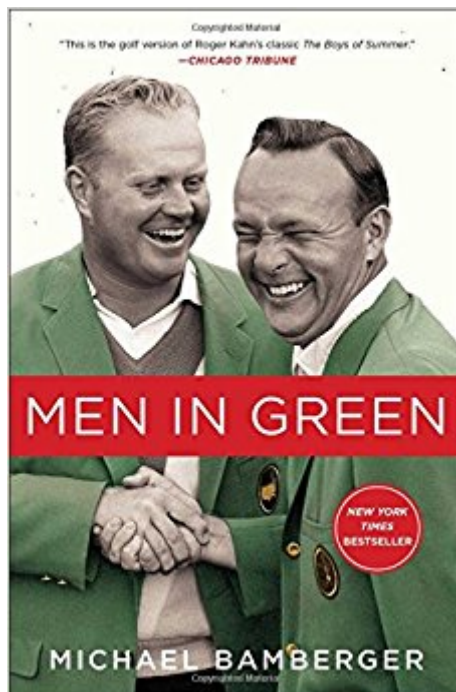


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Men In Green



Synopsis

The instant New York Times bestseller from acclaimed Sports Illustrated writer Michael Bamberger — a warm, nostalgic, intimately reported account of golf's greatest generation, and — “maybe the best golf book I've ever read” (Bill Reynolds, The Providence Journal). With — “exceptional insight into some of America's greatest players over the last half-century” (The Philadelphia Inquirer), *Men in Green* is to golf what Roger Kahn's *The Boys of Summer* was to baseball: a big-hearted account of the sport's greats, from the household names to the private legends, those behind-the-curtain giants who never made the headlines. Michael Bamberger, who has covered the game for twenty years at Sports Illustrated, shows us the big names as we've never seen them before: Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, Tom Watson, Curtis Strange, Fred Couples — and the late Ken Venturi. But he also chronicles the legendary figures known only to insiders, who nevertheless have left an indelible mark on the sport. There's a club pro, a teaching pro, an old black Southern caddie. There's a tournament director in his seventies, a TV director in his eighties, and a USGA executive in his nineties. All these figures, from the marquee names to the unknowns, have changed the game. What they all share is a game that courses through their collective veins like a drug. Was golf better back in the day? *Men in Green* weaves a history of the modern game that is personal, touching, inviting, and new. This meditation on aging and a celebration of the game is — “a nostalgic visit and reminiscence with those who fashioned golf history — and should be cherished” (Golf Digest).

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Customer Reviews

“Maybe the best golf book I’ve ever read.” “This is the golf version of Roger Kahn’s classic *The Boys of Summer*.” •Chicago Tribune“Until roughly the mid-1980s, the PGA Tour really was a tour, not the geographically-dispersed collection of big-money events that it is today. The players and often their wives drove from event to event or hopped on chartered flights together. . . . In a new book, >, author Michael Bamberger re-creates that tour through a series of surprisingly candid interviews with players, caddies, wives, and others who were there. It is a world of booze-fueled friendships and feuds, of deep bonds and annoyances, of hurts that still fester and memories that still glow. Braiding it all together is the power and addiction of golf. . . . Bamberger doesn’t flinch at portraying the Tour’s earthier aspects. Drugs, sex, and alcohol, although not sensationalized, take their appropriate place in his narrative. But the book is overwhelmingly a love song. . . . Above all, what comes through is the sense of the Tour back then as an extended family, sometimes dysfunctional but never dull.”•

Michael Bamberger was born in Patchogue, New York, in 1960. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania in 1982, he became a newspaper reporter, first for the (Martha’s) Vineyard Gazette, later with The Philadelphia Inquirer. Since 1995 he has been a senior writer for Sports Illustrated. He and his wife, Christine, live in Philadelphia.

I very much enjoyed this book not least because it settled for all time the whispered rumor of Arnie cheating at the Masters. Big tip of the hat to Michael Bamberger for tracking the story down and sticking with it. The book is well written and informative. I particularly liked the sidebar stories of caddies and also-rans. Well written and entertaining. My highest recommendation. Hurry up, Mr. Bamberger, and write another!

