

Architects Society honors Whitten

PINEHURST, N.C. — Ron Whitten, whose writings on golf course architecture over the past 15 years have enabled the public to better understand the architect's myriad contributions to the game, was presented the American Society of Golf Course Architects' (ASGCA) Donald Ross Award here March 28. Architectural editor of *Golf Digest* and *Golf World* magazines, Whitten was given the award during the society's 50th annual

meeting here.

Whitten has just finished editing "*Golf Has Never Failed Me*," a compilation of the lost commentaries of Donald Ross. In co-authoring "*The Golf Course*" in 1981 and "*The Architects of Golf*" in 1993, with Geoffrey Cornish, as well as writing more than 100 articles on golf course design, Whitten has increased the golfer's respect, understanding and appreciation for golf course architecture and the architects who create it.

Whole In One turns Tull 9 into 18-holer

SEAFORD, Del. — Seaford Golf and Country Club, a nine-hole private facility designed in the 1940s by Alfred Tull, is expanding to 18 holes with the cooperation of DuPont and with one unique prerequisite: the need to incorporate more than 400,000 cubic yards of coal ash into the layout.

"We usually don't like to move more than 200,000 yards of material on an 18-hole project. This is twice as much material in half as much area," said Richard

Mandell of Whole In One Design Group, the course architect for the project which broke ground in early January.

Originally built for DuPont Co. members, Seaford Golf and Country Club is expanding on land formerly used by the firm.

The ash requirement was one of many site constraints in what is being looked upon mostly as a land-enhancement project. Whole In One negotiated water lines, water monitoring wells, electric lines and other existing

elements in the project.

"My design concept is to create an additional nine which was indistinguishable from Alfred Tull's original nine holes in an effort I refer to as historical compassionate restoration," Mandell said. "This requires little earthmoving, although both sites are dead flat. The only earthwork done by Tull was building up his greens, tees, and mounding around a few fairway bunkers."

Mandell is using the coal ash to create large ridges running throughout the site, creating subtle slopes, hardly noticeable to the eye.

"The easy answer would have been to create berms surrounding the property and implementing moguls throughout the design," he said. "We chose not to do that for the primary reason that it would not give Mr. Tull's original nine holes justice and would unfairly provide the membership with two distinct layouts."

The ash ridges will look mellow. Using so much fill material was only half the challenge, Mandell said. For erosion purposes, Whole In One decided to implement a 1-foot cap of native material over all ash areas. Also, some green locations were excavated first, filled with coal ash, and then topped with native material to ensure that each green complex was built on enough native material.

"This allows the superintendent the luxury of having all his greens built in the same way, of the same material", said Mandell.

The 1-foot native cap will come out of the proposed ponds. To handle stormwater on the relatively flat site, five ponds were dug — the depth of each determined by how much soil was needed for the cap.

Mandell created plateau greens, greens slightly raised above the fairway, and greens which bleed into the fairways to maintain Tull's design integrity. The bunkers are all deep, low-profile hazards with sand mostly hidden from view (further maintaining integrity of the original course).

Some adjustments were made to accommodate today's member, though. The new nine's bunkers won't be as punishingly deep as the original ones. The greens were also enlarged to accommodate more players. Mandell also created a variety of bunker positions and shapes, while maintaining Tull's design style, in order to introduce more strategy.

"Tull was very penal in designing the first nine," he said. "He has deep bunkers completely surrounding each green. Basically, his strategy is, 'Hit the green or find yourself in a bunker.'"

Expected opening date is the fall of 1997.



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