I think we talked about it already this



morning. We've been very focused and the team has been very focused on the social issues and health and well-being. Really if you think about kind of getting that message out, we talked about it today, you've got to do things differently. You've got to be a bit bolder.

You have to look at different partnerships, unique partnerships. Because really it's a message not only for the things we talked about today and women in sports, but it's also a message for communities.

We kind of look at how you get a message like this out, you can try to stay in very traditional paths, but you're really not getting to the type of people that can make impacts in our communities.

You've got people here from around the country representing great courses from around the country, pride in their communities, pride in what they're doing, great community spirit. Using golf not only to promote golf, promote women, promote their clubs, but also to promote their communities. These are rallying points for communities.

I just look at what Solheim did for Toledo, Ohio. It became a rallying point for the entire community. The community changed. It's like having a party in your backyard. We try to clean the whole place up. It's really a source of pride. It's a source of economic development.

I really think, when you think about this platform, the ability to use golf and to not only celebrate women and celebrate sports, and we talk about equality and inequalities in our country, but also this whole message that, if we can get communities more focused, we can change lives. So from a Toledo standpoint, we've seen golf and the experiences we've had change lives. And I think with this partnership we're going to be able to do great things in a lot of different communities together.

Q. Mike, what does Pinehurst have that allows it to host back-to-back U.S. Opens for the second time?

MIKE WHAN: As an American, I think of Pinehurst as a home. When I'm there, I feel like I'm at the home of golf. I'm the guy that sits in the Carolina Hotel and watch that four-minute video and watch it again for another four minutes because it kind of talks about just golf's beginnings.

It's hard to come into the village of Pinehurst and just not feel it, like the history is just in the air. The fact that we can celebrate the best of the men's game and the best of the women's game in back-to-back weeks, I can tell you, I was the commissioner the first time this went through, and I

was just scared to death. Operationally, I knew it was going to be challenging. So I was holding my breath for most of that time, and it was an absolute home run as only John and the entire USGA can do.

So I'm really excited as a fan to go back to back to back. I'm really excited to -- as most people probably know, we're building a facility in Pinehurst. We're building a new test center there that will open in 2024. We'll have 50 to 60 employees down there. We'll have a welcome center that we can showcase to the million golfers who come there every year a little more about the USGA.

But I've been lucky enough to probably go to Pinehurst 20 or 30 times, and it has a Pebble-like feel to it. When you get off the plane, you sort of take a deep breath and realize you're in golfing country. It's exciting.

Q. Danielle, with your time playing in Toledo and Sylvania, what do the people of the Toledo area mean to the golfer's experience? What has been your experience with the fans there?

DANIELLE KANG: I love fans.

JULI INKSTER: They love you.

DANIELLE KANG: I really love fans. Toledo's fans are so exuberant. They're just excited. During Drive On, I know we weren't allowed to have fans. I'm surprised I won without fans. I just thrive on the roars and the excitement.

I think the preview I experienced for the major that's going to be coming there is the Solheim Cup. The fans were incredible. I never experienced anything like that. My first one was in 2017 at Des Moines, and I thought that was the pinnacle. Then I showed up at Inverness this year, and people were out there at 5:00 in the morning. I go, what are you guys doing there? They're so excited to have us out there and just support. It's a community that's proud to have us and to come support.

The fans really, the community, Toledo, the city itself really, really supports women's golf and golf in general. I'm really excited to get back there for the U.S. Women's Open.

Q. Megha, after a successful 2021, what are your goals for this year?

MEGHA GANNE: So many. I have one thing to say first. I was one of the 5:00 a.m. people at the Solheim Cup, me and the rest of the Junior Solheim Cup team.

DANIELLE KANG: I saw you guys in the stands.



MEGHA GANNE: Yeah, we saw you guys.

My goals are just to -- I have so many things to look forward to. I'm going to be starting at Stanford this fall. I'm playing the U.S. Junior and the U.S. Amateur and hopefully find a way back into the U.S. Open again this year. A lot of huge events for me.

Having those and something like the Augusta National Women's Amateur, I know it's going to be televised. I know my friends and family are going to be watching. It all just feels like steps in the right direction. I'm really grateful the USGA is pouring a lot of support and focus into the future of the women's game because it's what I'm doing. I'm really thankful for it.

Q. Mike, with the USGA's commitment to raise the women's prize money to \$12 million, it's approaching the men's purse, 12.5. When do you expect the two championships will award equal prize money?

MIKE WHAN: I don't know. But I'm glad whoever asked the question is asking the question. I think we always want to keep that on the windshield. I'm not going to kid you, the men's purse is a moving target too, and they'll see increases as well.

I said this while I was commissioner and I'll say this while at the USGA, I'm not sure equal purses is the end all to end all because I'm not sure you couldn't go farther in time, and I won't maybe be alive to see that. But I'm not really sure it's inconceivable. But I think the only way to get to these levels is to have monster increases, not regular increases. I'm really proud to be part of a monster increase.

I think, once you make a monster increase, it's like pulling off a really good flop shot. Once you do it once, you can do it again. Not that I could pull it off. But once you make a monster step, you teach yourself a monster step wasn't as scary as you thought and you look forward to making another one.

