

# Te Arai South growing in ahead of 2022 opening

Strategy of new course by Coore and Crenshaw is determined by the natural dune contours upon which it is routed

**C**onstruction of the new Coore and Crenshaw-designed South course at Te Arai Links in New Zealand is complete and growing in ahead of an opening in October 2022.

The new South course is part of the Te Arai development – which will also include a course designed by Tom Doak, restaurants, cottages and villas – and is located on the east coast of New Zealand's North Island. The project follows the success of, and is close to, Tara Iti, the private 18-hole course by Doak that opened in 2015 to widespread acclaim.

Tara Iti owner Ric Kayne and golf industry veteran Jim Rohrstaff are leading the Te Arai development, which Rohrstaff says will "turn this

little stretch of coastline into one of the great golf destinations in the world."

"When you have undulating sand and dunes along the Pacific Ocean with a great climate, what more can you ask for," said Rohrstaff. "Tara Iti is a testament to how good golf can be on this property, but each of the courses will have a different personality. Despite being on the same property, Te Arai South and North will be entirely different."

"To anyone who has seen it, Tara Iti is obviously one of the world's most beautiful and special golf courses," said Bill Coore. "It has an amazing routing that radiates in varying directions and showcases golf in an interesting and extremely enjoyable manner. Tara Iti is set on a sand dune landscape

Te Arai South's seventh and eighth holes play along the eastern coastline of New Zealand's North Island





*Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw have made use of undulating sand and dunes for their first course in New Zealand*

that is visually connected but not immediately adjacent to the ocean.

"Te Arai is on a more linear dunes site that parallels the sea for the majority of the course. Easily, thirteen holes could be described as seaside, with all but the more inland second hole having views of the sea from some point on each hole. It could be argued that the Te Arai site has a greater variety of dramatic landforms than Tara Iti but like Tara Iti, the character and the golfing strategy of each hole was determined by the natural dune contours on which each hole was routed."

Construction of the South course began in September 2020 and is now complete. It is the first Coore and Crenshaw project in New Zealand, with Coore saying he has enjoyed the design freedom afforded to him by Kayne and Rohrstaff.

"For those of us in the golf design profession, an opportunity like Te Arai is a dream come true," said Coore. "Relating to the routing, I'm prejudiced but I think the Te Arai routing showcases the amazingly varied topography of this dramatic site and the sequence of holes and individual character of each hole

