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The current Graham Cooke designed golf course at Fox Harb'r Resort

In 2019, on the occasion of being jointly honoured by the Golf Journalists Association of Canada as their Dick Grimm Award winners for their service to the game, golf architects Doug Carrick and Thomas McBroom shared a juicy secret. That day, at the TPC Toronto at Osprey Valley, they revealed that they would be collaborating. It was quite a moment for two stalwarts of their profession who often found themselves competing for jobs through their careers.

But where would this project be? The Fox Harb'r Resort, by Ron Joyce of Tim Hortons fame, was the answer.

Now, the resort near Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia, has made the project public. It is expected that the full plans for the layout will be revealed this coming January (2023).

The plan to have both Canadian architects was the first intention for Fox Har'r in adding another full-length 18-hole course to their waterside property on the Northumberland Strait, but the opportunity arose.

According to Steven Joyce, CEO & Chairman of Fox Harb'r, "Our goal is to expand on our existing course to create the finest golf destination in Canada. We have the land, the ocean and the passion. With that in mind, we conducted an international search for architects who could see the potential of our spectacular location. The fact that the two best concepts came from Canadians was a bonus. That they were not only willing but excited to work together as a team was the best possible outcome."

The initial search began four years ago, with an international design competition. Carrick and McBroom both submitted individual bids, facing off against the best in the world. Recognizing a dynamic opportunity to bring together two of the country's most formidable talents, the team at Fox Harb'r proposed they work together to create a new world-class course.

According to Doug Carrick, "the original vision was to add 18 holes to the existing 18. Working together, we decided that rather than just building a new course, we would instead reimagine 9 of the existing holes and combine them with 9 new holes, all in a links style, to create a true ocean course. Construction began in September 2022 and we hope to have it completed by the fall of 2023. Our next phase will be a separate 'vineyard' course - again, rethinking the existing back 9 and combining it with 9 new holes. The style is going to be different from what is at Fox Harb'r now. It's a big vision and very exciting."

Tom McBroom explained that currently Fox Harb'r has a parkland style course on the ocean. "It has the kind of bunkering you might find on an inland course. It's dramatic and very visual. The new design will take more advantage of the conditions by the sea. We intend to make use of grass hollows, and smaller bunkers in a more traditional links style. It will feature the rumbles and rolls of the land, and green contours that hug the surface of the ground. It will be refined and well maintained with fairways that roll and fall into the bunkers."

In terms of difficulty, the strategy is to create a design that will accommodate a wide range of skills. "We will be looking to create alternative routes and multiple tees so that people can play a longer or shorter yardage. The course will have width so that the course is enjoyable and friendly for the average golfer but still offer risk and reward strategies for experienced players," says Carrick.

McBroom adds that wind will be a factor in the design. "We will need to take the ocean breeze into consideration, it can blow the ball around and wreak havoc with the way people play. We need the width to ensure everyone has a fun day."

Both designers are enthusiastic and clear about what they want to accomplish. Says McBroom, "both Doug and I are excited about this incredible opportunity. We intend to make Fox Harb'r a landmark golf experience in Canada."