I would like to say, D.K., you have perfect posture. I find myself sitting up here trying to keep up with you, and I realize I don't have the core strength for that. I'm learning a lot about myself right now.

DANIELLE KANG: I do have good posture.

Q. Back to you, Mike. Now in your role with the USGA and the LPGA, how important has Toledo been for you and for women's golf?

MIKE WHAN: I went to school in Ohio. I finished high

school in Ohio. So that's an unfair question to an Ohioan. To me, any time I land in Ohio, I'm home.

So it's exciting. I said this the first time Randy and I got together, if I could pick which state you'd be from, 2 would be Ohio, and the fact that you are, it's great to me. I think D.K. said it right. Toledo is fanatical about their golf. They're really fanatical about their sports. Go to a mud heads game, and you experience that. It really doesn't matter what's playing in Toledo, they're supporting it.

I remember Danielle said this, and I think I remember it was Brittany Lang that came off when we were playing the Drive On Championship. We had taken a five-month COVID break, as everyone remembers in 2020. She came off and didn't have a great round. You know me as commissioner. When you don't have a good round, I don't make eye contact and try not to run into you because I'm not sure how you're feeling about it.

Brittany kind of looked at me, Brittany Lang, and she started walking to me, and I thought, oh, gosh, here we go. Who put the pin on 17? Or I don't know what's going to come out. And she looked at me, Commish, this is a major stage. She didn't maybe have the greatest round, but this is a major stage was in her mind.

It was raining that day. We hadn't played in six months. That's been in my brain ever since she said it. It is a major stage, and we're going to showcase it as a major stage in '27.

Q. Randy, when you think about being at Pine Needles in just a few months and seeing the ProMedica name there, what excites you the most?

RANDY OOSTRA: I'm nervous. We haven't done this before. Just testing what our goals are. We have great ideas about creating community conversations, creating awareness to a lot of these issues. We're incredibly impressed with the staff of the USGA and the help that they're giving us.

So we're really excited to get going. We're really excited to test the type of goals we have and the things we want to do. We're reaching out, our team is right now, to the community, and we've got some ideas about partnering. We've done that in a number of communities across the United States.

We're very excited. We're anxious to get going. Today was a long process to get here, a lot of discussions, too many lawyers, to be honest. But we're here today, and we're excited to get going. So we're excited to be there, and it's coming up real quick.



Q. Last question for Juli. Historically, how have you viewed the USGA's role in advancing the women's game?

JULI INKSTER: That's what they do. They grow the game, with The First Tee and the Junior and the Drive, Chip & Putt. I kind of was like Danielle where I started late in life. I didn't know what a major championship was. I really didn't even know what the LPGA was.

But I grew up on a golf course, Pasatiempo, that was a tough golf course. I qualified in '78 was my first USGA at Indianapolis Country Club. All I remember is I got there and there were brand new Titleists on the range, so I took a few of those home with me.

I think really playing Pasatiempo helped in USGA events. Par was your friend. You make a lot of pars and sprinkle in a few birdies, you're going to have a great week.

The USGA, they're evolving, like Mike said. Mike did an amazing job for the LPGA as far as growing the game, and I knew, when he took the USGA job, I knew he would not stand status quo. He would find ways to make women's golf, men's golf better. He's just kind of done it in a very quick time.

But with partners like ProMedica and hopefully more partners to come, we can do this. We can -- it's like I hopefully grew the game a little bit for Danielle, and hopefully Danielle grows the game a little bit for Megha, and we can just keep this going on.

I look at the people that grew the game for me, and I have a huge respect for the game of golf and for where it started and where it's going.

BETH MAJOR: Juli, thank you. Thank you to everyone for their great questions. As we close, I'd like to turn it back over to our CEO Mike Whan.

MIKE WHAN: On behalf of all of us at the USGA and ProMedica, thank you for celebrating this with us. We're not going to let COVID or a snowstorm stop us from having this joy.

For our players, thank you. And for Mollie, thank you for making this trip. I know the off-season in LPGA is short. Are you in high school still, Megha?

MEGHA GANNE: Yes.

MIKE WHAN: I'll write you a note to get out of Friday's class. I appreciate you guys for first answering my phone

and actually saying to come.

I think Danielle said it the best. While this is really cool for us, it's really going to be cool for your daughters and your daughters' daughters who can have these kind of dreams that are maybe bigger than you were able to have and your parents were able to have before you.

I would be remiss if I don't say this. I'm the king at standing on stage and taking credit for a real good day, but if it wasn't for Dennis and John and Brian and Katie and John and Reg and Jason and so many more people that brought this thing to life. I get to stand up here and act like I had some sort of vision, but this was going on at the USGA well before Mike Whan ever walked in the door.

At an event like this, if you enjoyed the event, find somebody who was part of putting this on and give them a high five, then sanitize, but to just say thanks. None of this stuff happens, as we said in the video and Randy so eloquently said, none of this happens alone. You find a way to push it and take it to the next level. Even this meeting was a way of finding something and pushing through a lot of obstacles to get to Manhattan and make this happen.

If you joined us online, thank you. If you made it in person, thank you even more. If you can find it in your schedule, get to Pine Needles in 2022. As we said in the video, this isn't the end, this is just the beginning. Thanks for being here.

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