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Final Report

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When I first started the process of searching for an internship site for the summer of 2018, I looked for positions and places that I felt fit my interests best. I also knew that I did not want an internship where I would be working in a stadium and acting as the mascot for a minor league baseball team. In my search, that basically drew a line through any operations or promotional internship for a minor league baseball team. I had taken in to consideration the fact that I could see myself in a marketing or communications type of role when I get out of school. In addition, I thought that attempting a role that I have not had before could be an enlightening experience as well.

Over the past couple of years, I have gotten in to watching and playing golf more and more. As my internship search went on, I realized that I had not applied to anything in the golf industry or had even looked for anything in the golf industry. I started with the PGA Tour, which eventually led me to a website specific to the Tournament Players Club (TPC) Network. It was here that I discovered TPC Jasna Polana, a golf course about 15 minutes from where I live in Princeton, New Jersey. The property, which was originally just a home (now the clubhouse), was built in the early 1970's and owned by John Seward Johnson (Co-Founder of Johnson&Johnson) and his wife. In 1996, the decision to construct a golf course on the property was approved. It was at this time that Mrs. Johnson partnered with the TPC Network as part of

the PGA Tour. The course was established in 1998 and fully designed by the legendary, Gary Player. It has played host to a handful of Senior PGA Tour Tournaments back in the early 2000's but has not hosted one in a number of years. It now mainly hosts various types of member tournaments, corporate outings, and interclub championships. Although it does not host big-name tournaments like other TPC courses such as TPC Sawgrass and TPC Scottsdale, it has consistently been one of the gems being one of the only for-profit courses within the TPC Network.

Naturally, I searched for any possible internship opportunities I could find there, and I was lucky enough to find one. As a golf course operations/maintenance intern, I worked under Matt Castagna, who is the Superintendent of the golf course at Jasna Polana, and RJ Blanchard, who is the Assistant Superintendent of the golf course. In addition to Matt and RJ, I worked alongside Jack Meyer and Liz Holmes, both of whom are Assistant Superintendents in Training (AIT). My role throughout the summer was focused entirely on the golf side of Jasna Polana. Each day I would get in to work and would be assigned a role that would help prepare the course for the day's activities. If there was a tournament or corporate outing going on, the preparation would be more involved than on a day that consists of just regular play. My tasks were set up in a way to make sure that everything that was necessary to be completed prior to play starting was the very first thing I would do in the morning. For example, a couple of tasks that would be assigned in the morning are changing the hole location for the day and making sure that the tee box is set up for the correct yardage. My responsibilities in the afternoon were tasks that did not necessarily have to be completed that same day. Over the course of the summer I managed to take on more responsibility. As I mentioned in my log for the month of

July, a couple of new employees joined our team and I was able to teach them how to do complete different tasks and how the daily schedule worked.

Although I was focused solely on golf, Jasna Polana also offers space for parties such as Bar/Bat-Mitzvah's and weddings, and space for corporate meetings. They also have room accommodations for guests that come from out of town who are staying multiple days. Jasna Polana is not a typical country club, there is no swimming pool or tennis courts for use. The only recreational activity they have is golf. It is without a doubt that Jasna Polana makes most of its money off of golf. Whether it be membership fees, corporate outings, or equipment/apparel sales, golf drives the revenue. With that said, they also see a healthy amount of revenue made off of their parties. In fact, they can influence the bottom line at the end of the fiscal year greatly. Even if it is just one or two more parties than the year before, its impact can be seen. A party is just a one-time payment, but it is large one-time payment. It is safe to say that money has never been an issue at Jasna Polana.

This summer brought on a lot of new experiences for me, which resulted in a great learning experience. When I first started, just about every task I needed to do was something that I had never done prior to starting the internship. Because of this, I was able to grow and improve on different skills throughout the summer. I experienced a lot of personal growth in my ability to manage my time in an effective way. Once my internship started, I quickly realized that I would need to have a plan going in to each day so that I would be able to get my work done for school when I needed to and so that I could keep my energy up. Sleep became the most important thing for me. At school I typically stay up late because I do not have many early classes. I realize that is not a realistic possibility in the professional world. Being able to manage

my time efficiently will allow me to maintain a good work-life balance in the future and allow me to live a healthier life. I also feel that I grew in to a more outgoing person. Due to the fact that I would complete tasks with at least one other person, I was constantly communicating with someone else. This made me more comfortable giving and receiving directions in addition to just having a casual conversation with somebody that I had not known for more than a month.

As for my professional growth, I feel that I became a better team member and I learned how to better act in a professional environment. I was provided a great opportunity to become a better team member just off of the fact that I was constantly working with somebody else. This is very important for me because although I do not see myself taking on a position like this in the future, it is very rare in the professional world to land somewhere that does not involve collaboration or some form of teamwork. Being able to utilize that growth and turn it into a skill is something that will help me to succeed in the sport industry. Learning how to conduct myself in a professional manner is also clearly important for my professional future. I made sure to be 15 minutes early every day for work so that I would be ready to start the day by six. I feel that the start time is not when you show up, it is when you are ready to go. Throughout the summer I saw the reactions of Matt and RJ when other employees would show up late or right at six and I could see that it was not something they took well. Getting to work on time is the first impression you can make and it certainly leaves an impact. I never want to have the reputation of a lazy worker and that starts with being ready to go at the start of the day.

