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The Cup is Full

The Europeans
march into Rich
Harvest Farms
to regain the
Solheim Cup.

By Greg Jourdan

Do not be mistaken and assume the Solheim Cup is simply a ladies version of the Ryder Cup. True, both events are biennial and both events include the best players from Europe and the good ol' USA; however, while the Ryder Cup has an edge with a rich history of competition, the Solheim's genuine, infectious enthusiasm takes a backseat to no other affair in professional golf team clashes. Excluding the most recent Ryder Cup in Kentucky (where the boys brought the cup back to the colonies sans Tiger Woods), the Ryder Cup has been tarnished by a lack of enthusiasm from the players on our side of the Atlantic. Our boys wanted their cut of the financial pie, which was reflected in their embarrassing performances in 2004 and 2006. In deep contrast, our Solheim ladies understand they are playing for a piece of American pie, with national pride serving as the essential motivator.

Fans entering Rich Harvest Farms for the Solheim Cup should be prepared for a climate

closer to March Madness on the hardwood than the gentle applause usually associated with professional golf. It is US vs. Them with energized fans from both sides singing, cheering, and feeling like participants in the competition. This excitement sharply contrasts the atmosphere Rich Harvest Farms owner Jerry Rich intended when he built this refuge for his family and friends. August 17 to 23 will be a chance for the public to enjoy Rich's creation and to walk along the fairways of one of America's

who love sport." While fans will enjoy strolling the grounds, players will need to pull the blinders on and focus on each shot. "I think it's just going to be extraordinarily tough," Davies shares. "If you miss a fairway by an inch, you're probably laying up."

The par-73 course is difficult, which Greg Martin, Rich Harvest lead design consultant, will tell you is exactly how Rich wanted it. This is not a course where most players experience success on the scorecard. However, do

Golf Chicago. "Hole #1 on the Silver (hole #10 for members) is a simple and strong par-4 that must be played on the left side of the fairway. This hole sits on a slight bluff along the edge of Welch Creek. A beautifully simple and satisfying golf hole." Martin also has advice for fans looking for an exciting stretch of holes for viewing. On the Silver side, holes 5 through 7 are, "easily navigable and will provide great theater," while on the Gold nine, holes 3 through 6, "will be equally dynamic." During match



Hole 7 [Silver]



most exclusive golf clubs. The bedroom community of Sugar Grove will have the world's eyes on her and the most historic sporting event to visit the area.

The Farm

For most golfers, a chance to experience Rich Harvest is a pipe dream, so attending Solheim week gives the public a chance to join the celebration and Rich's clandestine backyard. The players, like European team staple Laura Davies, are equally thrilled to compete at Rich Harvest, "It's wonderful. It's a playground for people

not mistake difficulty with an over-the-top layout. Good shots are rewarded while poor shots will serve penance in the form of lay ups and bailouts.

According to executive director of the 2009 Solheim Cup Kelly Hine, the players have begun to visit the site. "They are all extremely impressed with the golf course and all the facilities at Rich Harvest." While it may be premature for the ladies to pick their favorite holes, especially when that hole could be the hole that ends their match, Martin shared his favorites with

play, Martin predicts hole 4, a 410-yard, par-4, will require a steady hand on Sunday. The ladies will not have a chance to catch their breath until the Solheim Cup is awarded.

The Kids

Despite the exclusiveness of Rich Harvest Farms, introducing kids to the game has been a priority for Rich, who along with departed friend Don Springer started a foundation to introduce kids to the game of golf. That organization has evolved into The Kids Golf Foundation of Illinois with

program sites throughout the state. During tournament week, Solheim Cup FORE Kids will stage activities for children and their families at The Pavilion. Kids will enjoy hands-on activities, take a behind the scenes tour, and experience the passion that Kids Golf Foundation of Illinois instills during its programs. Kids who pre-register at www.kidsgolffoundation.org will receive a special pre-printed credential and a goody bag with Solheim souvenirs. Kids under 15 years are

both sides of the big pond will be at the Aurora Country Club August 17 to 19 to battle for the Ping Junior Solheim Cup. Here is where the passion of the Solheim Cup begins for many of the girls, so be sure to join the excitement.

The Fashion

The US team's fashion forward two-some of Natalie Gulbis and Creamer will join the rest of the US squad and sport the team's outfits and plenty of red, white, and blue. Fans should remember to save their Fourth of



Cover Girl

Catching the LPGA's All-American girl Paula Creamer for a quick interview is a tough assignment. Creamer leads the LPGA in style points and has the game to match. With a charming exchange about the Solheim Cup, Chicago, and even deep-dish pizza, the Taylor Made staffer was true to her reputation as one of the sweethearts in professional sports.

