

2009 MASTERS TOURNAMENT GUIDE

By

The Armchair Golfer

A publication of the
ARMCHAIR GOLF BLOG

*“You have to really temper your excitement, your nerves.
The rush is hard to explain, really. The adrenaline is so strong.
It feels like the only place I’d ever want to be.”*

–DAVID DUVAL

March 2009

Dear Golf Enthusiast,

Welcome to my 2009 Masters Tournament Guide. I've included a lot of the need-to-know information about the year's first major. I've also included bonus material such as interviews, interesting facts, history, humor and more.

In 2008, I made my first trip to Augusta for the Masters with golf friend and author John Coyne. I've included notes and observations from that trip in the section titled The Masters Experience. The section may be helpful if you're going to the Masters, or illuminating if you'll be watching from home and wondering what it's like to be there. There's also a Q&A with Jim Gorant, a senior editor for *Sports Illustrated* who shares his Masters experience.

With Tiger Woods back in action and many new and longtime challengers, I think this will be another thrilling Masters. I'll be watching from home this year, in my armchair, wondering who will master Augusta's lush fairways and tricky greens to don the Green Jacket.

Finally, whether you're new or been around awhile, I'm extremely grateful that you read the ARMCHAIR GOLF BLOG. Keep coming back. I plan to have plenty of interesting golf material for you at the blog, in future reports and in occasional email updates.

Enjoy the Masters!

Yours for golf,
The Armchair Golfer

P.S. I'll have Masters coverage at the ARMCHAIR GOLF BLOG, so be sure to check back often. Also, please feel free to write me at armchairgolfer@gmail.com.

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THE MASTERS EXPERIENCE

My Road to the Masters

“Get off on the last South Carolina exit,” Kathy said. “It’s farther but will save you time.”

Kathy works in the ticket office at the Augusta National Golf Club. She helped me a week ago when my tickets for the Monday practice round didn’t arrive, so yesterday I called again to ask her advice on parking and which exit to take. Kathy could not have been more pleasant.

Tomorrow morning I leave by car for my first Masters. I’ve been watching the tournament since my teens, and I feel like a five-year-old on Christmas Eve.

I’ll leave my home in the Blue Ridge Mountains and head south for Charlotte, where I’ll pick up John Coyne who is flying from New York City.

(John is the author of *The Caddie Who Knew Ben Hogan* and *The Caddie Who Played With Hickory*.)

We’ll drive to Columbia, South Carolina, and spend the night. Then on to Augusta early Monday morning.

“Will Tiger be there on Monday?” my wife asked.

“Yeah, I’m sure he will be,” I replied. “He’s not playing this week.”

I told her about the various gates, the parking, the crowds, and talking to Kathy to find out the best way to do things since it’s my first time.

“How does Tiger get there?”

I laughed. “He flies in on his private jet.”

“Where will he stay?”

“He and a lot of the other pros rent homes for the week.”

“Does his caddie fly with him?”

“Steve Williams. Yeah, I’m sure he does sometimes, depending on their schedules. But caddies are responsible for getting themselves to tournaments. They’re independent contractors.”

Her questions made me think about the life of a successful PGA Tour pro. These

guys are good, as the saying goes, plus they've got it good.

So Tiger will fly in from Orlando, I imagine. He may already be at Augusta. Meanwhile, I'll drive in – 300 miles – from Virginia. On Monday we'll be walking the same hallowed golf ground.

I can't wait.

One Patron's Guide to Augusta National Golf Club

I've been called many things in my life – mostly good, I would like to think – but until yesterday I had never been called a “patron,” at least not in the golf sense. If you know anything about the Masters and Augusta National Golf Club, then you know what I mean.

Yesterday I attended my first Masters, a Monday practice round on the hallowed golf grounds of Augusta National. So I am now a patron, and have a twice-scanned badge to prove it. (More on Masters security shortly.)

As such, I will pass on a few observations, one patron to another (or patron to non-patron).

Getting there. If you're coming from the east on I-20, take the last South Carolina exit. It will funnel you through North Augusta. Follow the signs and avoid the congestion of the main Augusta exits. If you want to enter through the main pedestrian gate (Gate 3A), try parking at Whole Life Ministries across the street, just \$20. But you'll need to arrive early.

Security. You're not boarding a flight but might think you are. I thought I was in after I passed security guards, showed my badge and walked through a turnstile. Then, fifty yards ahead, I encountered the metal detectors. Note: Don't secure your badge on your clothing until AFTER you pass through the final checkpoint. You'll have to hand it over to be scanned. (They'll also scan your badge when you leave the grounds.) You have to place cameras and other stuff in plastic containers (like at the airport) before walking through the metal detector. Leave your pocket knife at home or it will be confiscated. It happened to a man behind me.

Pimento cheese sandwich. Go ahead and try one – it's a Masters tradition. But unless you're from the South, don't gobble them down. Not that anything bad will happen, just as a precaution. I had my one and only pimento cheese sandwich at 9:30 a.m. (I had been up since 4:30 a.m. and was operating on a cup of MacDonald's coffee and an orange juice.) It got me to lunch, which was a tuna fish sandwich and bag of

chips. If you go to the Masters, be ready to eat sandwiches wrapped in Masters green cellophane.