I gained some valuable insight on the sport industry throughout my summer as well. Both Jasna Polana employees that I interviewed offered great advice for me. They both

reiterated the idea that making connections and building relationships is crucial to advancing and achieving success in the sport industry. I have also learned that it is important to take everything in strides. Everyone always wants to make a quick rise to the top of the totem pole, but that is never how it works. While some positions allow for advancement at a quicker rate than others, there is still a process that every person has to go through. There is no quick road to the top. Facing the brutal the facts and understanding that there is no easy way to do it is an important piece of information that I will take with me wherever I go. It also helps me to stay in the moment rather than worrying about where my future will take me and if I made mistakes in the past.

When it comes to developing both personally and professionally, there is always room to grow and things to improve upon. I have tried to get as much variety out of the types of jobs that I decide to take on so that I can be capable of handling many different tasks and responsibilities. Whenever I apply for different job, that is something that I push heavily during interviews. One of the big reasons why I decided to take this internship was to add an operations focused position to my resume and to learn more about that area of work. With that said, in the future I hope to take on more of a front office/corporate type of position and I need to definitely get more practice with computer programs such as Excel and PowerPoint if I want to be able to succeed. Unfortunately, at my internship site this summer, there was not much use of either of those two programs. In a world that is growing through the use of technology, I need to improve that side of my skillset to separate myself from the rest.

In regard to my future, my plans and aspirations have not been changed much by my internship, if anything they have been made stronger. Ever since I began working with the

marketing team and in the communications office with the athletic department at UD, I have taken a strong interest in both marketing and communications. My goal is to end up on the agency side to allow myself to work with more creativity. Going in to this internship I thought that operations was something that I could see myself in as well. Although I did enjoy my time, the people, and the work I did at Jasna Polana, I do not really see myself pushing for a career in operations, especially golf operations. I do enjoy doing hands on work which is something operations gave me, but I also enjoy analyzing data and doing more administrative work. This is something that operations did not give me much of. Also, although it is not a driving factor for me, income is something that needs to be thought about and I have come to realize that the best paying jobs typically are positions that deal with bringing in revenue. This fact has also played a role in my future plans. Although my internship did not change my future plans, it did add some new strengths that I would have considered weaknesses prior to this summer.

A struggle that I feel I have always had is communicating effectively and efficiently. My internship allowed me to strengthen my communication skills by constantly working with at least one other person. When it comes to operations, communication is key to make sure everything gets done in a concise manner. It was one of the tools that was stressed a lot by my supervisor. I was able to get more comfortable giving and receiving feedback, which is something that is important in any setting. Another one of my strengths during my internship was my attention to detail. At a place that is held to the standards that Jasna Polana is being a PGA Tour operated facility, members and guest expect the very best every day. Because of this, the entire staff from the catering staff to the bag drop attendees need to be able to provide the best service. I recognized this very quickly and made sure that I was fully invested in the

moment every day to ensure that my work best represented the club. I will say that it was much easier to provide my best work being surrounded by others who were performing at their best than it would be if I was not. Once I acquired that work ethic, it was just about impossible to change my mindset.

As I have stated in my monthly logs, at first just about every task I took on was something new to me because of the fact that I had not previously worked at a golf course and I had not previously held an operations position. With that in mind, although everything was very new to me, I felt very prepared and confident in my ability to adapt and put forward the knowledge I have gained at Delaware to this internship. One piece of information that has been stressed by all of the sport management professors has been the number of hours that are worked in the sport industry. Going in to my internship, I knew golf was a sport that started early in the morning, so I was already aware that I would be waking up earlier than I ever had for work. Even with that in my head, knowing that how much I was working was the norm for sports, it made me feel like I was not being overworked and kept me satisfied with the work I was doing. I also realized through my internship that not every job is going to have the same kind of hours. Another way the program prepared me for my internship was through all of the group projects that we do. Although communication was not a strong suit of mine going in to the summer, the group projects we do allowed me to go in to my internship knowing how to work well with others and split duties in an effective way.

Overall, I enjoyed my experience at TPC Jasna Polana. I definitely got out of it what I expected to. It was a very hands-on and physical position, which again is not something I necessarily see myself doing in the future, but I nonetheless enjoyed. It was a very new

experience that I learned a lot from. I feel that I performed well throughout my internship. As stated in my logs, everything was new to me, so it took a little bit of time to get comfortable with tasks, but once I was it was smooth sailing. My supervisor gave me a lot of positive feedback throughout the summer and let me know that if I do not find a job that more suits my interests, he is willing to bring me back once I graduate. The staff at Jasna Polana creates a friendly and welcoming environment that is noticeable the second you arrive. For any student interested in the golf industry, I would highly suggest TPC Jasna Polana. It provides experience at the highest level.