

# A Leading Role on Golf's Stage

Occasionally in life we come across the 'right person in the right job with the right experience at the right time' scenarios.

As Canada's national golf associations recently deliberated over a blue chip list of qualified candidates to lead its Play Golf initiative, it became increasingly evident that James Cronk would be the right leader to spearhead Canada's grow the game program.

Call it destiny, stars aligning, or a culmination of golf experiences preparing him for this test, but I've had a front row seat to watch James Cronk carefully obtain the right experiences working for recognized leaders in the golf industry so that he may one day have the opportunity to take on the biggest challenge of his career on a national stage.

## CASTING CALL

I first met James on the unlikeliest of days in 1992 when my mind was undeniably elsewhere - on my job interview at Marine Drive Golf Club in Vancouver for the Executive Director's position with the British Columbia PGA.

While waiting to meet with Marine Drive Head Professional and British Columbia PGA President Tim Tait, I struck up a conversation with a very pleasant, cheerful and affable assistant golf pro by the name of James Cronk.

He made an indelibly positive impression on me that day and I like to think the positive karma he exuded contributed to my success in obtaining the job.

Shortly thereafter James became the President of the Assistant Professionals' committee in BC. I learned of his decision to leave the restaurant management/importing business/acting chapters of his life to forge a career in something he had a passion and love for, the game of golf.

## THE RIGHT PORTFOLIO

James' careful preparations led him first to a position as golf professional at one of Vancouver's elite golf clubs; Marine Drive. Choosing a horizontal career path over the more standard vertical one, James then left Marine Drive for a whole different world and set of experiences; a very busy public golf facility in Pitt Meadows known as Golden Eagle, and after two years at Golden Eagle in golf's "fast lane",

James broadened his work experience once again, landing at the brand new Westwood Plateau Golf & Country Club, a unique residential golf community in Coquitlam, eventually growing the business to award winning status.

While James Cronk's career ascended to the upper ranks of the golf profession, his 'pedigree' continued to build with various board positions with the British Columbia PGA and Canadian PGA, and as I watched his tireless work ethic, unrelenting questioning of anything that wasn't done properly or correctly (not even the operations of the CPGA were safe from his scrutiny) and uncanny ability to quickly assess a situation and make an intelligent evaluation, it seems I was taking notes for the future.

## PLAY GOLF PROTAGONIST

James Cronk has gained the respect and admiration of other golf associations in Canada and their members. He has spoken at several NCGOA Canada conferences, including an unforgettable entrance riding a horse at the Banff Springs hotel. James has also spoken on customer service at Canadian Golf Superintendents Association seminars and with the Canadian Society of Club Managers.

Simply put, James Cronk's presence and profile spans the breadth of the entire Canadian golf industry, and that, in a nutshell, is a very positive feature relative to his new Play Golf position.

James Cronk is intimately familiar with today's golf consumer, in all of his or her forms, preferences, fickleness and complexities. He has made it his life's work to study and understand the golf consumer and to create golf experiences that match the consumer's needs, desires and wants.

James Cronk now enters uncharted territory in his career at the helm of a national effort to grow the game of golf in Canada. If the program does not succeed, it won't be through any lack of determination, hard work or commitment on James' part.

But...judging by his track record, I'm betting he'll lead the Play Golf initiative to 'Broadway' and beyond.



**STEVE CARROLL**

Steve is Executive Director of the Canadian PGA and a member of the National Allied Golf Associations, the organization spearheading the Play Golf initiative. He can be reached by email at [steve@canadianpga.org](mailto:steve@canadianpga.org).

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-Sarah Cruse

*General Manager, Olympic View Golf Course  
GolfBC Group*



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