Take a camera on practice days. Take a camera even if, like me, you're not the one who usually snaps the photos. All the superlatives you've heard about the Masters are true. I assure you that you've never seen a golf environment like Augusta National. (I was wondering if they schedule when and how many pine needles can fall at any given time.) You'll be glad to have pictures.

The lines move fast. I'm patient about a lot of things, but I avoid most of life's lines unless it's, well, unavoidable. I confess that I didn't stand in line to buy merchandise. (You can buy online.) I did stand in line for the restroom. Either way, lines move quickly at the Masters. To say things are well organized is like saying Tiger Woods is a good golfer.

A spectator tip from Bobby Jones. Sure, there's more, way too much to impart. I'm still overwhelmed by the experience. But enough of me. I turn it over to Robert Tyre Jones Jr. who literally wrote the book on how to be a spectator at the world's most-famous golf tournament. Here's an excerpt from page 17:

"Most distressing to those who love the game of golf is the applauding or cheering of misplays or misfortunes of a player. Such occurrences have been rare at the Masters but we must eliminate them entirely if our patrons are to continue to merit their reputation as the most knowledgeable and considerate in the world."

Hear, hear.

Masters Food: A Tradition Like No Other

To my knowledge, I've never eaten a pimento cheese sandwich. Unless my parents served me one when I was a boy, in which case I ate every bite. That was the rule.

However, I may eat one next Monday when I attend my first Masters. It's a tradition, and I can see myself being duped by tradition, especially at Augusta National Golf Club.

The crazy thing? Even if it makes me gag, I'm only out \$1.50. I repeat, buck-fifty. (7% tax included.) Like most things Masters, the food prices are frozen in the 20th century.

Of course, I could splurge and get a Master Club sandwich. That would set me back \$2.50. Throw in a bag of chips and a beer and I'm shelling out more than a Lincoln. Me and my big-spending ways.

Seriously, if you add up everything on the Patrons Menu (that's Masters insider talk) I don't think it comes to \$30. The Masters is definitely in some kind of weird time warp.

Food aside, I just hope the course will be in decent shape. I've heard it can be pretty nice this time of year.

The Patron's Menu

<i>Sandwiches</i>	Ham/Cheese/Rye	<i>Snacks</i>
Tuna Salad/Wheat	<i>Beverages</i>	Candy
Bar-B-Q	Soft Drink	Chips
Egg Salad	Pink Lemonade	Crackers
Pimento Cheese	Water	Aspirin
Chicken Breast	Beer	Tylenol
Turkey/Wheat	Imported	Ice Cream
Masters Club	Sports Drink	

Chasing a Tiger

Tiger Woods collects a tee and readies himself to launch his 3 metal on the par-4 10th hole at Augusta National during Monday's practice round. To his right, Mark O'Meara retrieves his driver as Tiger's caddie Steve Williams, clad in traditional white Masters coveralls, looks on. Across the way, Tiger watchers incessantly snap photographs of the world's most-famous sports figure.

I cannot think of Tiger Woods without thinking of the throngs that chase after him. The crush of Tiger spectators at Augusta National is hard to fathom without experiencing it. As for me, I waited patiently at the 10th tee for Tiger to arrive, positioning myself behind three shorter Tiger gawkers so I would have a clear view of him. We all wanted to stand close to greatness, even if just for a moment.

Q&A: SI's Jim Gorant on the Masters

In his book, *FANATIC: 10 Things All Sports Fans Should Do Before They Die*, Jim Gorant takes you on his pilgrimage to golf heaven on earth, Augusta National. It's good stuff for the golf or sports junkie. Jim provides vivid glimpses into this world-famous golf landscape and the strange sideshow outside the tournament gates.

The book, which includes nine other sports must-do's, comes out in paperback the week before the Masters. Jim is a *Sports Illustrated* senior editor and a self-described sports addict.

ARMCHAIR GOLF: It's been a few years since your sports fanatic boondoggle. Do you still owe your wife big-time?

JIM GORANT: I owe her for agreeing to marry me in the first place. Seriously, I think it helps that the book turned out well. She's always proud of me, but in the end she enjoyed reading it herself and that helped make all the sacrifice and craziness seem worthwhile. It doesn't hurt that over time you tend to forget how bad things were. It's the same phenomenon that allows women to have more than one baby. Within months of having the first, they sort of forget how miserable the experience was. Maybe sleep deprivation has something to do with it.

ARMCHAIR GOLF: You've no doubt watched the Masters all your life. What was most startling about actually being at the Masters and Augusta National?

JIM GORANT: To me the most startling thing was the juxtaposition of the scene outside the gates at Augusta National and on the grounds. The course is pristine and beautiful, but you expect that. What you don't expect, or at least I didn't, was the sort of honky tonk, flea market feel that dominates the streets outside the club. It's sort of where Bobby Jones meets John Daly. If I'm being totally honest, I also love any chance to use the word juxtaposition.

