

GREATS OF GOLF
May 3, 2019



ANNIKA SORENSTAM
NANCY LOPEZ
PAT BRADLEY
JULI INKSTER

CHRIS RICHARDS: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm very honored to welcome four of the legendary players of our game, Ms. Juli Inkster, Pat Bradley, Nancy Lopez, Ms. Annika Sorenstam. I'll open with one question for each player and then I'll open it up to questions from the media.

I'll start with Juli. During weeks like this, are you able to appreciate not only what you've done for golf but what golf has done for you?

JULI INKSTER: Oh, definitely. I mean, just being up here with these ladies. Pat and I were talking about how lucky we are to not only play on the LPGA, but be able to be in the Hall of Fame. I'm sure looking back on when we were little kids, we never dreamed that we would be here today playing with the great legends of the game, the Nicklauses, the Players, all of them. It's a dream come true just to be here on the stage right now.

CHRIS RICHARDS: Thank you. Pat, what does it mean to you to be part of a legendary group of 16 players today at the 3M Greats of Golf?

PAT BRADLEY: It's very special. I have to kind of pinch myself for me even being here. I mean, you know, I've known Mr. Nicklaus and the Gary Players and the Trevinos and I played on tour and everything, but even I haven't been up that close to these players. So it's very exciting to be able to touch Jack, you know --

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Hands off my team.

PAT BRADLEY: -- and to say hi to him and be up close and personal with him.

You know, when I left the tour I never thought I would have this opportunity to walk the fairways with players that helped me in my career to take it all the way to the highest level and to be able to reunite with Juli and Nancy and Annika. This is what I hoped and dreamed it would be after I left the grind of everyday play on tour. It's an added bonus to be here with 3M and Insperity. To be with the boys, it's really kind of cool.

CHRIS RICHARDS: Thank you very much. Nancy, on Thursday you were presented with the Dave Marr Award. How special was that night and how honored are you to be this year's recipient?

NANCY LOPEZ: It was a great horn. I didn't know I was receiving it. They were going to surprise me that night, so I'm glad they didn't. I would have never thought I was winning the award.

But I've known Dave Marr, Jr., for quite a long time also. I know that his dad was very special to him. Winning the award and what it stands for, I think in golf you love to win tournaments, as I said that evening, and it's great to win the trophies, but I always wanted to be the best person I could be as a competitor, winner, loser, whatever happened when I played the game of golf. You know, when you're with your fellow professionals and always treating people right and signing autographs and doing what my dad taught me really has been even more of an accomplishment for me than just winning tournaments. To be recognized with the Dave Marr Award was just, it was awesome. It was just a real horn for me to be able to accept that award the other evening. It was very special for me.

PAT BRADLEY: Well deserved, Nancy.

NANCY LOPEZ: Thank you.

CHRIS RICHARDS: Thank you. Annika, in addition to playing in today's 3M Greats of Golf, you're hosting a girls clinic tomorrow. What's your overall message to the girls when you host clinics like that?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well, Just like the ladies said here, it's an honor to be here. When I stepped away from competitive golf in 2008, I wanted to give back to the game of golf and I was looking at things that I cared about and things that maybe I knew a little about, and it was girls golf, to be able to create inspirational experiences for them.

We're now entering our 11th year with the Annika Foundation and we have seven global tournaments and then we have four or five initiatives that are called Share My Passion Days. We're lucky now to be able to do that here tomorrow with the tournament.

A little background on that for you that might not know. It's for girls who are 6 to 12 years old. They have to write a letter why they love golf. We pick the top 40, and I think we received 75 letters, so unfortunately we had to turn a few down, but hopefully we can do it again.

So we've got 40 excited girls coming tomorrow. It's all about introducing them to the game. We do some LPGA professionals or PGA professionals to help them with instruction on the putting green, some short game, hitting balls on the range, and then we do a little fitness element to it, then I do a clinic and we have a healthy lunch.

