

## “WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CORI BRETT?”

August 2010



### “CONVERSATION WITH ANNIKA”

What questions would you ask the most famous woman golfer in the world? I was one of the few journalists granted an interview with Annika Sorenstam on July 25<sup>th</sup> at the Course at Wente Vineyards. Annika hosted an all-day event to celebrate the release of her newest wine, a (delicious!) 2008 Chardonnay. She is delightful. Following are highlights of my interview.

Cori Brett: What do you see for the future of the LPGA tour?

Annika Sorenstam: There have been a lot of changes. It's no doubt the economy has been affecting the tour, but we have a great commissioner. I'm still involved in the game and on the Commissioner's Advisory Board. The product is wonderful. I hope that the game becomes more accessible for women. And it doesn't always have to be 18 holes. You can play 9 holes and you can still enjoy the game.

Cori Brett: What do you think golf could do to attract more women?

Annika Sorenstam: Well, I think one thing - not necessarily just for women - has to do with the pace of play. It is so slow. I don't know how many in this world have the time to be out there for five hours. Again, you can just play nine holes or so. Also, I think introducing match play is a way to speed up the game. Make clubs more available for women. I grew up in a place where golf is open for everybody. I think that's important.

Cori Brett: When you're designing a golf course, how do you consider the forward and middle tees for the mid-range player?

Annika Sorenstam: Let me talk about my whole philosophy of designing. My goal is to create what I call an inspirational experience for a professional, for a beginner, for men, for women, for an older person, for a kid ... It's funny because when I go out there, the first thing they say is, "Oh, are you designing a course for women?" And I'll be, "No, I'm designing a course for golfers."

Cori Brett: What are your current design projects? I understand you're doing a lot in Asia.

Annika Sorenstam: I love the golf course design business and using my creativity. The first one was at Mission Hills in China. In September we have the grand opening of a 27-hole project south of Seoul, Korea. We have a project in the Philippines and one on hold in China. When I played a World Championship in Malaysia – I believe in 2001 or '02 – I was introduced to Tan Sri Lee Kim Yew. He's a big supporter of women and golf. At his new project, the Mines Golf City, he plans to have the golf designed entirely by female golfers. I am to do the first one and Se Ri Pak is supposedly doing the second one.

Cori Brett: Tell us about your wine partnership with Wente Vineyards.

Annika Sorenstam: I'm very happy with the partnership. Karl Wente is just fabulous and together when we do the blending, it's a lot of fun. He's the expert and I'm probably oh, a "nine handicap" in wine – don't know if I give myself too much credit. I make a few bogeys. But I know what I like. I tell him what I want, and he's a great listener. He says, "Okay, you want this type of flavor - then we need these type of grapes." And then I try, and I say, "Hmm, maybe it's not as full bodied or with a white for example, maybe it's too buttery." And he will say, "Oh, try this." I'll be, "No, it's too fruity."



Hole #15 at The Course at Wente Vineyards

Cori Brett: Is it fun?

Annika Sorenstam: I mean I love it. The first time we sit in like in a chemistry lab with these measuring cups and try a third of this and a third of that. It's not what you think of wine tasting. That happens later on.

Cori Brett: Do you want your daughter to follow your footsteps as a professional golfer?

Annika Sorenstam: If she wants to, I'll support her. I know a few things about it. I think bottom line is you need to want to do it yourself. It's not something I'm going to push, but I'm going to make it available. She already has a bag, golf balls and shoes. So I don't know if you call that pushing.

Cori Brett: How old is she now?

Annika Sorenstam: Ten, almost eleven months now.

Cori Brett: Would you consider coming to Arizona, hosting a wine tasting or putting on a benefit that we could do for the Arizona's Women's Golf Association?

Annika Sorenstam: Yes, I've done several wine tastings and several charity events. Today is such an example of what you can do. The people here love similar lifestyles - golf, obviously the beautiful setting, and the food and wine. As far as Arizona goes, we don't have any plans of going there, but I'm all for fun events like that and raising money for good causes.

Cori Brett: Do you have any final comments about women's golf, about the future?

Annika Sorenstam: We have to continue to support each other and create opportunities. I grew up, like I said, with my parents playing, and it's open. Men and women play together, and that's the way we should enjoy this game.



# 7 at The Course at Wentz Vineyards

(To read about The Course at Wentz Vineyards, see November 2009 “Where in the World is Cori Brett.”)

*“Escape with Cori” on assignment to exotic and fun destinations. First-hand impressions from an experienced golf travel writer and AWGA member. [www.coribrett.com](http://www.coribrett.com)  
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