

**State Farm Classic
The Rail Golf Course
Springfield, IL
September 3, 2006**

Final-round Interview

AN INTERVIEW OF ANNIKA SORENSTAM

THE MODERATOR: Annika, congratulations. I have a whole list of things here. 59th career win today. You came from five shots back. You shot 10-under, and tied the lowest final round by a winner in the LPGA history. Just talk about what you are feeling right now.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well of course I feel really good. I knew I had posted a low score, but I didn't know how low, and how low I would be able to go. To come from 5 behind, and to win by 2, it's pretty amazing. It's something that I'm going to remember for quite sometime. And then, you know, when I finished. I just feel like I had a good chance of winning the tournament. I also won the State Farm series, which is quite a surprise. So a fantastic day.

THE MODERATOR: Can you talk about winning the State Farm series?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah. It's something that, you know, obviously I'm aware of, but I didn't know they changed the format to winner takes all. Which was a great move. But, no, I mean it was, like I said, it was quite a special surprise. And what a bonus for the week.

THE MODERATOR: You talked yesterday about how you put everything together for today's round. Do you think you did that today?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, I think so. I mean I got off to a very good start. I birdied the first three, and then, you would think the one you would birdie No 4, I didn't, but then I came back with a birdie on the 5th. So I made the tournament a good score, and then got really hot on the backside. You know to finish 4 birdies on the last 5, that will do it a lot of times. It was fun to do it on a Sunday when I needed it.

THE MODERATOR: Can we go over your scorecard?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah. I don't have it here, which I normally do. If you don't mind. The first hole, I hit just a sand wedge to about 2 feet. No. 2, I hit an 8-iron to 3 feet. No. 3, I hit a sand wedge to about 7 feet. And then I chipped in on No. 5 with the par 3 I hit an 8-iron over the green, and chipped in for about 16 feet. Are you keeping up?

Okay. And 11, I hit, let's see, I hit a 6-iron and rolled in a putt that was 12 feet. No. 12, forward in the green-side bunker and hit it to about 2 feet. 14, 6-iron to about 11 feet. No. 15, I hit 10 wood onto the green, two-putted. And I was in the front and the pin was about 29 feet, and I made a birdie and I was 3 feet. No. 17, sand wedge to 11 feet. And here on 18, I hit a 9-iron to about 18 or 20 feet.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q You got such momentum going early on the front 9, you didn't birdie No. 4, which is a prime birdie hole. You had a little bit to go, is this a little frustration early?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: No. When you birdie the first three how can you be frustrated? I just thought, keep on going and it's going to happen. The chip on 5 was key. I didn't make a lot of mistakes. I drove the ball well and hit a lot of fairways. I don't believe I missed a single one. I was in the rough cut twice, but I managed to get down the fairway, a lot of greens. I feel like if you want to be a little critical, there could be a few more. I'm happy with my round and it was there and it was easy for me to grab it.

Q How about ball striking, how does this compare to your round of 59?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Very good. A lot of fairways and greens I had good distance control. I was always around the hole, happy with that.

Q I guess not to be greedy after a 62, any 1 or 2-putts that you felt were right there?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: No. 8 that is where I had an 8-footer. And No. 10, I had a 6 or 7-footer.

Q You said yesterday what Kate Golden did here in 2001, I think you said is the type of round that was there, and you grabbed it. Did you really feel really good, like I'm really going after those first three holes? At what point did you maybe feel like I really do have something special going here?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well I think, you know, I chipped on 5 I was 4-under and this is good. I'm climbing up the leaderboard. Just letting them know that I am here and I'm playing well. And it's always fun to be able to put a little pressure on the leaders. Because when you are a leader and you see someone moving you never know how they can go. I kind of felt like I was in that position, you keep, you keep an eye, but she was quite far back. I felt good making the turn. When I rolled in the birdie putt on 11, I felt good about that. After that I played care free. I hit the fairway and greens and just go for it. I have nothing to lose and everything to gain. It's kind of fun to be in that situation.

Q I asked Kerry afterwards how many wins on the bag for him, and he said 59. Stephen Williams gets a lot of face time because of his relationship with Tiger. Can you tell us what Kerry is good at as far as your relationship is concerned?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: We have been working together for 7 years and we have gone through a lot together. He is a hard worker. He takes his job seriously. He is very prepared. Which is what I like. There is not a sprinkler that is out there or a twig or anything out there he doesn't know. He is so prepared. I'm a player and a person that I don't like surprises, so I need to know where, you know, everything is out there. If I ask him what is the carry of that bunker, or what is the carry to that fairway cut? He knows it all. I like that. He is a guy that is precise and exact with everything. He is also a guy that knows what to say at the right time. There is times to leave me alone, and there are times to cheer me up. And he has a very good feel for what to say and when to say it. And, I think last but not least, we have become very good friends. And so we have a good time out there and he is very competitive, and he knows what my goals are. And he is there to help me to reach those goals, and I think that is very important.