ARMCHAIR GOLF: You were fortunate to see Jack Nicklaus in his last Masters appearance. What else is on your Augusta highlight reel?

JIM GORANT: Amen Corner, Magnolia Lane, players skipping the ball across the water at 16 during practice rounds, lunch on the clubhouse balcony, and a friend who's a well-known TV personality trashing a customized golf cart while cruising around the development we were staying in the rain well after midnight.

ARMCHAIR GOLF: Did the experience disappoint you in any way? Now that you've been, have you gone back?

JIM GORANT: I have been back and imagine I will certainly go again. I really loved it. It's just one of those places that's so unique and so special that it makes you feel lucky to be there. You don't want to leave.

ARMCHAIR GOLF: I'll be a first-timer at the Masters this year. Any tips or advice? Should I go easy on the pimento cheese sandwiches?

JIM GORANT: You're on your own with those pimento cheese things. I stayed away. Although I will say, they're a great deal, like all the food at the Masters. Otherwise, wear comfortable shoes because you're going to want to cover a lot of ground in order to see everything there is to see. As for viewing, I like 16 during practice, and the spot right by the 12th tee where you can see part of 11, all of 12 and all of 13. It's beautiful and there's plenty of action.

ARMCHAIR GOLF: If you made a list of golf tournaments to see before you die, what events besides the Masters would be on your list?

JIM GORANT: Good question. Obvious answers are the other majors, U.S. Open, British Open and the PGA. I also really enjoy the Players, because it's a such a

different-looking course with lots of dramatic risk/reward shots. Beyond that I'd want to hit the classic venues – Riviera, Pebble Beach, Colonial. Phoenix for the, um, atmosphere, and then something in Hawaii, because who doesn't want to go to Hawaii?

2009 MASTERS TOURNAMENT

The Field

(as of 3/14/09))

“The first time I played the Masters, I was so nervous I drank a bottle of rum before I teed off. I shot the happiest 83 of my life.”
–CHI CHI RODRIGUEZ

Robert Allenby (Australia) (14, 16)
Stephen Ames (Canada) (14)
Stuart Appleby (Australia) (10, 14, 16)
Briny Baird (16) Angel Cabrera (Argentina) (2)
Chad Campbell (14, 16)
Michael Campbell (New Zealand) (2)
Paul Casey (England) (10)
K.J. Choi (Korea) (14, 16)
Stewart Cink (10, 14, 15, 16)
Tim Clark (South Africa) (16)
Fred Couples (1)
Ben Crenshaw (1)
Ben Curtis (13, 14, 16)
Ken Duke (14, 16)
Ernie Els (South Africa) (14, 16)
Steve Flesch (10)
Raymond Floyd (1)
Jim Furyk (14, 16)
Sergio Garcia (Spain) (5, 13, 14, 16)
Retief Goosen (South Africa) (2)
Todd Hamilton (3)
Padraig Harrington (Ireland) (3, 4, 10, 14)
Dudley Hart (14, 16)
Ryuji Imada (Japan) (14, 15, 16)

Trevor Immelman (South Africa) (1, 14, 16)
Ryo Ishikawa (Japan) (20)
Miguel Angel Jimenez (Spain) (10, 11)
Dustin Johnson (15)
Zach Johnson (1)
Robert Karlsson (Sweden) (10, 11)
Anthony Kim (14, 15, 16)
#* Drew Kittleson (6-B)
Bernhard Langer (Germany) (1)
#* Danny Lee (New Zealand) (6-A)
Justin Leonard (14, 15, 16)
Sandy Lyle (Scotland) (1)
Hunter Mahan (14, 16)
Billy Mayfair (16)
Rocco Mediate (11)
John Merrick (11)
Phil Mickelson (1, 4, 5, 10, 14, 15, 16)
Larry Mize (1)
#* Jack Newman (8)
Greg Norman (Australia) (12)
Geoff Ogilvy (Australia) (2, 14)
Sean O'Hair (10)
Jose Maria Olazabal (Spain) (1)
Mark O'Meara (1)
Pat Perez (15)
Kenny Perry (14, 15, 16)
Carl Pettersson (Sweden) (11, 14, 15, 16)
Gary Player (South Africa) (1)
Ian Poulter (England) (12)
Chez Reavie (15)
Andres Romero (Argentina) (10, 16)

#* Reinier Saxton (Holland) (7)
Adam Scott (Australia) (15)
Vijay Singh (Fiji) (1, 4, 10, 14, 15, 16)
Brandt Snedeker (10)
Craig Stadler (1)
Henrik Stenson (Sweden) (12, 13)
Steve Stricker (14, 16)
Kevin Sutherland (14, 16)
D.J. Trahan (11, 14, 16)
Camilo Villegas (Colombia) (13, 14, 15, 16)
Nick Watney (10)
Bubba Watson (16)
Tom Watson (1)
Boo Weekley (14, 15)
Mike Weir (Canada) (1, 14, 16)
Lee Westwood (England) (10, 11)
#* Steve Wilson (9)
Tiger Woods (1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 14)
Ian Woosnam (Wales) (1)
Y.E. Yang (South Korea) (15)
Fuzzy Zoeller (1)
#- Denotes first Masters
*- Denotes Amateur

(Past champions not playing: Tommy Aaron, Severiano Ballesteros, Jack Burke Jr., Billy Casper, Charles Coody, Nick Faldo, Doug Ford, Bob Goalby, Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer.)

