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**Office Depot Championship  
El Caballero Country Club  
Tarzana, California  
April 2, 2004**

**First-round leader quotes**

AN INTERVIEW WITH ANNIKA SORENSTAM

Q. We'll do your scorecard last, if could you start out talking about how you were able to post a good score on a tough scoring day with tricky greens out there?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yes, I do think I love this place. You know, I hit a lot of good shots today, I thought. I mixed them with a few bad, but when I did hit a bad one I was able to make up and downs. I thought I was really solid at times. I putted really well. I saw the lines today. I had a good feel on the greens, and I had a chance to make a lot of birdies and obviously that helps. I'm very pleased with the first round and take it from there.

Q. Do you feel one got away from you on nine?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yes. There is always one here, one there, should have, could have, would have. I made some good saves all around, so I'm not going to complain now. If I make the short ones, it's okay if one or two slips by.

Q. Getting up and down, saving some pars is almost important as making some birdies, is that the case every time you play here?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I agree with you. I mean it's nothing for me personally. It's just kind of a momentum feeling. If you make a few birdies then it's okay to make a bogey. But then again, if you save it, then it feels almost like a birdie, so you can move on, and the momentum keeps on building. That is something that I didn't have last week at all. I mean I would make a birdie, and then I would miss a green, and I wouldn't make up and down. I was always kind of struggling, always trying to get back on the right track. But today it just seemed like I did that. I missed the green on two, but I was able to make up and down. The same on three. I felt really good about it. And then some day you roll in two birdie putts, and here we go.

So, I think, that's really the momentum and the key out here.

Q. How much harder are these greens to putt, Annika, if you missed your attempted target?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well, you got to really pay attention to where the green is, the slope of the greens. You got to definitely put your approach shots on the right side of the flag. I mean, some of these putts are very tricky. You just want to test them. On the other hand, if you don't make putts, you have to be aggressive, so it keeps the line. So you really got to pay attention to where you are when you read the putts. I start getting an afternoon tee time. It will be a little tough, but I just rolled them really sweet today, so, obviously that helps, too.

Q. Is this course as tough or tougher than last week, do you think Mission Hills?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well, it's tough to say. I mean the greens for sure are tougher just because they are so undulated and so tricky.

I do think the rough is thicker here this week. Distance-wise, I don't really know what it's playing, but play about the same. You know, I think both courses are tough, I really do. Today I just took advantage of, you know, some good ball striking and then also some good momentum. That's why I scored better today than I did last week.

Q. How important is experience on this course, it always seems like the top players rise up here?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well, it is a tough course. You got to hit your approach shots good. This is a ball striking golf course. If you are straight, obviously that helps. But you got to know your differences with your irons and that's the key here.

I think the top players are longer, and they might be more accurate with the irons. But, then again, you need your short game here, too. So, it's really kind of a major type of golf course. I want to say where you have to have everything. You got to have a short game and you got to have your long game, and you got to be able to put it all together.

Q. You scrambled and saved some nice pars on your front nine today, is that something that you have been working on in the off season?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yes. I worked so much on my short game this off season. It felt really good in Australia and Phoenix definitely. I made up and down everywhere. Therefore, when I went into last week, I felt really good about it. If I missed a green, not to worry, I can make up and down.

But last week I just lost the touch or something happened. I did not have a lot of up and downs and then here I am. And today I had a lot of up and downs. So who knows what's this game is all about? I have spent a lot of time on my short game. I feel very comfortable with the chips around the greens, my bunker play and everything. I think you need that on the this type of course because you are not going to hit every green.

So just knowing that in the back of your mind gives you a lot of confidence.

Q. You made those two birdies at the end of your round, how tough is it to stay patient and just wait for something like that to happen?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well, that takes experience and that takes just being in that situation. I have been many times where, you know, where I feel like something should drop but it doesn't, then you start pushing it and you make a bogey or something like that, and then you totally get upset and then you lose it. This game it's 18 holes that count. You just got to be patient. You just got to remember that. I try to play one hole

and when I go to the next I try to just forget about everything and play the next hole like it's the only hole I'm going to be play all day. That's trying to be positive in your mind, and that's the only way you are going to be able to post a low score on 18 holes, I think.

Q. Annika, did the greens seem to get a little faster as the day wore on today?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I want to say they didn't slow down, that's for sure, which I was really expecting because, I mean I was out here practicing, I think it was Wednesday afternoon, and I felt the putting green was very, very slow. Then I played in the Pro-Am early in the morning, and I thought the greens were very fast. Today we had a little overcast, maybe the grass didn't grow as much as it did the other day. But they definitely didn't slow down and I actually thought they were much smoother this afternoon than they had been in the past.

Q. 54 hole event, obviously a fast start is important, you got to like your position now?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I do. I like that I'm striking the ball better. I like that I'm making some putts and obviously that my short game is there.

So, obviously, I'm hoping for that to continue. I'm going to keep my fingers crossed and keep on playing the way I have -- well, I guess, the last 18 holes.  
(Scorecard now.)

Q. Thank you, Annika .

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