We host these on tournament sites, so if it's an LPGA event, they get to see the locker room, they get to see the media room, the fitness trailer, just kind of behind-the-scenes stuff. Here they're going to welcome the winner on the 18th green, so they'll be part of the competition. So it's been really fun and that's really what the Annika Foundation is about, is creating

opportunities for these young girls. So this is the lowest level, and then we have invitationals, like I said, seven of them, and then a college tournament.

So to go back to your question, it's extremely rewarding to be able to hang out with these young girls. We have over 600 every year. We have countries, more than 50 represented total in tournaments. So just looking back at ANWA, which we talked about just the other night how special it was for women's golf, we have 59 out of the starting 72. I feel like kind of the motherly feeling when you see them tee off and see them play. Maria Fassi especially, she won the Annika Award presented by 3M at the time. For her to come up there on the 18th hole was really cool.

Yeah, it means a lot to me. I travel thousands of miles a year just to be part of it because I want to inspire them and I care about growing the game of golf. So excited about tomorrow. I've already had some girls here today say, "I'm going to see you tomorrow." It's cool.

CHRIS RICHARDS: Very good. At this point I'll open it up to questions.

Q. Annika, you were here last year, played with Jack and Gary, and I think you said it was one of the first or second times you played an 18-hole round with them. What did you tell these other three ladies about playing with those legends and what they had to look forward to for today?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Nancy and Pat, we played together in the 3M Greats in Minneapolis, they know as much as I do. It's nice to have Juli to be part of this. I mean, this is really special. Like Pat said, we're not always so close to them and we've grown up watching them play. You know, I get a little nervous just being in the same group as the greatest of the game, but I love hearing the stories that they tell. They have great memories, but the stories they tell are so much fun.

To be able to walk there and share that and learn a lot from them even at this age and just the way they approach the game, the way they give back to the game, I think we all can learn.

But once tomorrow -- now we're not on the same team. Normally we're on the same team, so now we're going to kind of focus on our own. No, I'm very honored to be able to come back, 3M, Insperity, thank you very much for giving us this opportunity to continue to play and enjoy what we do.

Q. Just on the growth of the game, Annika, that you talked about, and you and Nancy were both honorary starters at the Masters this year for the Women's Amateur. Just a comment from each of you just on what that moment meant to each of you, but also to the growth of the game of women's golf.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, I thought it was -- you know, on stage with Jim Nance the other day, he said, "What are some of the highlights of your career.?" Obviously when I

played competitively, winning tournaments, like Nancy said, that was important.

Now, when I stepped away, growing the game, giving back to these young girls is really important. I remember walking up on that tee at Augusta National on that Saturday morning. I really didn't know how I was going to react, but walked up there and obviously I saw my family, I saw some of the girls. I was up with Nancy, Lorena Ochoa, Se Ri Pak. I mean, we all come from different parts of the world and it just felt like everything was just coming together. Members in green jackets. It was an incredible history moment. I get goosebumps sitting here now.

But I think we've come a long ways. I wouldn't say we've come all the way, but we've come a long ways. To be part of that was very special. To be able to give back, but to be able to share what we have done to the next generation, it just could not have been any better. So very honored to have done that and hopefully we can continue with events like that. Hopefully they set the pace.

And if you watched it, the display of golf was incredible. These young ladies, keep in mind they maybe played there once, maybe twice. They don't have the hundreds of thousands of practice rounds. They went out there in front of everybody and performed at a very, very high level. So that to me, you know, was even better. It justified that they were there and hopefully we'll have years of continued success.

NANCY LOPEZ: Well, it was a great day on Saturday morning. When you're with three fantastic players that you played with or have watched play the game of golf and given back so much, it was a great horn. I think in golf you're a family. No matter where you're from or the competitive spirits you have when you're playing, when you walk out on that tee, you know, I felt nervous, I felt excited. I felt like we represented golf, me, Annika, Se Ri and Lorena.