Number after each name indicates the basis of qualification. The Masters Committee, at its discretion, also invites international players not otherwise qualified.

1. Masters Tournament Champions (Lifetime).
2. U.S. Open Champions (Honorary, non-competing after five years).
3. British Open Champions (Honorary, non-competing after five years).
4. PGA Champions (Honorary, non-competing after five years).
5. Winners of The Players Championship (2007 and 2008).
6. Current US Amateur Champion (6-A) (Honorary, non-competing after one year) and the runner-up (6-B) to the current US Amateur Champion.
7. Current British Amateur Champion (Honorary, non-competing after one year).
8. Current U.S. Amateur Public Links Champion.
9. Current U.S. Mid-Amateur Champion.
10. The first 16 players, including ties, in the 2008 Masters Tournament.
11. The first 8 players, including ties, in the 2008 US Open Championship.
12. The first 4 players, including ties, in the 2008 British Open Championship.
13. The first 4 players, including ties, in the 2008 PGA Championship.
14. The 30 leaders on the Final Official PGA Tour Money List for 2008.
15. Winners of PGA Tour events that award a full-point allocation for the season-ending Tour Championship, from previous Masters to current Masters.
16. Those qualifying for the season-ending 2008 Tour Championship.
17. The 50 leaders on the Final Official World Golf Ranking for 2008.
18. The 50 leaders on the Official World Golf Ranking published during the week prior to the 2009 Masters Tournament.

The Course

“Frankly, I was overwhelmed by the exciting possibilities of a golf course set in the midst of such a nursery.”
—ROBERT TYRE JONES, JR.

The site of the Masters Tournament started by Bobby Jones in 1934, Augusta National Golf Club is one of the most famous golf courses in the world. (In fact, the Old Course in St. Andrews, Scotland, is probably the only golf course that eclipses Augusta’s fame.) The Masters is golf’s unofficial rite of spring and is the only major to always be played on the same golf course.

Augusta National is a former indigo plantation and nursery (Fruitland Nurseries) acquired by Jones during the Depression to build a golf course. According to the *Masters Spectator Guide*, Jones was thrilled when he examined the property from what is now the practice putting green.

“Perfect!” he exclaimed. “And to think this ground has been lying here all these years waiting for someone to come along and lay a course on it.”

Scotsman Alistair Mackenzie, designer of Cypress Point in California, served as course architect. The plan was to accentuate the natural attributes of the 365-acre property and rely on mounds more than bunkers to define the layout. A winding natural creek (Rae’s Creek) would also become a defining characteristic, along with routing that featured plenty of dogleg holes (many right to left) and massive undulating greens.

Augusta National has undergone several alterations, most of them in more recent years to add length and difficulty to offset gains in equipment technology and the ability of the world’s best golfers.

For the 2009 Masters Tournament, Augusta National will play to a length of 7,435 yards. Par is 72.

Augusta National Golf Club Scorecard

HOLE	PAR	YARDAGE	NAME
1	4	445	Tea Olive
2	5	575	Pink Dogwood
3	4	350	Flowering Peach
4	3	240	Flowering Crab Apple
5	4	455	Magnolia
6	3	180	Juniper
7	4	450	Pampas
8	5	570	Yellow Jasmine
9	4	460	Caroline Cherry
OUT	36	3735	
10	4	495	Camellia
11	4	505	White Dogwood
12	3	155	Golden Bell
13	5	510	Azalea
14	4	440	Chinese Fir
15	5	530	Firethorn
16	3	170	Redbud
17	4	440	Nandina
18	4	465	Holly
IN	36	3710	
TOTALS	72	7435	

Masters TV Coverage

“I will never forget April 13, 1986. It was my first Masters, and just as it ended, Ken Venturi drove me back to the CBS compound and said, ‘Jimmy, you may be lucky enough to broadcast 50 Masters, but you’ll never live to see a greater one than the one you saw today.’ I think he was right.”

–JIM NANTZ

Wednesday, April 8

3:00 – 5:00 p.m. ET Live Coverage ESPN

Thursday, April 9

4:00 – 7:30 p.m. ET Live Coverage ESPN & ESPN Deportes

8:00 – 11:00 p.m. ET Replay of the first day telecast ESPN

11:30 – 11:45 p.m. ET Highlights Show CBS-TV

Friday, April 10

4:00 – 7:30 p.m. ET Live Coverage ESPN & ESPN Deportes

8:00 – 11:00 p.m. ET Replay of the second day telecast ESPN

11:30 – 11:45 p.m. ET Highlights Show CBS-TV

Saturday, April 11

3:30 – 7:00 p.m. ET Live Coverage CBS-TV

Sunday, April 12

2:00 – 7:00 p.m. ET Live Coverage CBS-TV

Masters Facts

Fact: The Masters wasn't always called the Masters. Bobby Jones thought the name was too presumptuous. The original name was the Augusta National Invitational Tournament until changed in 1939.

