

Cindy Parlow-Cone:

Thanks, Neil. This is a good day. I hope everyone sees that we are a new U.S. Soccer. We've made significant changes to personnel, as well as having a new approach to the challenges and opportunities ahead of us. We have a new president and new CEO. We have new leadership throughout our organization with new ideas. And I think this fresh approach helped us reach this settlement and will serve us well and everything we do in the years ahead. This settlement, as well as our transformed relationship with the foundation demonstrates the commitment of our new leadership to find a new way forward in working together with our partners and our players. Coming to the agreement on the working conditions was just the first step. The goal for both sides in this was to really define a more structured way, provide both teams - the men and the women with equitable support while still allowing for flexibility at the same time. So with that, I will open it up to questions.

Meg Linehan:

Since the beginning, when you stepped in as president, obviously a very strange situation in terms of the mood between the Federation and the players. Have the conversations actually really started to progress in terms of beyond just settling these kinds of lingering complaints from the Title Seven part of the lawsuit into actually having some more substantial conversations on the equal pay front?

Cindy Parlow-Cone:

That is certainly our hope. I hope that the women and their lawyers see that we are taking a new approach. The way we reached this settlement was in a collaborative way. There was a lot of back and forth and trying to understand where each side was coming from, and that's how we reached this resolution. So it is my hope that we continue down this path and are able to find a resolution on all aspects of this litigation.

Jeff Kassouf:

Today's news has some of the technical elements of what's been worked on, I'm wondering from the perspective of the mood and the environment that you just mentioned as you get to maybe about a year out now from a new CBA, do you feel like this agreement today, this news today is a positive step in kind of the bigger relationship beyond some of the legal parts that we're talking about now, but even looking forward to needing to again, negotiate in a year's time or whatever that might be?

Cindy Parlow-Cone:

I think part of this is we want the women's team, as well as their lawyers to see that we want to move in a different direction. We want to have a different relationship with them. We want to work together. I think they're starting to see that and we have to continue down this path and that's the hope and that we can continue to collaborate together to come to a resolution on all aspects of this litigation so that we can continue to rebuild the trust between the players and the Federation.

Ron Blum:

Do these terms on travel and the hotels, are they on the men's side for the current men's deals or the next successor CBA? Are they contemplated with the men are already agreed to both sides?

Will Wilson:

The policies are specific to the women in that they're the ones that were raised through the litigation and were the Title Seven claims. Our goal with both teams is to provide the best world-class services that we can for it to be equitable. Obviously there's differences between men's and women's calendar, or the games they play and when they play them. So what we've contemplated is a structure that is equitable that provides flexibility for the different teams in gender. As our relationships with both entities and unions progress, we look at future agreements. They will certainly be contemplated as we go forward, but these policies specifically will fold into the current CBA for the women.

Ron Blum:

Do you then agree with the women that whatever you agree in the successor deal with the man you then take back to the women? How do you weave that back and forth to keep equity?

Will Wilson:

Our intent is that there would have to be that ongoing dialogue to keep them in the same range. Yes.

Jonathan Tannenwald:

Thanks, Neil. Cindy, I wonder if we can go in a little bit of specifics on the venue part of this, but obviously that's been a very public part of the back and forth for many years now. What's your perspective on it and how that will play out going forward? How's it going to work, more bluntly, to figure out where the games are going to be played going forward?

Cindy Parlow-Cone:

As you can imagine, where the national team games are going to be played is a very complex process that both teams go through to find out what the best venue is for each game. Obviously right now, given COVID, that's a little bit even more complex right now, depending on if things are different from state to state. I think we arrived at a place where both the women and the Federation are comfortable. It allows us some flexibility, in terms of where we're playing the games. And I think they ended up at a place where they were happy and they received the markets that they really wanted to play in.

Jonathan Tannenwald:

Working to establish equality on these things between men and women and the equal pay thing is the next big thing in court, but in terms of collective bargaining with the end of this women's CBA visible on the horizon and with the men still not formally having one, do you think there is an opening here to get everybody into the room at the same time, whether or not that is formally joint bargaining, but to get everybody into the same room?

Will Wilson:

That's probably a better question for the unions themselves in terms of approaching it that way. But you do highlight that there was going to be crossover between the two. So obviously we're looking at it through that lens and that's something that we contemplate.

Tom Goldman:

Are you able to provide any details of the non-compensation part of the settlement and sorry to be thick about this, but does this mean that you're going to basically try and settle the pay dispute as well to avoid the appeal and this going back to court?

Cindy Parlow-Cone:

Obviously, as I said before, our aim is to find a resolution with our women's national team and we're committed to doing that. We've reached out to them. We have offered them the same contract as the men for all games that are controlled by your soccer. But unfortunately the response has been that they didn't want to negotiate with U.S. Soccer unless U.S. Soccer was willing to make up the FIFA World Cup prize money, which you all know is the vast majority of the \$66 million that they're requesting in back pay. And we all know that this just isn't possible from a U.S. Soccer standpoint to make that up. Even pre-COVID this would be devastating to our budget and to our programming. But given COVID and not to be overly dramatic, but it would likely bankrupt the Federation.

Tom Goldman:

How about the details on the settlement because it's being announced today, are you able to provide any info on travel venue, staffing, et cetera, hotel accommodation?

Will Wilson:

I think we're not really in the position to provide a lot of detail on it. I think the key thing is that we have agreed on a path forward that works. It took a lot of work to get there and a very collaborative approach to get to where we've landed and the key phrase where it's equitable, but yet it gives flexibility depending on the national team. So we're happy about where we've landed on this. It's important stuff. I mean, obviously these are difficult conversations that have taken place over a long time, right? So a lot of good work had been done previously, and then we picked up the mantle and have just tried to move things forward in a positive way.

Pablo Maurer:

Obviously there's an election upcoming. I'm curious if you feel empowered to work directly with the players as president and find a resolution before that next Federation election.

Cindy Parlow-Cone:

I would love it if that would happen. I think that's a pretty fast timeline, but like I said, I will sit down with the women anytime to try to work through the issues that they still have on equal pay. I can tell you that we are 100% committed to equal pay. I think moving past this litigation is not only important for soccer in the U.S. But I think it's important for soccer globally. As we have the best women's team in the world and we're leaders in a lot of ways, I think it's important to come to a resolution because I know that working together, we can amplify our efforts to make a larger impact across the world. Women's soccer still isn't being invested in as much as it could or should be. I would love to join forces with the women's team and help push FIFA to equalize, not only World Cup prize money, but equalizing their investment in the game at all levels. Our vision doesn't stop with just equal pay here in the U.S., we're committed to leading the efforts to support, develop, and to grow women's soccer across the world. FIFA is made up of 211 other countries and we need to help all of them see the value in investing in women's and girls' soccer. Investing in women and girls will not only improve their national team, it will improve their countries. So we have to help everyone get there.

Mickey Turner:

Congratulations on settling the lawsuit. I was curious have you had any discussions with Hope Solo and what is your position about the settlement vis-a-vis her lawsuit?

Will Wilson:

Hope Solo conversations continue with their counsel. We're hoping to move forward in a positive direction on that one as well.