Back in 1936 Tilly foresaw a world with no sand nor traps

By J. BARRY MOTHES

PORTLAND, Maine—"Golf Course of Future Will have No Sand Nor Traps, Expert Predicts"

A headline from the National Golf Enquirer?

No, just Albert W. Tillinghast getting a bit apocalyptic back in 1936.

Tillinghast, the Philadelphia playwright and renowned golf course architect who designed Baltusrol, Winged Foot and the San Francisco Golf Club to name a few, was hired by the Professional Golfers Association (PGA) of America in the mid-1950s to advise its member clubs on alterations. At the time, 11 national championships had been played on his courses in the preceding 16 years.

As part of his charge, Tillinghast traveled the country for more than a year as a PGA-sponsored adviser. He met with golf course superintendents and pros, toured golf courses and offered advice. By September 1936 he had visited 322 courses. In September 1936, Tillinghast visited Portland Country Club here.

A few excerpts from his visit reported by the Portland Sunday Telegram:

"The golf course of the not too distant future will have neither rough nor sand, except [where] it be unavoidable," A.W. Tillinghast, widely known golf course architect, predicted Saturday afternoon.

"Mr. Tillinghast expressed his strong disapproval of sand on golf courses, and said that golf courses 10 years hence would have none of it... Of course, he said, seaside courses will be bound to have some sand on them, but why should a beautiful inland course be cluttered with it?"

But, Tillinghast added, "Sandless courses won't be any less difficult to score than those of today... The science of golf course architecture is now built into the contours of the greens and the approaches to them..."

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Forse masterminds ‘oldies’ remarks, longs for his own

Q: Golf Course News: Are people more aware of course designers than they were five, 10, 20 years ago?

Ron Forse: Yes. Now guys who aren’t big internationally are being promoted. People like Art Hills. It’s like "designer" labels to some degree. People are putting the names of the architects on advertisements, promotional materials and scorecards. This is a news occurrence. People now know because of the media attention to architects. In the mid-’80s people all of a sudden became aware.

Myrtle Beach’s North Course faces major changes from Palmer

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C.—Arnold Palmer and the Palmer Design Group have returned here this summer to oversee substantial changes to the famous North Course at Myrtle Beach National Golf Club, a 54-hole complex. The course closed May 1, and is scheduled to re-open in October. The South and West Courses at Myrtle Beach National remain open throughout the summer.

The North Course was originally designed by Arnold Palmer in the early 1970s. It was among the first courses at the Beach, and one of the first courses anywhere to feature an "island" green. The North Course’s par-3 3rd hole, with an island green and "SC" shaped bunkers has remained the signature hole for the entire Grand Strand. What began as a minor updating of the North Course has evolved into a project of total course design and visual enhancement under the direction of the Palmer Group. The bentgrass greens will be re-shaped and re-disced, and then seeded with the new hybrid Crenshaw bentgrass. Many trees have been removed. Several fairways will feature increased undulation, and bunkers and lakes will be reshaped. The 3rd hole is undergoing major enhancement, with the addition of bulkheads and a new bridge.

Myrtle Beach National is owned by the Myrtle Beach National Co.