Fact: The original course layout was changed. After the first Masters in 1934, the nines were reversed.

Fact: The tradition of the member's Green Jacket began in 1937. Members were encouraged to wear their Green Jackets during the Masters Tournament so patrons would be able to identify a reliable source of information. In 1949, Sam Snead was the first Masters' champion to be awarded a Green Jacket. Except for the first year when the champion can take it home, the Green Jacket is always kept at Augusta National Golf Club.

Fact: The Champions Dinner began in 1952 when defending champion Ben Hogan hosted a dinner for all previous winners. Each year the defending champion creates the menu and serves as host of the Champions Dinner on the Tuesday before the tournament begins.

Fact: Bobby Jones and architect Alistair Mackenzie designed Augusta National Golf Club.

Fact: Bobby Jones played in 12 Masters. His best finish was 13th in 1934.

Fact: There are 61 Magnolia trees that line Magnolia Drive, the entrance to Augusta National Golf Club. They are thought to have been planted prior to the Civil War.

Fact: The tradition of Honorary Starters began in 1963 with Jock Hutchison. Since then, six other men have served as Honorary Starters: Fred McLeod, Byron Nelson, Gene Sarazen, Ken Venturi, Sam Snead and Arnold Palmer.

Fact: Augusta National landmarks include the Hogan, Nelson and Sarazen bridges; the Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus plaques; the Eisenhower Tree and Pond; and Rae's Creek and Magnolia Lane.

Fact: The Crow's Nest is a small living space above the Augusta National clubhouse reserved for amateur entrants during the tournament. No amateur has ever won the Masters.

Fact: Three players have won consecutive Masters: Jack Nicklaus (1965, 1966), Nick Faldo (1989, 1990) and Tiger Woods (2001, 2002).

Fact: Amen Corner, a three-hole stretch beginning with the 11th hole, got its name from legendary golf writer Herbert Warren Wind in 1958. The term originates from a song, "Shoutin' at Amen Corner," and is an old Southern expression.

Fact: The greens at Augusta National Golf Club were changed from Bermuda to Bentgrass in the fall of 1980.

Fact: The Eisenhower Tree stands in the 17th fairway about 210 yards from the tee. President Eisenhower asked that the tree be removed because he hit it so often.

MASTERS HISTORY

Errie Ball: Last Man Standing from First Masters

On the trail of a golf story from yesteryear, I stumbled across Errie Ball, a Welsh-born pro who was befriended by Bobby Jones at the 1930 British Open and soon after came to America to be assistant pro at East Lake, Jones' home course in Atlanta, Georgia.

I learned Errie, age 97, was the last surviving player from the first Masters in 1934 won by Horton Smith. I called him one afternoon in January 2008 at his Florida home.

“What was it like playing in that first Masters?” I asked.

“The first Masters, they were having a lot of trouble getting off to a good start,” Errie said. “It was like a friendly deal. I didn't feel too scared or nervous at all in the first one because it was more relaxed. Bob Jones made it that way.”

Jones wasn't the only thing that helped keep things loose.

“There was a lot of liquor floating around,” he added. “Of course, in those days, I didn't drink anyway.”

It was far different the next time Errie teed it up at Augusta National.

“When I played it again in 1957 it was a different story. It was really big time.”

I'd be surprised if any living person has played with more golf champions from past generations than Errie Ball. In addition to Bobby Jones and Walter Hagen, Errie later played with golf greats Byron Nelson, Sam Snead and Ben Hogan.

In fact, Errie goes so far back I had to ask, “Did you ever meet Harry Vardon?”

“No,” he said. “I saw him in the distance and watched him. My father was a good friend of Harry Vardon. He had a beautiful swing. I know that.”

Errie has seen hundreds of swings in his 97 years and still spends time on the practice tee.

“I've had a couple of operations, which has taken me off the golf course and I haven't really played 18 holes in two years,” he said.

“But I've hit a lot of balls on the practice tee and still give a few lessons. I'm feeling a lot better now and I think I'll probably start playing soon.”

Q&A: Walker Inman Jr., First Augusta Native to Play in Masters

(Editor's note: Walker Inman Jr. was a 1950s PGA Tour pro and longtime club professional. This is an excerpt from my 2007 interview with Walker.)

ARMCHAIR GOLF: I think I read that your father met Bobby Jones.

WALKER INMAN JR.: They were fraternity brothers at Georgia Tech together. When I was 7 or 8 years old, he took me over to the Masters and in those days that was the only place Jones played. They started the Masters in '34 and he invited a bunch of his friends to come play a tournament, and that's how the Masters got started. It was an invitational tournament. Of course, all the best players in the world were his friends, so he invited them all to come play. That's the only time Bob Jones played in front of the public – he retired in 1930 – in the Masters.

