



Best New Course



CLIVE BARBER

Created on land that would, at first, seem ill-suited for the purpose, Maple, Ont.'s Eagles Nest GC is among the most impressive modern courses to open in Canada in the past 30 years. Given the accolades the course has received since first opening in 2004, it is not surprising to see it awarded Best New Course.

The dream of a group of Toronto real estate developers, the majority of Eagles Nest was initially an old aggregate pit, with some natural rolling meadows and trees at the north end of the property and a capped landfill to the west. With largely a blank slate, Toronto designer Doug Carrick created an inland links with massive faux dunes, acres of fescue and crafty, rolling greens.

The best and most memorable elements of Eagles Nest rest in the areas where Carrick took the biggest risks and hit homeruns. Witness the split fairways on the long par-4 14th and difficult 17th or the routing that includes back-to-back par 5s. Everything about Eagles Nest is bold and the scale of the entire course makes it appear like a seaside Scottish course on steroids.

"The purists are going to say we haven't created a true links, but I wanted to create the look and shot values of a links," Carrick says.

Though many who saw it prior to opening were concerned about how difficult Eagles Nest would be, head professional Jamie Trenholme says the course has matured into a playable, though often tricky, golf course that presents plenty of options.

"When you look at it there are few forced carries and you can roll the ball into most greens," he explains. "In

many ways, Eagles Nest is more visually challenging, and actually plays easier than it looks."

Regardless of its difficulty, Carrick's creation will remain a testament to the vision of the architect (and that of his lead associate Cam Tyers) and his ability, more than 20 years into his career, to challenge both himself as a designer, and in turn Canada's golfers. — *Robert Thompson*

1. Eagles Nest GC, Maple, Ont.

Doug Carrick, 2004

2. Dakota Dunes Golf Links, Saskatoon, Sask.

Graham Cooke/Wayne Carleton, 2004

3. BlackBear Ridge, Belleville, Ont.

Brian Magee, 2005

4. The Ridge at Manitou, McKeller, Ont.

Thomas McBroom, 2004

5. Fox Creek GC, Dieppe, N.B.

Graham Cooke, 2005

Honorable Mention

The Club at Bond Head – South Course, Bond Head, Ont.

Georgian Bay Club, Collingwood, Ont.

Osprey Valley – Toot Course, Caledon, Ont.

Courses that opened in 2004 or 2005 were eligible for Best New Course.