I’ve been a fan of Michael Bamberger’s golf writing since his book “To the Linksland” which told of his year spent in Europe, caddying on the European tour and traveling around to the great courses (famous and unknown) in Scotland. His new book, “Men in Green,” is a joy to read, not only for the wonderful stories of golf legends (famous and unknown) such as Palmer, Nicklaus, Tom Watson, and Alldous “Golf Ball” Hull and Sandy Tatum, but for the lucid, well-constructed prose and for the care and generosity he has for his subjects. The trait of generosity...both financial and spiritual...is one Bamberger often notices and comments on, whether it is a player who over-tips a caddy or Nicklaus, in defeat by a single stroke, putting his arm around Watson’s shoulder as they walked off

the green at Turnberry following their legendary Duel in the Sun. His open-mindedness, empathy, fairness, and ability to honestly assess and describe people without judgment demonstrates the type of generosity of spirit that he admires in others. As he travels around the country with his friend and former PGA touring pro, Mike Donald, Bamberger stumbles upon many remarkable intertwining of lives, loves and tournaments over the last 60 years and untangles some mysteries about those people and events along the way.

Although the dusk jacket picture and title are misleading, this is a warm look at golf and writing by Michael Bamberger. Just as John Feinstein's muse is Paul Goydos, Bamberger's is Mike Donald, a grinder who came inches from winning the US Open. Arnie's sex appeal and Jack's dignity are constant themes. Fred Couples and Ken Venturi are exposed as being less than met the eye. Bamberger is also strangely quiet about writing for SI the last two decades as if they paid the bills but no longer had the literary chops it did in its Herbert Wind and Dan Jenkins's glory days.

Just got around to reading this book. Bamberger provides quite a bit of inside information here, but seems really hung up on the Palmer-Venturi "feud" from the 1960 Masters ruling. I must admit that I have never been a Venturi fan, and this book enforces the opinion I had of the guy all these years. Then again, I grew up in Western Pennsylvania so maybe a bit of regionalism has been in effect. Bamberger comes from a unique background, having caddied on tour prior to becoming a journalist, and has made many interesting friendships along the way that show up nicely here. The book's title comes off a somewhat misleading, though, as I would think many potential readers might think it's focused on The Masters with the title and cover picture of Palmer and Nicklaus in their green jackets. There are also a few times when I completed a chapter and found myself wondering why the information provided didn't appear earlier. But all in all, the author pulls few punches in this creative approach to the ancient and honorable game.

Not a bad book, but a little misleading. I thought it would be a close personal look at some of golf's greats. While there are interviews with some of these legends of the game, the book's focus lies heavily on Arnold Palmer, Ken Venturi and Mike Donald (the author's long time friend, traveling partner and former journeyman tour pro) with the others on his list of legends only have chapter dedicated to them, and even then somehow Arnold and Ken managed to get worked in. You do get an interesting look into what life on the tour was like in its golden age from the players and some caddies, plus there are some thought provoking quotes from some of the subjects.

Sometimes a book comes along that captures the spirit of its subject perfectly. "Men in Green" is one of those books. It's easy to forget how good quality writing can be (in the age of digital snippets). The quality of writing and the content of this book is surely going to make it a treasured classic amongst golf fans. It was so engaging I could not put it down and after reading it cover to cover continue to dip back to its pages for more. It made me laugh out loud (I'll approach those 4 foot must make putts differently after hearing Billy Harmon's advice), made me sad but mostly made me grateful that such quality writing combined with a topic I love can bring so much pleasure. I highly recommend this book to any golf fan or indeed anyone who admires quality literature.

I'm a golf fanatic. I remember watching all these legends on TV as a kid with my dad. I wish he had taught me to play back then. Maybe he didn't think of it 'cause I'm a girl. Now I play all the time and volunteer at tournaments, including The Boeing Classic, a senior tour event, so I have gotten to see some of these Legends play. This book made me feel like I was part of their history.

The author shares intimate behind the scenes profiles of the famous and less famous players and caddies in the game of golf commencing with his "walk on" caddy career through his current interaction as a Senior Writer for Sports Illustrated and other media participation. He knows the game and the landscape of the pro and amateur world. The reader will gain a perspective of the real person behind the public person. The narrative is entertaining and very informative. Anyone interested in golf can really enjoy this read and maybe some of those who just see it from time to time on TV too.

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