So my daddy wanted me to go over there and watch him play. I've got movies of my dad playing with him when he would come to town and play at the country club before Augusta National was even built. So my dad takes me over there, and we watch him playing the 8th hole. I know exactly where he was standing when I first saw him. He said to my dad, "Is this your son, Walker?" My dad introduced me and he said say hello to Mr. Jones, and I did. He put his hand on my head, and he said, "Walker, are you going to be a golfer like your daddy?" I said, "No sir, Mr. Jones. I want to be a golfer like you." I can remember that just like it was today. He was swinging his fairway wood hitting pine cones. He said to my dad if he could hit the golf ball as good as he can hit these pine cones, he could still win.

ARMCHAIR GOLF: How old did you say you were – 7?

WALKER INMAN JR.: I was 7 or 8. I was born in '29, so that was about 1938. I

guess I was about 9 years old.

ARMCHAIR GOLF: Was your dad a pretty good player?

WALKER INMAN JR.: He was about a 3 handicap player. He played with Jones when they were in college together and that kind of thing. That's where his friendship and golf came from that.

When I qualified for the Masters, he [Jones] welcomed me there and was very excited about having me play. I teed off the first hole – I was as nervous as a cat on a tin roof – finally hit the ball up the fairway, managed to hit a 6-iron in the middle of the green and holed about a 30-footer. And I thought, shoot, there's nothing to this. I said, "This is easy. I thought this was going to be hard."

Walk over to the second tee, and as I'm going through the ropes, there's Mr. Roberts and Mr. Jones sitting on a golf cart on the side of the tee. Mr. Roberts comes over to me and says, "Walker, Mr. Jones and I are very happy to have an Augusta boy playing in our tournament for the first time, and Mr. Jones is a good friend of your dad's, and Mr. Jones would like to watch you play a few holes. Do you mind?"

Now all of a sudden my nervousness comes back and I got to perform for the best player that's ever walked around. That was quite an experience. They drove the cart around nine holes and watched me play. I wish I had a picture of that, but no cameras on the golf course so I don't have a picture.

ARMCHAIR GOLF: From what I read, you had a pretty good day that day, and then it sounded like in that last round, they had weather like this year.

WALKER INMAN JR.: The wind was blowing between 45-50 mph gusts.

ARMCHAIR GOLF: That must have been brutal.

WALKER INMAN JR.: You couldn't stand up to putt.

ARMCHAIR GOLF: And on those greens – I can't even imagine how you could play those greens.

WALKER INMAN JR.: Well, you couldn't. And the greens in those days weren't as fast as they are today because they didn't have Bentgrass on them. But they still were fast because of the undulations. You couldn't stand still the wind was blowing so hard. It made putting more difficult than hitting a full shot.

ARMCHAIR GOLF: Well, I'm sure at that point in your career you thought you'd...

WALKER INMAN JR.: I thought I'd be there many more times, and of course it never happened any more.

ARMCHAIR GOLF: It's a good thing you did get to play in the Masters, though.

WALKER INMAN JR.: That was kind of a goal of mine when I first turned pro. Get in the Masters and play in front of my hometown friends and I did it, so that's a memory I'll always have.

Masters Winners

"I had a 15th club in my bag."

—BEN CRENSHAW

(Referring to his lifelong golf coach Harvey Penick, who died a few days prior to Crenshaw's second Masters victory.)

2008 - Trevor Immelman
2007 - Zach Johnson
2006 - Phil Mickelson
2005 - Tiger Woods
2004 - Phil Mickelson
2003 - Mike Weir
2002 - Tiger Woods
2001 - Tiger Woods
2000 - Vijay Singh
1999 - Jose Maria Olazabal
1998 - Mark O'Meara
1997 - Tiger Woods
1996 - Nick Faldo
1995 - Ben Crenshaw
1994 - Jose Maria Olazabal
1993 - Bernhard Langer
1992 - Fred Couples
1991 - Ian Woosnam
1990 - Nick Faldo
1989 - Nick Faldo
1988 - Sandy Lyle
1987 - Larry Mize
1986 - Jack Nicklaus
1985 - Bernhard Langer

1984 - Ben Crenshaw
1983 - Seve Ballesteros
1982 - Craig Stadler
1981 - Tom Watson
1980 - Seve Ballesteros
1979 - Fuzzy Zoeller
1978 - Gary Player
1977 - Tom Watson
1976 - Ray Floyd
1975 - Jack Nicklaus
1974 - Gary Player
1973 - Tommy Aaron
1972 - Jack Nicklaus
1971 - Charles Coody
1970 - Billy Casper
1969 - George Archer
1968 - Bob Goalby
1967 - Gay Brewer
1966 - Jack Nicklaus
1965 - Jack Nicklaus
1964 - Arnold Palmer
1963 - Jack Nicklaus
1962 - Arnold Palmer
1961 - Gary Player
1960 - Arnold Palmer
1959 - Art Wall
1958 - Arnold Palmer
1957 - Doug Ford
1956 - Jack Burke Jr.
1955 - Cary Middlecoff
1954 - Sam Snead

1953 - Ben Hogan
1952 - Sam Snead
1951 - Ben Hogan
1950 - Jimmy Demaret
1949 - Sam Snead
1948 - Claude Harmon
1947 - Jimmy Demaret
1946 - Herman Keiser
1942 - Byron Nelson
1941 - Craig Wood
1940 - Jimmy Demaret
1939 - Ralph Guldahl
1938 - Henry Picard
1937 - Byron Nelson
1936 - Horton Smith
1935 - Gene Sarazen
1934 - Horton Smith

Masters Records

“I miss it, I miss it, I miss it, I make it.”

