

# U.S. Women's Open

Thursday, June 2, 2022

Southern Pines, North Carolina, USA

Pine Needles Lodge and Golf Club

## Annika Sorenstam

### Quick Quotes



#### **Q. Annika Sorenstam, 3-over 74. Talk about the first tee and how that felt.**

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: No, it was great. What a nice warming welcome here at Pinehurst, Pine Needles. It was nice to see Donna being the -- I played against Donna, so it was great to have her as the announcer, the starter.

I was teeing off first, and she said, one more minute. It was probably one of the longest minutes ever. I was like, I'm ready now. Looking at my kids over there, they had the microphone on I was wondering what they were saying if something inappropriate would come out. But it was great, really nice.

#### **Q. Talk a little bit about the play.**

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, overall I thought I drove the ball really well. Obviously I didn't do it on the last hole.

But I had a few minor good iron shots, unfortunately, and you need to be strategic here, need to be on the right side of the green, and in the middle of the round there I had some really long putts.

Yesterday I putted off the green a couple times, and that was the last thing I wanted to do. Yeah, a few better I think I would have been super happy, but overall it was great to be out here. And obviously playing with Ingrid who played fantastic. She won the ANNIKA Invitational in 2019. It was nice to walk with her but she was fearless. It's fun to watch. Same with So Yeon Ryu. She is so sweet. Could not ask for a better pairing.

#### **Q. Normally you wouldn't pay so much attention to a playing partner in the first round of a Women's Open. Did it feel different out there, that vibe knowing that she's one of yours?**

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well, I can't really claim her, but it's so nice to see. We talk about growing the game of golf, we talk about the next generation of girls and having tournaments, and to have an Annika winner like that, it's so

neat so see that women's golf is in good hands, and come out here and play so solid.

We had some good conversations, and her caddie, Sophie Gustafson, is somebody I played against and also in the Solheim Cup. So we had some nice conversations and brought back some memories.

Mikey, the other caddie, he's been with Karrie forever, so it's like here we are, like a reunion a little bit. Like I said, it was a great day out there. It's hot, very, very hot. I thought the course played great. Some of the hole locations are a little bit tricky. You've got to be very careful.

But overall it's just nice to be here.

#### **Q. I saw when you made the turn you were kind of hugging up on Will and then you made birdie and you looked over at the kids and you're telling them, drink, hydrate. Can you compare this to last time you played in an Open and now just having kids out here walking around following you?**

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, I wasn't worried about them. Now it's like I worry about my husband, I worry about the kids, are they drinking, and then do my kids have enough sunblock. There's a lot of thoughts going in.

And then it's like, okay, trigger, now you've got to play, you've got to hit a hybrid. There's a lot of thoughts that go through my mind. But that's just kind of the way it is now. That's one of the reasons I'm here.

They want me to play and we're doing this together.

Yeah, sometimes I get a little distracted. There was a few holes I'm like, where did Will go? Is he okay? Is he climbing some tree somewhere?

Then I saw him on 18, so it's nice.

#### **Q. What were the feelings like today as compared to '96?**

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I mean, I'm a lot more content in



my life. My playing days are over; I'm not here to create a new career or start something new and make a mark for myself. I'm more here to enjoy what I've done and enjoy being invited to come here and play and kind of share it with my loved ones. I think that's more the attitude I have.

I have worked hard to try to get ready, and I've told myself this morning, there's nothing else I can do. Another day, another week, another month is not going to change. I'm happy the way I'm playing.

And score-wise it could have been better, but also it's not, and I think in '96 might have been able to put another gear in or maybe two gears. But I'm at my highest gear or lowest gear, whatever you want to call it, there's just nowhere to go other than what I have. I just have to accept it and kind of deal with it.

I don't get as mad as I used to. I kind of bounce it off. By the end of the day the kids want to do something, I probably have to cook dinner, just all those things that I enjoy doing off the golf course. I can't get upset anymore.

It's just great to be here, enjoy. The fans have been super supportive, a lot of cheering coming up to the greens, so it warms my heart. Especially on 18 there was a little tear or two from my husband and myself because it warms to be here.

**Q. Speaking of kids wanting to do something else, I understand Will made a 1; can you walk us through that?**

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, I guess he just hit and then bounced in directly, hole No. 5. He went through the course -- or the score -- they played it twice, so he went through the scores and the shots like three times, so I've heard it quite a bit, giving me the shot by shot, the 20-footer and the five-footer and all those things.

Yeah, he made it from 50 yards and it was so neat. I mean, we called him ace last night. That was his nickname, and every time we said, ace, he lit up. He called his buddies. He has a friend in Nevada, Mason, and Mason is a good player. Mason hasn't had a hole-in-one I've just found out.

Joshua Poulter has not had a hole-in-one, either. He was first and I got to hear that a few times. We're making memories in different ways.

**Q. Before today what interactions had you had with Ingrid, if any?**

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Oh, I've had quite a few. Maybe

not so much this week. I saw her earlier this week. I saw them at lunch. But I've spent quite some time with Ingrid at the 2019 ANNIKA Invitational up in St. Augustine.

I think I shared the story. She won but she was flying out of Orlando and she didn't have a ride. I said you can ride with me, so I took her to the airport, we had a good conversation.

And just listening to her, she can be quite bubbly, so it was more listening than talking. She's really impressive. I think people see her as a long hitter, but I'm sure you saw her today, some of those chip shots she hit, especially here on 18, that was not an easy one.

She just kind of stood there, really good touch, and she putted beautifully today, good speed. Everything was really -- I was really impressed.

**Q. Maybe bubbly is the answer, but for people who are just going to be introduced to her now, what is her personality like? What should we expect?**

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, she's authentic. She's got a special look, but she's a fearless player. I think she's confident in her own game. I know she doesn't shy away from the limelight that maybe I did as a young girl. I think she embraces it quite well, and she has some good tournaments coming up this summer, and I think she's excited.

She's going to be a senior. She's one of the leaders. She's really a terrific young lady, and I think she's going to do well.

**Q. Because of the ANNIKA Invitational and other things you've been involved in, it feels to me like there's another wave of Swedish women coming along like there was in the 1990s and early 2000s. Do you think that's the case?**

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, we have a group right now that's really, really good, six to eight of them. They're just on the border of being a junior, senior, and then the first two years, like Maja Stark is here, Amanda Linner is one, Beatrice Wallin is another one, and obviously Ingrid. That's four of them.

So yeah, it kind of goes in waves. I think we have really nice wave, and what I like about these young ladies, they are solid. They are good players, and they work hard. I think they inspire each other. It's been a really good Swedish national team right here. I think they're going to do well at the European Championship this summer. I think we've got to look out for some more Swedes.

**Q. What's it going to take to make the cut tomorrow, and do you think you'll play a little more aggressively to try to make that happen?**

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: You know, I don't really know. I think this is a course where you just -- certain holes it's just you can't be aggressive. I'm just thinking No. 5, that is just such a tough par-3, and I hit 6-iron -- not the best 6-iron, but I hit a 6-iron, and if I hit it a little this way or that, it's really a tough shot.

I think tomorrow we'll just have to see. I'm obviously not going to try to leave anything out there. I have nothing to lose. But also I've got to be careful so I don't end up in places where I just can't make up-and-down. I haven't really looked at the scores.

Obviously I know what Ingrid had and I figured that is going to be leading by the end of the day, so I have a long ways to go, but right now I think a little lunch, hang out, and maybe I'll come back and practice if it cools down. That would be nice.

I have a late one tomorrow. Unless my kids want to go to the cradle again, then we'll have to see. Otherwise they'll have to cradle me some more.

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