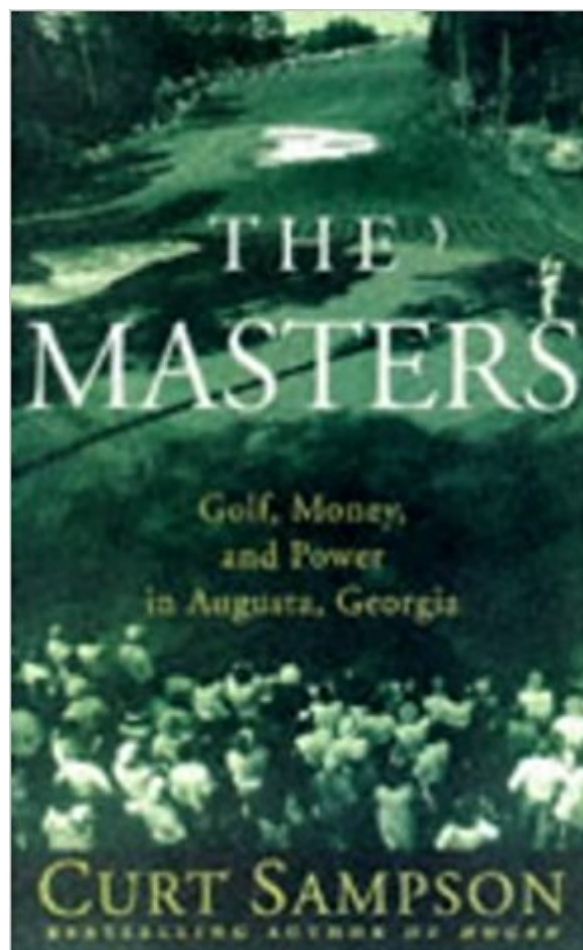


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# The Masters: Golf, Money, And Power In Augusta, Georgia



## 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. As it is the only major golf tournament to return to the same site year after year, much of the fascination is historical. But as Curt Sampson, author of the bestselling *Hogan*, reveals in *The Masters*, a cold heart beats behind the warm antebellum façade 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. Roberts, an elusive and reclusive figure, pulled the strings that made the Masters the greatest golf tournament in the world. His story—including his relationships with presidents, power brokers, and every golf champion from Bobby Jones to Arnold Palmer to Jack Nicklaus—has never been told. Until now. No mere recitation of birdies, bogeys, and tournament winners, *The Masters* is the intricate tale of the interplay among the town, the tournament, and the club. It 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. It is a portrait of a tournament unlike any other as well as the town in which it lives and breathes—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 book that is certain to cause controversy yet will reinforce one's love for and dedication to the sport's greatest event. It is just as certain that *The Masters* will be the golf book of the year.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Having played at Augusta National and attending the tournament for over 25 years, everything Curt Sampson has to say is true. Until now, nobody had the courage to publish the truth, for fear of losing their "privileges". His book is not a revelation of new facts, but is more a history lesson of the elitist group of men who founded the club and the tournament and their relationship with the city of Augusta. The members are still pompous! We forget that what we see now on TV is far from how this event started. Very factual. Well written. Easy reading. A good gift for any golfer who dreams about Augusta National.

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.

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.

I liked the book for the most part. I guess I wanted to read more about past champions and how they won as opposed to the trees, grass and watering systems at the national. At times I had a hard time understanding which direction the book was going. Really enjoyed learning more about Bobby Jones and Cliff Roberts and the type of men they were.

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 its past and insights possibly into its present, this read will begin that path.

The author starts well but doesn't finish as he jumps from the course, to the town to the townspeople, but with no real insights into the main subject: the golf course and the tournament itself. His one-sided portrayal of Cliff Roberts doesn't help the reader truly understand why Roberts spent much of his life devoted to Augusta National. The last chapter was out of joint with the rest of the text as he struggles to end what he started. Hard to recommend to others.

Author Curt Sampson captures the birth and life of one of the most famous sporting events in the world, The Masters golf tournament. Played annually in Augusta, Georgia, this prestigious golf tournament has become the new face of golf. Mr. Sampson shows us how this once unknown place, turned into a sanctuary for some of the greatest golfers of all time. He gets deep into how it was started by a group of New York business men, only 68 years after the Civil War. He shows us how although, one of the most famed golf course in the world has always been dampered by the reputation for being a racist society. He explains how that when Tiger Woods won the Masters in 1997, Augusta and the Masters had come full swing from what it once was. This book goes well into detail about things the common person would have never known or been able to find out. Although, occasionally drags on about the birth of this event. this book has solid content and gives information

that you would have never known otherwise. I recommend this book to any golf enthusiast.

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