–SEVE BALLESTEROS

(Two-time Masters champion explaining a four-putt green.)

Most Wins

6 - Jack Nicklaus (1963, 1965, 1966, 1972, 1975, 1986)

4 - Arnold Palmer (1958, 1960, 1962, 1964)

4 - Tiger Woods (1997, 2001, 2002, 2005)

3 - Jimmy Demaret (1940, 1947, 1950)

3 - Sam Snead (1949, 1952, 1954)

3 - Gary Player (1961, 1974, 1978)

3 - Nick Faldo (1989, 1990, 1996)

2 - Horton Smith, Byron Nelson, Ben Hogan, Tom Watson, Seve Ballesteros, Bernhard Langer, Ben Crenshaw, Jose Maria Olazabal, Phil Mickelson

Wire-to-Wire Winners

Craig Wood (1941)

Arnold Palmer (1960)

Jack Nicklaus (1972)

Raymond Floyd (1976)

Youngest Winner

Tiger Woods, 1997 (21 years, 3 months, 14 days)

Oldest Winner

Jack Nicklaus, 1986 (46 years, 2 months, 23 days)

Most Runner-Up Finishes

4 - Ben Hogan (1942, 1946, 1954, 1955)

- 4 - Jack Nicklaus (1964, 1971, 1977, 1981)
- 4 - Tom Weiskopf (1969, 1972, 1974, 1975)
- 3 - Johnny Miller (1971, 1975, 1981)
- 3 - Greg Norman (1986, 1987, 1996)
- 3 - Tom Watson (1978, 1979, 1984)
- 3 - Raymond Floyd (1985, 1990, 1992)
- 3 - Tom Kite (1983, 1986, 1997)

Most Consecutive Years Played

- 50 - Arnold Palmer, 1955-2004
- 46 - Doug Ford, 1956-2001
- 44 - Sam Snead, 1937-1983
- 44 - Raymond Floyd, 1965-2008
- 40 - Jack Nicklaus, 1959-1998
- 35 - Billy Casper, 1957-1991
- 35 - Ben Crenshaw, 1972-2008

Most Total Years Played

- 51 - Gary Player, 1957-2007
- 50 - Arnold Palmer, 1955-2004
- 49 - Doug Ford, 1952-2001
- 45 - Billy Casper, 1957-2005
- 45 - Jack Nicklaus, 1959-2005
- 44 - Sam Snead, 1937-1983
- 44 - Raymond Floyd, 1965-2008
- 42 - Tommy Aaron, 1959-2005
- 40 - Charles Coody, 1963-2006

Lowest Score, Front 9

- 30 - Johnny Miller, third round, 1975

30 - Greg Norman, fourth round, 1988

30 - K.J. Choi, second round, 2004

Lowest Score, Back 9

29 - Mark Calcavecchia, fourth round, 1992

29 - David Toms, fourth round, 1998

Lowest Score, 18 Holes

63 - Nick Price, third round, 1986

63 - Greg Norman, first round, 1996

Lowest Score, 72 Holes

270 - Tiger Woods, 1997

271 - Jack Nicklaus, 1965

271 - Raymond Floyd, 1976

272 - Tiger Woods, 2001

274 - Ben Hogan, 1953

274 - Ben Crenshaw, 1995

274 - David Duval, 2001

275 - Seve Ballesteros, 1980

275 - Fred Couples, 1992

275 - Davis Love III, 1995

275 - Phil Mickelson, 2001

Highest Winning Score

289 - Sam Snead, 1954

289 - Jack Burke, 1956

289 - Zach Johnson, 2007

Most Eagles, Career

24 - Jack Nicklaus

22 - Raymond Floyd

Most Birdies, Career

506 - Jack Nicklaus

Most Birdies, One Round

10 - Nick Price, 1986, third round

Most Consecutive Birdies

7 - Steve Pate, 1999, third round

7 - Tiger Woods, 2005, third round

Lowest Career Scoring Average, 50 or More Rounds

71.00 - Tiger Woods

71.24 - Phil Mickelson

71.92 - Ernie Els

71.97 - Fred Couples

71.98 - Jack Nicklaus

72.01 - Jose Maria Olazabal

72.18 - Hale Irwin

71.19 - Vijay Singh

72.20 - Tom Watson

72.23 - Tom Weiskopf

Largest Lead Lost After Third Round

6 strokes - Greg Norman, 1996

5 strokes - Ed Sneed, 1979

Most Cuts Made

37 - Jack Nicklaus

30 - Gary Player

27 - Raymond Floyd

25 - Ben Crenshaw

23 - Arnold Palmer

23 - Billy Casper

23 - Fred Couples

23 - Tom Watson

Double Eagles

1935 - Gene Sarazen, fourth round, No. 15, 234 yards, 4-wood

1967 - Bruce Devlin, first round, No. 8, 248 yards, 4-wood

1994 - Jeff Maggert, fourth round, No. 13, 222 yards, 3-iron

MASTERS HUMOR

Tiger Woods Will Still Win the Grand Slam This Year

(Editor's note: There were many who practically guaranteed that Tiger would win the Grand Slam in 2008. After Trevor Immelman won the Masters, I had a little fun with that idea.)

