

A REVIEW

2nd of Tillinghast troika a true winner

By MARK LESLIE

BASKING RIDGE, N.J. — Tilly's Trilogy: Part II, or better known as "Reminiscences of the Links," is out — and something to behold.

You may have read the history of golf through the eyes of an historian, or a golf writer. But here, through the efforts of three

members of Baltusrol Country Club, you can read it from the viewpoint of one of the great classic golf course architects: A.W. Tillinghast.

Here was a man who spanned continents ... and eras. He can write, on the one hand, of personalities who shaped the game ("One evening I sat with Old Tom Morris

in his little sitting room.") And, on the other hand, of the effect of golf balls on play ("I believe that the larger ball will bring back to the game the wrist shot and the more general playing of the cut. The playing of these was a delight to see in the old days...").

Here was a man who stood staunchly by the tradition of cad-

dies, little knowing that there would be few of them 50 years later — and declaring that young caddie Eddie Lowry brought Francis Ouimet the U.S. Open Championship and calling golfers to drink to this toast: "Fill your glasses, gentlemen, and pledge 'Our Caddies,' what would our golf be without them?" And a man who disapproved of some of the advances in the game, like "matched sets of irons

with closely catalogued degrees of loft of the faces" which, he said, "has made play more mechanical than of yore and consequently eliminated much of the versatility of the player himself."

Tillinghast expounds on the likes of "Andra" Kirkaldy, who in 1890 beat Willie Park 8 and 7 in a great match over four courses; "Sandy" Herd, British Open Champion and world record holder for aces at the time: 19 holes in one; and various great golfers of the Roaring Nineties through the 1920s.

And, in the end, he predicts some things about the game of golf, one of which I share here: "As one of the very early American players I have seen the game pass from the state of a fad of the red-coated few through a sturdy, healthy growth until it has become the most popular recreation of several million Americans. Ten years probably will find this host doubled in numbers, with the great majority of towns of 20,000 population supporting at least one course of its own, for the masses have taken golf into their lives and there it will remain as a vital factor of health and pleasure."

Anyone care to dispute that?

Publishers Bob Trebus and Rick and Stu Wolffe — all members of Tillinghast-designed Baltusrol Country Club — have laced this oversized, 160-page book with scores of historical photographs dating back into the 1800s and some paintings from the 1700s. Great stuff.

"We preserved a lot of the photographs taken from very, very old magazines on the verge of disintegration," Trebus said. "We were able to capture those photos and, through computer work, publish them."

"We spent a lot of time at Bethpage pulling their photos."

Because the book handles subject by subject in separate chapters, Trebus said: "You can read it in any order you want. The theme behind it is the history and growth of golf."

The three publishers started garnering the Tillinghast information while researching the 100-year history of Baltusrol.

"As we went through our old magazines," Trebus said, "we found a lot of articles by Tillinghast. Stu went through every issue of every golf magazine and pulled out all the Tillinghast articles. He wrote under other names, every month in *Golf Illustrated* and wrote freelance work."

Some golf clubs heard about their research and sent them photos from the Tillinghast era.

The temptation to publish the trilogy was too great. "Here we had a fellow who was an architect, journalist, photographer and player," Trebus said. "He was an incredible man, a pure genius in the world of golf. We wanted to put it so it wasn't lost to history."

The third book, "Gleanings from the Wayside," is due out at the end of 1999. It will deal with Tillinghast's recollections of his travels to different golf courses."



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