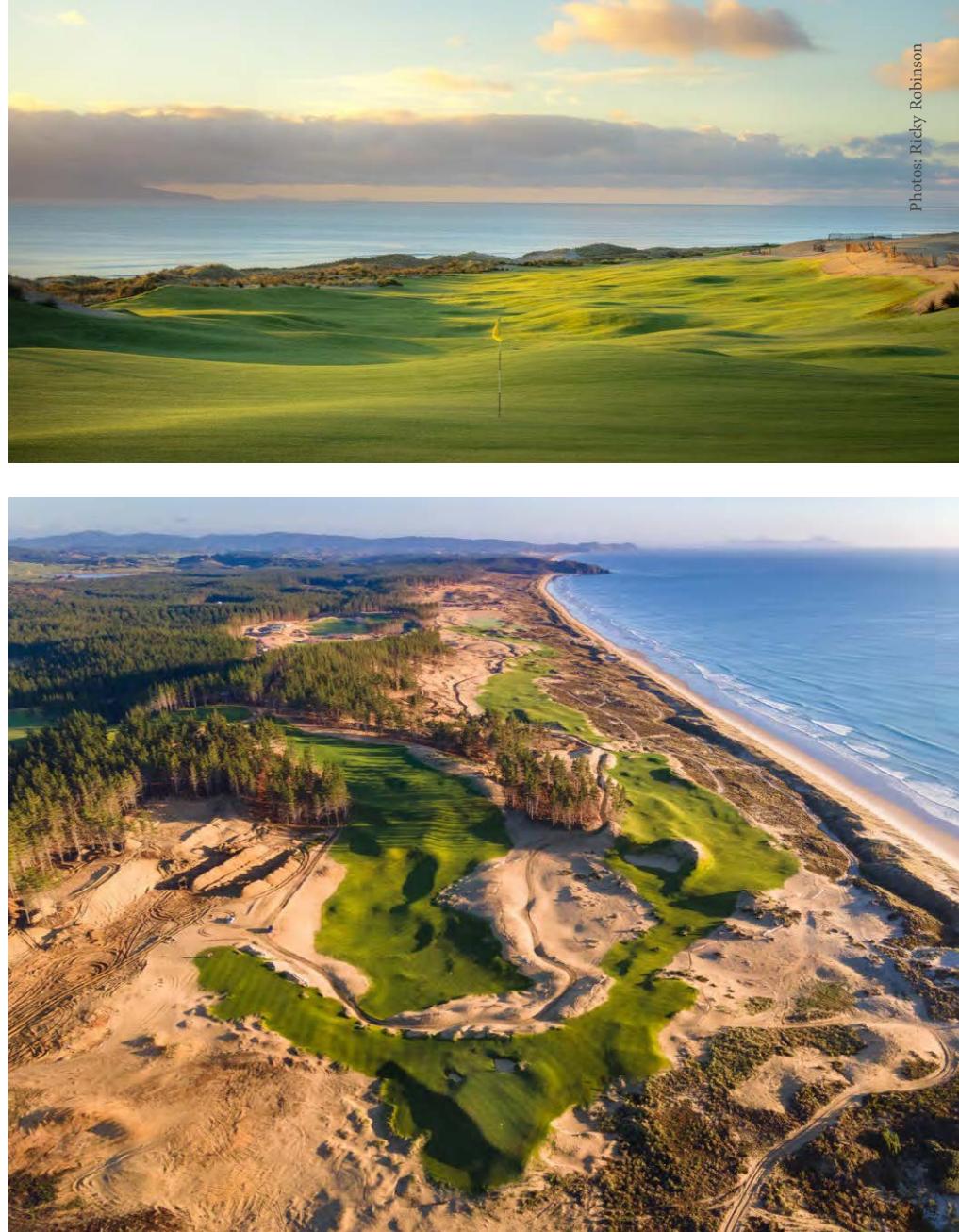
was determined and defined by each hole's natural landforms as presented through the routing."

For Rohrstaff the front nine is a personal highlight. "Holes four, five and six will absolutely blow people away," he said. "It is incredibly dramatic and is early in the round. Then the finishing stretch starting at fourteen will be as exciting as any course I've seen. I speak of these as personal highlights, but there is not a weak hole on the course. The hole pre-construction that I wondered most about was the fifteenth, but that has turned out to be great, too. I think

they've really nailed it. We cannot wait to share Te Arai with the golfing world when we open."

One complication with the project that Coore highlights was "trying to route and then create the seaside holes while following dune formations that naturally meander, and having an awareness of the regulated government reserve setback line [from the ocean] that was very straight and rigid in configuration."

Another challenge, particularly for Coore on a personal level, was the impact of Covid on travel restrictions. He made three trips during construction



*Almost every hole on Te Arai South has a view of the Pacific Ocean*

ranging from four to six weeks and each time had to quarantine in a government-mandated hotel for 14 days.

In his absence, associates John Hawker and Riley Johns were able to obtain visas for New Zealand and stayed on site full time, working with CJ Kreuscher, the grow-in superintendent at Tara Iti.

With the South now complete, work will turn to Doak's North course in early 2022 with the aim of having it open by late 2023.

"Although it has about 1,100 yards of coastline abutting the ocean, the majority of Tom's course is set more inland, meandering through forest and

rolling sand hills somewhat reminiscent of Pine Valley," said Coore. "It hasn't been as impacted from the wind over time, so the sand contours are somewhat less abrupt than those on Te Arai South.

"Like Tara Iti, Tom's site at Te Arai will provide opportunities to create a routing with more directional change for the holes than was possible at our more linear site. The two sites are dramatically different in terms of landforms and appearance, but each has the potential to create a truly special golf course. When combined, I think the two will be highly complementary to one another."