“Tiger Woods, whose hopes for a calendar Grand Slam ended with a thud,” reported ESPN.com.

“And it ends the American’s hopes of a Grand Slam of all four majors this year,” concluded BBC SPORT.

Here they come. The doubters. The naysayers. Those who have lost the faith.

But things are not as they seem on April 13. Tiger Woods will still win the Grand Slam this year. Not the Tiger Slam, the PGA Grand Slam of Golf, or the Denny’s Grand Slam. Rather, the never-been-done, professional, calendar-year Grand Slam.

What appears to be an ending is just a momentary setback. It will make Tiger stronger and more determined than ever as he sets his sights on the U.S. Open in June.

At Torrey Pines, where Tiger Woods started winning golf tournaments before he mastered his multiplication tables, everything will fall into place. Yes, Tiger will walk off with the U.S. Open trophy, his first national title since Bethpage in 2002.

In July at the British Open at Royal Birkdale, Tiger will fall behind early but eventually assume the 54-hole lead. After facing a stiff challenge in the final round, Woods will win his fourth Claret Jug in a playoff. The PGA Championship at Oakland Hills, on the other hand, will be a rout. Tiger will win by 10 shots.

The biggest surprise will come in September. Two weeks before the Ryder Cup the Masters Tournament will release a short statement. Tiger Woods, not Trevor Immelman, actually won the 2008 Masters Tournament.

Initially, the golf world and general public will be shocked by the statement. Didn’t millions see Trevor Immelman win and Tiger finish second? Wasn’t that Immelman who slipped on the Green Jacket in Butler Cabin?

The men of the Masters have extraordinary powers, though. They have helped elect a

president, run a TV network and created a whole new golf vocabulary. In truth, the apparent reversal will be kid stuff for the men of the Masters.

As have been past club actions and rulings, the decision will be cloaked in mystery. But speculation will abound. The 15th hole erred – Immelman’s ball should have rolled into the water, a mistake that would have eventually cost him the tournament. The club finally recognized that Tiger-proofing the course was unfair and would hurt the tournament’s legacy. Or maybe it was a strange scoring flap like 40 years earlier in 1968. However, no explanation will be offered.

Some will protest, including Trevor Immelman’s fellow countryman and mentor Gary Player, but their voices will quickly fade away. Many will come to see the wisdom of retroactively awarding the Green Jacket to the world’s best player.

In the end, all who emphatically predicted Tiger Woods would win the Grand Slam in 2008 will be vindicated. And those who already know that Tiger is the greatest golfer ever will rejoice.

The 2016 Masters

(Editor's note: Tiger-proofing Augusta National prompted this look into the future.)

Today, Tiger Woods was asked what he thought about Augusta National. Many in the golf world have hinted that the latest course changes were implemented to protect par and prevent Woods from collecting his 11th Green Jacket.

Tiger was diplomatic.

“Some say eliminating all the par 5s was an unusual move. But hey, it’s the same for everyone. I enjoy the challenge,” he said with a grin.

Yeah, there’s never been a championship course that has played to a par 67, noted a reporter.

“Well, it’s their tournament. I’m just honored to be able to win, er, play here,” Woods said.

What about 13?

“It will certainly play a lot tougher as a par 3, but if I can hit my power draw and cut the corner, it shouldn’t be a problem.”

Overheard in Heaven: Bobby Jones Consoles Byron Nelson

“I’m disappointed in my tournament, Bobby. It wasn’t the same this year.”

“I know how you feel, Byron. It’s hard when all that’s left of you down there is your name.”

“All of the finest players showed up for my tournament last year. They came up to me and shook my hand.”

“Last year you were alive, Byron.”

“Well, I guess it turned out well enough. I’m glad Scott Verplank won. I’ve known him since he was a junior. He’s a great kid.”

“That was special.”

“Bobby, do all the changes to Augusta National and your tournament ever bother you?”

“Sure, but you get used to it. They mean well, for the most part.”

“You’re still a gentleman, Bobby.”

“So are you, Byron.”

“By the way, Bobby, what’s that sound?”

“That’s Hogan hitting balls.”

“Ben practices up here?”

“Some things never change, Byron.”

About ARMCHAIR GOLF BLOG

Neil Sagebiel is “The Armchair Golfer,” a freelance writer who writes about golf from a small town in Virginia’s Blue Ridge Mountains. The ARMCHAIR GOLF BLOG is one of the top independent golf blogs on the Web, featuring daily news, commentary and humor about professional golf.

Thank you for reading the ARMCHAIR GOLF BLOG and this special guide. This “accidental” golf blog would not be fun, growing, or possible without you.

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