

American Century Championship

Saturday, July 10, 2021

Lake Tahoe, Nevada, USA

Edgewood Tahoe

Annika Sorenstam

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Annika Sorenstam is in the room. Great round today. Your reputation as one of the most consistent players in history, once again, 23 points today. 23 points yesterday. As of right now I think Vinny Del Negro just birdied 18. He's got 49, and you have 46. So looks like you're going to be in the last group tomorrow. Unusual for you, hey?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: It's been a while. Really haven't been in the last group for quite some years. But overall, if I just think about the round, I eliminated some mistakes today. Didn't make as many bogeys. Didn't make as many birdies but very steady. Hit a lot of fairways. Really wasn't fine tune with my irons, but had a lot of good, I thought, speed putts today. Overall, I hang in there. What can I say about my pairing? Fantastic with Tony Romo and Steph Curry. These are guys you watch on TV that you idolize and to come out here and they're playing my sport. I mean to be there inside the ropes with them and to see how good they are. And just nice guys in general, just complimentary. So had a super fun day. And Saturday is a bit of a moving day. Didn't move as much as I wanted but at least I'm going in the right direction.

Q. It really did look like the three of you had a great time out there today together. I think when you both -- I think whether it was birdies on 8 and 9, everybody was high-fiving, how often do you see that on a golf course?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: It's fun. I think we all are very competitive. And we obviously want to do well. But when you see other good shots and you see other good birdies and the other players doing something well, it's like, of course, you're going to cheer them on. I think that's what makes this tournament so fun. Everybody's happy to see something good.

But it's exciting because you can see in their eyes how competitive they are. Then I try to focus on my game playing my strategy the way I would play this course. It's a



little different than they play the course.

But after several holes I said I'll see you on the green, you can go whatever route you want but I'm playing this route. I met them on the green. A lot of fun and a lot of laughter. My husband on the bag, family around there, and then some friends from Incline, the atmosphere is so fun. Coming down 16 and 17, again, it's such an electrifying moment to be there.

And normally when you play golf you have this quiet sign. On the contrary here, it just gets louder and louder.

Q. Does that bother you at all? You're used to playing where it was quiet, like a church out there. It's a madhouse on 17, which makes this tournament what it is.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Exactly. That's why we're here that's what makes the tournament so much fun. I think Steph was shooting 3-pointers while I was teeing up the ball. That's how it goes. I was thinking about jumping up and trying to foul him but thought I'd focus on what I had to do. That's part of it.

The people are so excited to be here. You just have to take what you see and just make it more and create some more memories; that's really what my goal is this week.

Q. You speak about competitiveness. Obviously you've had that for many, many years. Are the embers burning?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: It's interesting, there's some parts of it I feel I know how to do it. And some parts I'm just a little rusty. I really haven't played in front of crowds like this. I really haven't played this type of format. And so I feel like anything, when you don't do it, you feel a little bit out of sorts. I've really got to focus, go back to my experience maybe, my maturity now, I'm 50; I've got to rely on something because I don't have the youth to rely on. But again, I'm just so happy to be inside the ropes and have a chance to play tomorrow. I know that I'm going to need to do a little bit more than I've done the first two days. So hopefully I saved the best for last.



Q. We talked a bit with Jack Wagner. He was in here. 61 years old. He won the tournament when he was 51, 10 years ago. I don't know if there's a theme emerging here of people that are used to winning being in the hunt on the last day.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: It's great to see his name up there. I was talking to him earlier he's playing steady. Happy the way he's playing. He's making birdies. Normally not this many. But now he's just so steady. He was in good spirits. And as we all know it's not about youth and about power, sometimes it's about smartness and maturity and having strategy on this golf course. I think that's the key here. You've got to be on the right side of these hole locations. The green can really be slippery. I noticed a few times where you see the line, but it's just so much about the speed and you can't be aggressive and sometimes what happens is it becomes the other way. Too tentative. Then the ball falls off the line. It can be frustrating sometimes. So tomorrow I think just being careful with your approach shots. If I can give myself a little bit more uphill putts, that would be super.

Q. How confident are you going into tomorrow?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I feel really good about my game from tee to green. I've just got to have some birdie opportunities. And I really would love to play the par-5s a little better. I played aggressively on two of them, the last and then 16. I just need to convert into birdies. It would be nice to roll in an eagle as well, but I'm just not birdieing the par-5s which I usually do. A little bit of improvement. And Sunday, I love Sundays. If I can be in the last group I would love it even more.

Q. With your background, with all the tournaments that you've won, you've got to feel pretty solid going into Sunday? You're right there.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I mean, I have experience. I've been there. And I love being there. I think that's really what it's all about, is about having fun and I cherish the moment. I feel the more golf I play the better I get.

Hopefully, like I said, I can save the best for last. But again, I'm not going to underestimate my competition by any means. These guys are really good golfers. They probably play a little more than I do. A lot of them play 18, 36 a day. And they've got the distance.

So I need to throw in some luck there tomorrow. But I look forward to the challenge and I'm going to do my best and whoever wins has got to earn it.

Q. You played in a few professional tournaments before with men. So you've broken a few barriers. If you were to win this tournament tomorrow, obviously you'd be the first woman to win.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, but that was quite some time ago. I feel like a little different person than when I competed full time. And I think being a mom and there's some other things in my life that gives me another priority. So I don't take golf as serious as I used to. But having said that, inside my ropes I'm going to do my best but I can really shake off my bad shots sooner now than before. But tomorrow I've got to be on my game. I've got to be solid. I've got to be confident and aggressive. I'm going to pull out all my cards tomorrow and we'll see what happens.

Q. Did the crowd sound louder today?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: It's super loud. On the first tee, tenth tee, eighth tee, as a matter of fact every tee. It's fun. They're just so into it. I love that about here. You have football fans cheering for Tony and basketball fans and golfers. Everybody's here and everybody's finding their own favorites. That's what makes the tournament so unique. You can always find one or two you really like.

Q. You were elaborating on this when I walked in, I had in my mind to ask you the question, how distracting was it for you on 17 with Steph shooting over your head?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I think it's just fun. I really do. I think we just expect that here. If it was quiet, we'd be thinking what's wrong; something is not right. So I don't mind it. I have learned how to turn it on and focus on what I've got to do and that's really what I do. I think he's great for the fans, and he was interacting with them. And also when we go from 17 to 18, it's just a lot of fun, high-fives and throwing a lot of golf balls, it's part of the event. If it wasn't there, it wouldn't be the same.

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