

2-time ACC winner excited Sorenstam is playing

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – Players having fun and interacting with the gallery – that’s some of what sets watching Tahoe’s celebrity golf tournament apart from the PGA or LPGA.

At least that’s how two-time American Century Championship winner Jack Wagner sees it.

He was in town June 3 playing a round at Edgewood Tahoe before the July 15-20 tournament. Wagner, along with John Elway, Mike Eruzione and Jim McMahon are the only four to have played each year. This marks the 25th year of the event.

“This is our Masters/U.S. Open,” Wagner said during a lunch at the golf course’s restaurant. “It’s real golf and there is a lot of fun golf.”

While the actor-musician last won the tournament in 2011, this year he’s favored to win it with 7:1 odds.

Who has the best odds is Annika Sorenstam at 2:1. Sorenstam, who has a second home in Incline Village, is thought of as the best women’s golfer of all time. She retired in 2008 after having won 72 LPGA tournaments, including 10 majors and 18 other international tournaments.

Wagner’s first preference of a playing partner would be his late father. But his celebrity choice is Sorenstam.



Jack Wagner talks June 3 about what it will be like to play with Annika Sorenstam in Tahoe's celebrity golf tournament. Photo/Kathryn Reed

"I would want to watch her rhythm, her tempo and say 'nice shot'," Wagner said.

"She has a great chance of winning. I think she will elevate everyone's game."

He doesn't take any issue with a former professional golfer being in the draw. Plus, she is going to be teeing off from the same markers as the guys in the field. Wagner also said Sorenstam is probably "rusty" so that could help the guys.

Besides his club tournament, the ACC is now the only tournament he plays.

"This tournament is the foundation of so many friendships," Wagner said.

A group of seven or so guys would take golfing trips together. While those days are gone, Wagner said, "This is where we rekindle our friendships."

He said they don't spend time in the casinos, but instead spend the bulk of their time at Edgewood Tahoe.

But that's not to say he hasn't gambled. There was the first

year when he went from the blackjack table to having to tee off.