GC We are less than two months from the Solheim Cup team selections. Is there a climate of urgency with the bubble players?

Creamer I know Captain Daniel and her assistants are watching this very closely. I haven't sensed any panic or urgency among anyone. I would guess that those under consideration are trying their best to be in top form going into the selection time, in case they do not make the team on points and are hoping for a captain's pick.

GC How are the bubble players preparing for the final leg to make the team?

Creamer You'd really have to ask those who fall in that mix. I know I'm preparing physically, mentally, emotionally each and every day. Just talking about it gets me fired up. I can totally sense a strong spirit of the USA Team already! It was strong in 2005 and 2007, so I'm sure this year will be no different! We will be ready and well prepared.

GC Can you compare the excitement at the Solheim with any of your other competitive experiences?

Creamer Since professional golf is an individual sport, we really don't have the chance all that often to be on a team. The Solheim Cup is great because it not only lets me be a part of a team competition, but the match play



Hole 8 [Gold]

admitted free for the entire week, while older teenagers are eligible to attend for greatly reduce ticket prices that will not exceed \$30.

Traveling with the Solheim Cup players to the outskirts of the western suburbs are the US Ping Junior Solheim Cup girls. This team is where the next Paula Creamer, Brittany Lincicome, or Morgan Pressel will be competing tournament week. In 2005, all three ladies were members of the US Ping Junior Solheim Cup team. The next generation of LPGA hopefuls from

July ribbons, flags, and accessories because this is truly a patriotic event for fans of both teams. Expect patriotic outfits and creative hat accessories that create as much of a buzz as the hats and caps at the Kentucky Derby. If you are not wearing your team's colors, then you will be in the minority. Remember, at the Solheim Cup, you cannot go overboard accessorizing with Old Glory and her colors!

For more information regarding tickets and events, visit www.solheimcup.com or call 866-848-4639.

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Cover Girl

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format also offers us something unique. Most importantly though, I cherish the opportunity to represent my country. Red, White and Blue! I am so proud to fly our flag, wear our colors, and play in this terrific competition. We will not disappoint!

GC Do you have any thoughts on Rich Harvest Farms?

Creamer I have never been there, but I've heard nothing but absolutely great things about it. I'm looking forward to playing it in advance and then of course for the matches themselves a few weeks later. Again, I have heard nothing but superlatives on everything at Rich Harvest Farms.

GC What are your thoughts on bringing the Solheim to the Midwest?

Creamer Fantastic! Why not? It's wonderful to come to the core of America's midwest and play for the USA. The Chicago area has great golf fans, and I hope it will be a regular stop once again for the LPGA. I really look forward to it!

GC If you had one captain's pick, who would it be?

Creamer My mom. She kind of wandered inside the ropes at Crooked Stick (right in play) back in 2005. If she were on the team, she'd have rightfully earned her way inside the ropes. Seriously, I think Captain Daniel will make the right choices. I just want to work on my part. Everyone needs to do her part to help the USA win this August!

GC Which European players will present the biggest challenge at Rich Harvest?

Creamer All of them. They are very good, and their captain will be constantly telling them that they can win in the US, like she did at the US Women's Open.

GC Is it a felony or misdemeanor that this is the first LPGA Event in Chicago in over 5 years?

Creamer Pretty strong accusation, but we (the LPGA) would love to return full-time to the Chicago area. I do think it is a *must* for the big picture of our Tour.

GC When you get to Chicago, what will you have on your deep-dish pizza?

Creamer The works! Hold the anchovies please. My second one will be pepperoni and cheese.

GC Cubs or White Sox?

Creamer And get my boys with the Oakland A's upset at me? Nice try.

Sweet Home Chicago

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two new ventures. Charles Cherney Photography will focus on corporate portraiture, golf course photography, and major events. Professional Sports Photographers LLC will focus on youth sports. Both entities will share a video division headed by Jeffrey Marpe.



Cherney states that the new ventures will allow him to expand his interests and explore new opportunities. "I have always been intrigued by the different ways photography can be used to memorialize an important event in a person's life or in a company's business history. I am hoping that I can transfer my skills to all different types of venues. I am looking forward to this new chapter in my life."

In his previous position, Cherney was cited twice as "Chicago Press Photographer of the Year" and once as "Illinois Photographer of the Year." He covered two Olympics, six Chicago Bulls championship seasons, and the war in Yugoslavia.

For more information on Charles Cherney Photography, visit www.cherneyphoto.com.