I think the other ladies, as they stood by me, I felt in a class of our own. Very classy women. They gave so much and still do give back to golf. But to stand on that tee at Augusta with that huge crowd really feeling I was carrying the world of women's amateur golf, golf, everything on my shoulders, I felt a little nervous and I wanted to do right by hitting a good shot, first of all.

But I think what was even more special for me was feeling the nerves. Then when I teed it up, I didn't feel nervous anymore. So for us to be in that situation again, because we don't compete anymore at that level at all, it was really special for me to be out there. It was a great honor.

I mean, I thank Augusta National for doing what they did by opening the doors to the lady amateurs to play there. I know when Fred Ridley announced it the year before, I was standing in front of the television and I could not believe what he had just said, that there was going to be a ladies amateur event. To me visually right away I'm like, okay, I've watched the Masters all these years, now I'm going to look at Augusta National on TV and

there's going to be women, young women playing in an amateur event and taking a divot. I just thought about that divot. They're going to be hitting the ground at Augusta in a competition and I just thought that is so awesome. So I was very proud to be there. I was really proud to be with Annika and I know Se Ri very well and Lorena and it was a lot of fun.

Q. (No microphone.)

PAT BRADLEY: Well, I watched it on television and, as Nancy said, it was such a wonderful surprise to see these young women playing Augusta National. And, you know, it was that -- it was Augusta National, it was that group that stepped forward and, you know, put it together. There's the credibility was instant because of their willingness to open up Augusta National to young women golfers.

So it was a thrilling weekend to watch and I know these young ladies will cherish that moment for the rest of their lives and it was -- I saw Nancy and I saw Annika and they were doing their thing and was proud to see them there.

As Annika said, it represented the world of golf on that first tee, so maybe we'll hold the flags next year, Jules. But it was great. I look forward to seeing the next group of young women next year.

JULI INKSTER: I didn't get to watch much of it, but I YouTubed it and I saw them hit their first shot, which I thought was awesome. Annika's thing, I went back and watched them, how they played the golf course and, you know, I think sometimes women's amateur golf and women's professional golf really don't get the credit of how good they are. It was really great to see how well they played under that pressure, and being the first one. So I thought it was great for women's golf.

Q. You know, some people have said that this could lead to other things. It could lead to maybe an LPGA event like there once was at the Titleholders. Do you feel like this is possibly a first step of what could happen at Augusta?

JULI INKSTER: Well, yeah, you know, I think it is. I mean, I would love -- I mean, to have an LPGA tournament at Augusta, I think that would be amazing. I thought when the USGA did Pinehurst for the U.S. Open back to back, how great would that be to be back-to-back tournaments for the men and the women. I don't really see that in the near future.

PAT BRADLEY: I believe in miracles. I've been a part of miracles, so --

JULI INKSTER: Yeah, that would be awesome. But I was just really impressed with how they played the golf course.

Q. Juli, I chatted with you at I think it was Northwest Arkansas last year for a little while. What's your schedule like this year, how many events do you plan on playing?

JULI INKSTER: I am going to play I think six this year, and we have in a couple weeks the USGA Senior I'm going to play in and then Solheim and some Fox stuff. It's good, yeah.

Q. Quick local question: The Women's Open is here next year at Champions. Have any of you guys played Champions or seen Champions? Any thoughts on any of that?

JULI INKSTER: I have not.

NANCY LOPEZ: I played a long time ago.

Q. It's just kind of an interesting market to come back into as well with what you're doing and what happened with the women's amateur. I just didn't know, I just thought I would shoot that one out.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: It's a great golf town, for sure. I'm sure the support will be fantastic.

Q. I didn't know if y'all had gotten a chance, if Robin had twisted your arm to get over there, play a round or anything like that.

CHRIS RICHARDS: All right. Anything else for these ladies? Thank you very much and have a good afternoon.