The city above Toronto will savor to new heights this spring when spectacular Eagles Nest Golf Club unveils its wings and ascends to its destiny as one of the country’s best.

Overlooking the GTA and the Toronto city skyline from the eighth tee deck, a 164-yard par-3, the shortest hole on this exhilarating Doug Carrick design, Eagles Nest GC promises a golf experience that is as pure as its breathtaking views. A rolling sea of mountainous sand dunes unlike anything ever built in Canada, shifting and rolling fairways, golden fescue grasses and cavernous sand pits, bunkers have been sculpted together to emulate the rugged terrain typically found on the sea-side courses of Scotland and Ireland.

The traditions of the game, a passion for excellence and an understanding of the delicate balance between nature and design are the hallmarks of the remarkable transformation of a former sand and gravel operation at Major Mackenzie Drive and Dufferin Streets in the City of Vaughan. It may be the toughest course on the planet when played from the tips, with an overwhelming length of some 7,476 yards and a par of 72. However, mere mortals can tee it up at more reasonable lengths - four other tee decks measure 5,183,
6,225, 6,680 and 7,085 respectively.

"Shortly after we retained Doug Carrick to be the golf course architect, we had a project team meeting and Jim D'Agostino (the managing partner) made the statement that he wanted the best golf course in Southern Ontario. The next meeting he made a correction to the minutes stating, "I want Eagles Nest to be the best golf course... period," and that has been our vision ever since," says Duane Aulie, Executive Director.

From the moment guests drive through the stone archway, it’s difficult to be anything but spellbound by the magnificent 36,000-square-foot clubhouse that rivals the very best in the country. The marble entranceway leads to Logos, a five-star dining room that will be open to the public for fine dining year round and overlooks a lake and the 18th green. Next door is the banquet room, which has seating for up to 300 for tournaments, weddings or special functions. Downstairs, Jim & Gary’s Pub (named after two of the owners) is a refreshing retreat after a round. The men’s and ladies’ locker rooms are equally to say the least! Up on the third floor, special guests can use The Nest, an exclusive boardroom featuring one of three wine cellars, a private kitchen and third-story balcony views of the 18th. Let’s not overlook the helicopter landing-pad adjacent to the ninth green or the 11-acre practice area either!

The pro shop, managed by Director of Golf Euan Dougal, offers a level of service and merchandise that’s second to none. "We’re looking to change the way people look at public golf. We want to be the benchmark that every club measures itself against, not only in the GTA, but on a national scale," Dougal says, noting there will be walking tee times with shuttle service for those who

April 2004
choose an intimate experience on
foot. A caddy program is in the
works for 2005.

"For years everybody has talked
about how well Angus Glen has
looked after their customers and
they certainly raised the bar for
public golf not only in the GTA,
but all of Canada. We’re just going
to knock it up another notch or
two, so people leave here thinking,
"I can’t believe this is a public golf
course." We want them leaving
feeling like they have played a
Beacon Hill, Magna or St.
George’s - one of the great private
courses in the country and know-
ing they can return whenever they
like."

For the seven to eight million peo-
ple who live in the GTA, Eagles
Nest is a destination without the
journey. When the course opens in
May, green fees including use of
the practice area, cart and taxes
will be $190. Originally drawn as a
27-hole design during the initial
planning stages in 1996, Eagles
Nest is an environmentally friend-
ly reclamation and rehabilitation
project on lands adjacent to the for-
mer Keele Valley Landfill site.

“The style for the course evolved
out of the rugged landscape left
behind from the former sand and
gavel operation. Many of the spoil
banks that were created from the
sand and gravel extraction were left
intact and form the backdrop and
framework for holes No. 12
through 15,” Carrick says of the
235-acre site. “We carried this
rugged landscape theme onto other
holes to create the linksland expe-
rience.”

The features that golfers are most
likely to remember about a round
at Eagles Nest are its undulating
fairways and uneven lies, the nasty
reverted pot bunkers, the massive
sand scars and forested chutes.
The course changes character on holes
three through seven, plunging into
the valley formerly known as the
Honey Pot Ski Centre. Dramatic
elevation changes and forested val-
ley slopes covered with towering
white pines provide the backdrop
for these holes.

Eagles Nest is Carrick’s second
attempt at a linksland type course.
The Heathlands Course at Ogilvy
Valley near Orangeville was his
first. “Many of the same character-
istics and design principles can be
found at Eagles Nest, however they
are provided on a much larger and
more dramatic scale,” says the
architect, who is noted for his des-
des at Bigwin Island, Magna,
Angus Glen and Copper Creek.
About 1.4 million cubic metres of
earth were moved to create Eagles
Nest - well above the norm. He,
moved only 130,000 cubic metres
at Bigwin and about 500,000
cubic metres at Copper Creeks. It’s
also the most expensive course
Carrick has built!

Eagles Nest is owned by York
Major Holdings Inc., a partnership
between the Zentil, DeGauperis,
Muzzo and Reefel group of com-
panies. YMH Inc. is currently
developing over 500 acres of land
in the area including plans to build
a 40-acre golf academy adjacent to
Eagles Nest with three links style
teaching holes designed by
Carrick.

For information and tee times
call 905-417-2360 or visit
eaglenestgolf.com