Q Was there any point today did he say anything? You had such a good round going out, did he say anything to maybe keep you on an even keel?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well today was just -- I wouldn't say just a regular day for us, but it was a Sunday where we just have to go out and do our work, so to speak. But it's all about the long term work and we have been working very hard on my swing the last few months. It's been, you know, a little bit of an up-and-down year. Today was a round out of many rounds I have been trying to find my game. And today clicked, and that makes it more special because then you remember the rounds where it hasn't clicked. And, you know, when putts don't go in, I'm going to remember today. And that is really satisfying.

Q You said you had described this as an up-and-down year. However, your last two tournaments, including back home, have been I mean different circumstances, but I don't know if 'emotional' is the right word. But I know you and Lorena went down to the wire on your home course, and you had a sensational round today, just compare the two experiences.

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well I think they are both great. Today I had lower round than I did in Sweden, but still kind of a dramatic finish, where, you know, you make a lot of birdies coming down the stretch. And it's always fun to make a putt to win on the last or even the last two. They are very similar like that.

Also Lorena playing so well being the money leader and her and for her to come to Sweden and then going head-to-head, that made it exciting. I have played very well the last two weeks, and hopefully that is a sign of things turning around and me finishing a stronger season.

Q When you were much younger you told me that visually you mentally put flags on the fairway when you stood on the tee. You talk about the visualization and you get into a round like today, the visualization that you go through in a 10 birdie round?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I think the key is to stay in the present. And even though you get off to a good round, it's easy to start thinking about birdies, and thinking, oh, I'm going to shoot a really low score. You have got to stay in the moment. And the third hole is done with, and let's go to the 4th and play that. And it's let's hit one shot at a time. And for me if you want to look at it's short term goals within the round. And that is why I used to say, put the flag in the center that is my first goal. I have to get it there. And then you put a flag on the green, and that is my second goal. And I kind of plug along that way. And it's a way of breaking the round up. An easy way to stay in the moment rather than looking at 18 holes and thinking I have to shoot 65, or something to catch someone. That to me is very difficult. And if I can do step-by-step, I did do that pretty good today.

Q (Inaudible)?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I haven't really asked anybody. I guess you should ask.

Q I will.

Q What type of physical workout do you do? Physical regiment?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah. I workout a lot. I have been for about the last 7 years; 3 times on the road and 5 times on the road. A lot of it is weight training. I lift a lot of weights. I have done a lot of cardio once in a while, but I wouldn't say that takes up most of my time. I enjoy it very much.

Q There were a bunch of points today (inaudible), how much of a role did emotions play today, and were there more emotions today than usual?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well, I think I was feeling so good because I have been working so hard on my swing for so long. And I just haven't felt like I have been able to finish. The British Open I started good, but I didn't finish. The first round here I started well and I didn't finish. It just seems like this year it's been 14 or 15 really good holes. In Atlanta I was leading and hit out of bounds on 17, which to me it's very rare. Normally, I am so consistent and I can finish. I think today I felt like I was in control most of the day. And the key for me was to be able to start well and to finish it. I didn't feel like I left too much out there. I mentioned a few putts, but it wasn't like I made big mistakes, which I have done previously this year. That to me is satisfying too. And hopefully that I'm changing the trend I have been doing for the last few months.

Q I think he asked you this question out at No. 18. But again, this is only the third time you have played here. And I know the autographs and the fans are something you are used to. But maybe when you come to a city again maybe you haven't played very often, and of course the kind of round you had today only enhanced it. But the response from fans, I mean, does it kind of remind you again of, the role you have in golf and on the tour? When you have that kind of fan response?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I think the response and just the support I felt all week has been fantastic. I mean I felt welcome from the beginning and the hospitality has been fantastic. It's fun when you come back to a place you haven't been for a while and obviously my career has changed a little bit since I was here last. A lot of things have happened. I really feel welcome and I really felt like they wanted me to be here. And several times people have thanked me for making this tournament special, and of course this warms your heart. It's more than coming here and playing, it's more on the personal level as well. It makes me feel good that is for sure.

Q I think you may have said, this Tulsa next week?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Yeah, I'm playing Tulsa.

Q You set this time the LPGA for a final round -- lowest final round. Annika, I am sure you have the record, you shot the 59. Do you recall any 61's anything between 59 and 62 career-wise?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: I think I had a 10-under before. I think we have to look that up.

THE MODERATOR: Anything else?

Q You had the two birdies late yesterday. Was there a carry over from that?

ANNIKA SORENSTAM: Well it's always nice to finish strong. It kind of leaves a good taste in your mouth. And, you know, I was -- you start the round 5 behind is a lot better than 7. That makes a big difference. Knowing that you are in striking range I think can kind of give you a little boost.

Thanks.