

The Greatest Under the Sun:

History awaits Team Europe at the 2023 Solheim Cup as the defending champions aim to make it a hat-trick of victories under the Spanish sun at Finca Cortesin.

2023 Solheim Cup Preview

The countdown to September 18-24 is now well and truly on, with both players and fans eagerly anticipating the start of the most prestigious and exciting event in all of women's golf.

Norway's Suzann Pettersen is at the helm for Europe as she looks to continue where Scotland's Catriona Matthew left off and make it a third consecutive Solheim Cup victory for the home side.

Standing in her way, for what we now know will be the first of two captain's duals, is America's Stacy Lewis, who, like her European counterpart, has been confirmed as skipper for the subsequent Solheim Cup in 2024 at Robert Trent Jones Golf Club.

Joining Lewis as vice-captains in the red, blue and white are Angela Stanford, Morgan Pressel and Natalie Gulbis, while Pettersen has turned to familiarity with

her assistants in the faces of Dame Laura Davies, Anna Nordqvist and close friend Caroline Martens.

Spain will stage the 18th edition of the Solheim Cup for the very first time this year, a befitting host nation renowned for its passionate, fiery atmosphere and deep admiration for the game of golf.

Having produced seven Solheim Cup stars since the biennial tournament was established back in 1990 – Carlota Ciganda, Azahara Muñoz, Raquel Carriedo, Paula Martí, Ana Belén Sánchez, Beatriz Recari and Tania Elósegui – Spain will host their first edition of the event at the incredible Finca Cortesin Golf Club.

Located on the Costa del Sol in Andalucía, Finca Cortesin is world-renowned as an elite golfing destination, previously staging three Volvo World Matchplay Championships on



the DP World Tour and consistently ranked within the top five courses in all of Spain.

Unlike in 2021, where six picks were on offer, the 2023 European Solheim Cup Team will be comprised of four captain's picks, joining the top two players on the LET Points list and the six highest ranked players from the Rolex Women's World Golf Rankings.

Members of the American side are decided by the top eight US Solheim Cup Points earners, as well as two players from the Rolex Women's World Golf Rankings who have not already qualified through the points standings. The final two places are then decided by captain's picks.

So how are the teams shaping up for our Solheim showdown under the Spanish sun? Over in the blue corner, and heading into the tournament as favourites, Pettersen will have plenty of experience at her disposal as she chases an historical treble on home soil.

Returning from the Toledo triumph and leading the charge as Solheim stalwarts will be England's Georgia Hall and Charley Hull, now entering their fourth and sixth editions respectively.

Hall said, "The Solheim Cup is one of the highlights of my career. It will be my fourth time playing this year so I'm looking forward to it. I think we're going to have the strongest team on paper this time. It's been a while since we were. But we have an amazing captain again in Suzann: a very fierce competitor, and I think she'll be a fierce captain, too. To get three in a row would be incredible."

Captain's picks in 2021, France's Celine Boutier and Ireland's Leona Maguire will add further star power as top 20 players in the Rolex Women's World Golf Rankings.

Set for her third straight Solheim Cup, Boutier holds an impressive 5-1-1 record and recently returned to the World Top 10 after claiming the LPGA Drive on Championship. Maguire meanwhile will be on a mission again after her impressive rookie display in 2021 saw her win all five matches in fearless fashion.

She said: "It's going to be a very different one this year on home soil in Spain. I was a rookie last time, so I didn't really know what to expect. I was just happy to be there and make the team. It will be great to have that home support, and also to get the crowds back after last time when the fans were not allowed to travel."

Elsewhere, Sweden's Madelene Sagstrom and Spain's Carlota Ciganda are well-positioned for automatic qualification as they too chase a hat-trick of Solheim Cup wins. Aiding Pettersen as one of her three vice-captains, Nordqvist's playing duties will then be called upon with the Swede in line to to make her ninth Solheim Cup appearance.

Doubling up on the Swedish contingency are rookies Linn Grant and Maja Stark, the pair raring to go following their magnificent breakthrough seasons on the Ladies European Tour in 2022. The remaining four captain's picks then remain well up for grabs with plenty of golf still to be played this summer.

Potential rookies Ana Peláez Trivino from Spain and Pauline Roussin-Bouchard from France will be eager to earn a place in Pettersen's side, while the Danish duo of Emily Kristine Pedersen and Nanna Koerstz Madsen will both be looking to secure a spot once more.

After being absent in 2021 when she was expecting her first child, Spain's Azahara Munoz will also be vying for a captain's pick on home soil – a selection which would mark her fifth appearance for Team Europe.

"I want to play the Solheim Cup," Munoz said. "It would be my dream. It would probably be the last one, I'm getting older, but to play another Solheim Cup and to do it at home would be amazing, because that would mean I would have played well that year as well. I won't have much time to qualify, but I'm going to do everything I can to be there."

Over in the red corner, Lewis is boosted by having World No 1 and Olympic gold medallist Nelly Korda back in full health and playing as well as she ever has. Recently recovered from a blood clot in her right arm, the one-time major winner is seeking to avenge the losses of 2019 and 2021 alongside sister Jessica and fellow major winners Danielle Kang, Jennifer Kupcho and Lexi Thompson –

Anna Nordqvist, Caroline Martens, Suzann Pettersen and Dame Laura Davies at the 2023 Solheim Cup vice captain announcement.





Leona Maguire of Europe in The 2021 Solheim Cup.

the latter coming in as America's most experienced player with five Solheim Cup appearances.

Thompson said: "It's been unfortunate the last two years that we've lost, but it happens. Representing your country is the highest honour, so hopefully we get that trophy back in Spain. Really looking forward to going there.

"The Solheim Cups bring a whole 'nother level out of people's game. Representing your country you have that drive. You're not only fighting for yourself out there, you have your partner next to you; you're fighting for your country and representing it."

Aside from the big five, Lewis will be holding high hopes on rookie Lilia Vu, the 24-year-old who arrives at Finca Cortesin as arguably the most in-form player in the world. After winning the EPSON Tour Player of the Year in 2022, Vu has taken this year by storm already, claiming her inaugural major at the Chevron Championship and rising to World No 4 in phenomenal fashion.

With only two captain's picks on offer, Megan Khang, Marina Alex and Ally Ewing will be hopeful of qualifying automatically for another Solheim Cup, while several rookies are knocking on the door for a spot including Allisen Corpuz, Angel Yin and Andrea Lee.

On top of looking to complete a Solheim Cup hat-trick for the first time in history, Team Europe will also be seeking to reduce to overall series deficit once again, With the United States currently leading the series 10-7.

As always, the prestigious event will take place over three days, with 24 matches in total. On the first and second days, eight pairs matches will be held, split between foursomes and fourballs, with 12 singles matches completed on Sunday to determine the winner of the 18th Solheim Cup.

Tickets for the 2023 Solheim Cup 2023 start at just €25 and can be purchased on the official website <https://solheimcup2023.eu/>. For further information on the tournament follow @SolheimCup2023 on social media.

