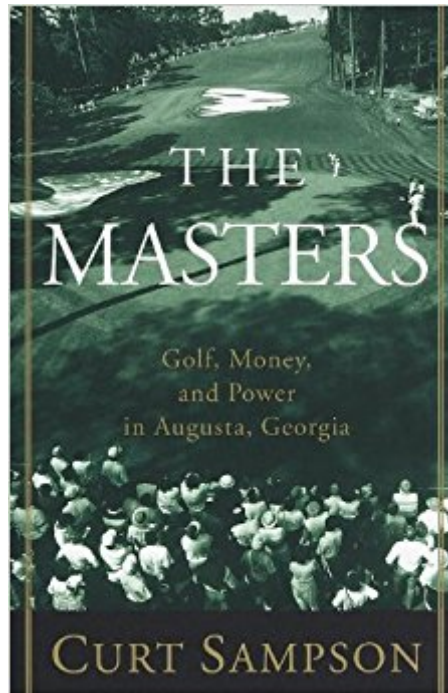




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# The Masters: Golf, Money, And Power In Augusta, Georgia



## Synopsis

The Masters golf tournament weaves a hypnotic spell. It is the toughest ticket in sports, with black-market tickets selling for \$10,000 and more. Success at Augusta National breeds legends, while failure can overshadow even the most brilliant of careers. But as Curt Sampson, author of the bestselling *Hogan*, reveals in *The Masters*, a cold heart beats behind the warm antebellum facade of this famous Augusta course. And that heart belongs to the man who killed himself on the grounds two decades ago. Club and tournament founder Clifford Roberts, a New York stockbroker, still seems to run the place from his grave. An elusive and reclusive figure, Roberts pulled the strings that made the Masters the greatest golf tournament in the world. His story--including his relationship with presidents, power brokers, and every golf champion from Bobby Jones to Arnold Palmer to Jack Nicklaus--has never been told. Until now. *The Masters* is an amazing slice of history, taking us inside the presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower, Augusta's most famous member. It is a look at how the new South coexists with the old South: the relationships between blacks and whites, between Southerners and Northerners, between rich and poor--with such characters as James Brown, the Godfather of Soul; the great boxer Beau Jack; and Frank Stranahan, the playboy golfer and the only white pro ever banned from the tournament. *The Masters* is a spellbinding portrait of a tournament unlike any other.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Curt Sampson follows his exceptional biography of Ben Hogan with another sweeping exploration of

one of golf's icier hearts: Augusta National and the powers behind the Masters. A combination of history, sociology, and good old sports writing, *The Masters* counterpoints a rich, white institution with the town surrounding it that is anything but. Ultimately, the book tells the story of a singular sporting experience--and the marvelous drama it has provided--that manages to succeed spectacularly despite the arrogance, dourness, and manipulations of the homogenous bastion that deigns to let the rest of the world intrude upon its exclusiveness for one week every April. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Arguably the most prestigious event on the Professional Golfers Tour, the Masters imposes 13 specific qualifications a player must meet to be on the invitation list. Even then there is no guarantee that a golfer will be selected to participate. No wonder this competition is a who's who of the world's best golfers. Sampson, author of several books on golf (e.g., *Hogan*, Rutledge, 1996), has compiled an interesting study complete with bibliography and index. This portrait of the Masters, appropriately subtitled "gold, money, and power in Augusta," traces the tournament's history since 1933, revealing both the dramatic moments and the controversial secrets, most notably racism. Certainly a book to raise eyebrows at the Augusta National Golf Club. The members' code of silence and a tight control of the media have kept a lid on the club's less-than-flattering side. Golfing enthusiasts will enjoy the publication. Purchase where demand warrants. A Larry Robert Little, Penticton P.L., BCCopyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

There are whispers & dark corners in most every enterprise and Augusta National is no exception. Even this expose likely just scratches the surface - the marks seem to have drawn blood from the netherworld. Though achieving a great place in golf, the 'means' have not always been pretty. A good read on the event & some more recent Augusta history.

*The Masters* is an interesting read, but surely the first rule of writing books like these is to provide both points of view. The average person has no chance to find out what Augusta National is really like, so we need to rely on authors such as Curt Sampson to go behind the myth and reveal the truth. If you compare "The Masters" with "The Making of the Masters" by David Owen, you wouldn't believe the two authors are writing about the same golf club. Most likely the truth lies somewhere between the two books - Owen could be the chief cheerleader for Augusta National, while Sampson isn't likely to be on the Chairman's Christmas card list. I would recommend the book to the serious

golf fan, but have an open mind when reading it.

I was not impressed with this book. For my taste it was poorly written and failed to tie its main theme to the examples the author gave. I believe there are much better books on the Masters that I would recommend before reading Sampson's.

If Sampson's probe is anywhere near the truth, it surely smudges the high place we give to Augusta and The Masters. Certainly, it still revolves around Jones, and it always has. The legend of this amateur and supposed gentleman is tarnished by his association with Roberts and his seizure of power and control of what has become golfing legend. Without the champion's name and backing and tournament, The Masters and Augusta would be just another club and tour stop. But from the outset it was Bobby who kept it together. Then the illness and pulling away, and the inroads of Cliff and the rest is history, here well documented by one of the great golf writers. Sampson again weaves his literary magic with different piercing vignettes of the personalities and events which have led to Augusta lore and legend. Story upon story from various facets permeate this fluid read--from club caddie to townfolk to neglected member and player -- one is given much to contemplate. The tales are superb, sampling but a few: the caddie deliberately overclubbing Robert's opponent on a Par 3 course contest; Dave Marr's response to Arnie that even his divot cleared Rae's Creek on 15; the asst. pro's wife being offered big money for the rope marker that only quandered off souvenir sales. Augusta appears to be the premier "ole boys" club. If you want scoop about it's past and insights possibly into its present, this read will begin that path.

I went into this thinking I would hate it (full disclosure I am a golf nut and one of the folks that looks at Augusta National with wide eyes). To his credit Curt was very fair and balanced even when he was criticizing the club/tournament. It got a little bit long winded at times when he got away from the actual club/tournament but even then it helped in painting the overall big picture that he was trying to portray.

Sampson doesn't pretend to write an objective history of Augusta National and the Masters. This book is all about the crabgrass and bare spots in the fairway. Picking and choosing his "facts" and with a colorful writing style, the author dumps on most everyone associated with Masters, Augusta National Golf (not Country) Club, and even the City of Augusta. Though most of his venom is directed toward Cliff Roberts, the club's founder and original czar, even Bobby Jones comes across

as something less than the golfing saint he's often portrayed to be. Interestingly, the last chapter of the edition I read introduces Hootie Johnson as the new club president, in whom Sampson seems to see a ray of hope. Obviously, that chapter was written before Johnson's go-around with Martha Burke.

gives a more realistic view of the Masters and all the surrounding hoopla

Good book for golf enthusiasts.

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