



LIBERTY CORNER, N.J. (May 2, 2023) – Three-time U.S. Women's Open champion Annika Sorenstam, of Sweden, has accepted a special exemption into the 78th U.S. Women's Open Championship, which will be conducted July 6-9 at Pebble Beach (Calif.) Golf Links.

Sorenstam, 52, won the 1995, 1996 and 2006 U.S. Women's Open Championships as well as seven other major championships and 72 total LPGA victories in her Hall of Fame career before retiring from full-time professional golf in 2008. In 2021, she returned to competitive golf at the 3rd U.S. Senior Women's Open, where she cruised to an 8-shot victory, securing her place in the 2022 U.S. Women's Open at Pine Needles Lodge & Golf Club, site of her 1996 Women's Open win. The 2022 U.S. Women's Open was Sorenstam's first start in the championship in 13 years and 16th overall.

"I am incredibly grateful to the USGA for the opportunity to play in this year's U.S. Women's Open," said Sorenstam. "It is a championship that has helped to define my career, and to play in the first one at Pebble Beach, which will be a defining moment for women's golf, with my family by my side will be a week we never forget."

Sorenstam's first professional victory in the U.S. came at the 1995 U.S. Women's Open, when she defeated Meg Mallon by one stroke at Broadmoor Golf Club in Colorado Springs, Colo. She would defend her title one year later at Pine Needles with a commanding six-shot victory for her second major title. It would be another 10 years before she would win her third U.S. Women's Open, outlasting Pat Hurst in an 18-hole playoff at Newport Country Club for her most recent major victory.

The 2003 World Golf Hall of Fame inductee was elected president of the International Golf Federation in 2020. Sorenstam was the recipient of the 2012 Bob Jones Award, the USGA's highest honor, which recognizes an individual who demonstrates spirit, personal character and respect for the game.

U.S. Women's Open champions Paula Creamer and Cristie Kerr were the most recent players to receive special exemptions into the championship, in 2021 at The Olympic Club in San Francisco, Calif. The most recent special exemptions before that went to two-time champion Karrie Webb, in both 2018 and 2019. Amy Alcott's sixth-place finish in 1994 at Indianwood Golf & Country Club in Lake Orion, Mich., is the highest finish for any player who has received a special exemption.

Sorenstam is one of four golfers in the championship's history to claim three victories. Only Betsy Rawls and Mickey Wright, both with four, have more.

Entry applications for the 2023 U.S. Women's Open close Wednesday, May 3, at 5 p.m. ET.

About the USGA

The USGA is a nonprofit organization that celebrates, serves and advances the game of golf. Founded in 1894, we conduct many of golf's premier professional and amateur championships, including the U.S. Open and U.S. Women's

Open. With The R&A, we govern the sport via a global set of playing, equipment, handicapping and amateur status rules. The USGA campus in Liberty Corner, New Jersey, is home to the Association's Research and Test Center, where science and innovation are fueling a healthy and sustainable game for the future. The campus is also home to the USGA Golf Museum, where we honor the game by curating the world's most comprehensive archive of golf artifacts. To learn more, visit usga.org.

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