

EUROPE RETAIN SOLHEIM CUP AFTER THRILLING DRAW WITH USA

MALAGA, SPAIN, September 27, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- After three days of world-class match-play golf, Team Europe retained the Solheim Cup with an enthralling 14-14 draw against Team USA. Captained by Rolex Testimonee Suzann Pettersen, the European team prevailed over a spirited Team USA to retain the coveted trophy for a third consecutive occasion marking the first time in history.

The 2023 Solheim Cup demonstrated once more why it has developed the reputation as the foremost team competition in women's golf. The intercontinental event, which follows the same format as The Ryder Cup in the men's game, saw 12-player combinations contest 28 matches over three days of intense and absorbing action. Delivering a compelling showcase of the finest talent from both sides of the Atlantic, the stunning Finca Cortesín resort in Andalucía, Spain proved a venue befitting of such a captivating contest, boasting 500 miles of Mediterranean coastline.

Amidst the fierce passion and competitiveness on display, the unwavering respect between opponents was a defining feature of this year's competition. Onlooking supporters, who had arrived in droves from around the world, were entertained not only by the supreme level of golf but also the intergenerational camaraderie and how the two



TEAM EUROPE CELEBRATE RETAINING THE 2023 SOLHEIM CUP



ROLEX TESTIMONEE AND TEAM EUROPE CAPTAIN SUZANN PETERSEN WITH THE 2023 SOLHEIM CUP

teams channeled their individual talent for the greater achievement of the collective. It is this unique and special spirit that makes the Solheim Cup one of the highlights of the golfing calendar. The timeless values of teamwork, fair play and respect for tradition that are synonymous with the Solheim Cup also underpin Rolex's own defining philosophy and the Swiss watchmaker's quest for perpetual excellence.



ROLEX TESTIMONEE AND TEAM EUROPE CAPTAIN SUZANN PETTERSEN EMBRACES CARLOTA CIGANDA WHOSE PUTT TO TAKE A POINT ON THE SEVENTEENTH GREEN MEANT THAT TEAM EUROPE RETAINED THE SOLHEIM CUP

Rolex first partnered with the Solheim Cup in 1994, as Global Partner and Official Timekeeper, and this association reflects its pioneering role and influence in women's golf more broadly. The longstanding relationship dates back to 1980, when Rolex became a partner of the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA), and has since contributed to the game's development around the world. As one of the most successful relationships between a brand and sports, Rolex has become part of the very fabric of golf and supports golf at all levels, including elite and legends of the game, Major championships – including all five women's Majors – the foremost professional tours and the world's leading team competitions.

Pettersen's Team Europe recovered from a clean sweep in the Friday foursomes to win two and share one of the next three sessions. This was significant as the contest ended being delicately poised at 8-8 heading into the final day. During Sunday's singles matches, players from both teams excelled and delivered a remarkable day full of nail-biting action, as the overall lead changed hands on multiple occasions. Anna Nordqvist emerged victorious during her match early on, however, Team USA, captained by fellow Rolex Testimonee Stacy Lewis, proceeded to dominate the middle matches to move within touching distance of the required 14 1/2 points to regain the trophy it last won in 2017. In the end, it came down to a thrilling and deciding final hour. Pettersen's decision to line up Carlotta Ciganda in the penultimate match proved the pivotal moment, with the inspired Spaniard holing out on the 17th to secure her victory in front of her home crowd, ensuring Team Europe retained the trophy.

Following Sunday's singles matches, Team Europe captain Suzann Pettersen said: "We knew that it was going to come down to the wire. We have the best team. I'm so proud of them, they play with their heart. There is no such thing as giving up, no matter what challenge is ahead. We got off to a rough start, but we do not look back – the sky is the limit."

This victory elevates the Norwegian into an exclusive group of Rolex Testimonees to have led their side to victory at the Solheim Cup, which includes Nancy Lopez who successfully captained Team USA at Crooked Stick Golf Club, Indiana in 2005.

As one of the European point-scorers, vice-captain and Rolex Testimonee, Anna Nordqvist said: “It means the world to me, it’s an honour to be vice-captain. My whole family is here. It is amazing to have their support. The team has been fantastic – we knew that we did not get off to the best start, but everyone has been fighting and has done so till the end.”

While glory belonged to Pettersen and Team Europe, several other members of the Rolex golfing family delivered strong performances including Lexi Thompson, who remained calm and composed on the 17th by putting out for a par and ensuring the Solheim Cup ended in a 14-14 tie. Additionally, Rolex Testimonee Rose Zhang delivered a battling performance in her first Solheim Cup.

Following on from the tie, Rolex Testimonee, and Team USA captain, Stacy Lewis said: “We did not lose. It was a tie and there was so much to build on from this week. I told [my team] how proud I was of them and to hold their heads high. They did everything I asked of them this week and more. They had great attitudes, they were classy opponents, they represented this country so well.”

By triumphing in Spain, Team Europe has the honour of holding onto the impressive Solheim Cup trophy until the next tournament. The glass-cut crystal cup is rich in history, having been crafted by the prestigious Irish firm Waterford Crystal, founded in 1783 by the Penrose brothers. Weighing just over nine kilos, the cup is almost half a metre high and after being commissioned by the Solheim Cup organizers, Waterford Crystal entrusted the creation of the trophy to Billy Briggs, one of its top designers, in 1990 – the year of the inaugural tournament. Engraved on the central area of the trophy is a silhouette of the cup itself and the Solheim Cup name, which is named after the Norwegian-American golf club manufacturer Karsten Solheim, a driving force behind the tournament’s creation.

Lewis and Pettersen are among a select group of golfers to have been at the vanguard of the sport throughout their playing careers and continue to lead the way as inspiring and visionary captains in a team setting. The 2023 Solheim Cup was golf at its very best and the anticipation is already building among players and spectators ahead of next year’s rematch at Robert Trent Jones Golf Club in Gainesville, Virginia. For now, though, the attention of the golfing world swiftly turns to The Ryder Cup which takes place from 29 September–1 October at Marco Simone Golf & Country Club in Rome, Italy.

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