

Golf carts and magazine trolleys

The first time I went to the Houston oil show was 21 years ago. To quote the local lingo, I was a total greenhorn. There I was, going from booth to booth with my trolley of magazines—keep in mind, there's over 1,000 exhibitors and 50,000 people at this trade show. I'm there, talking up Atlantic Canada, wearing holes in the bottom of my shoes, making sure as many people as possible know about this magazine (and by extension, the clients who trust us with their advertising dollars). And the whole time, I'm repeating 'wow' over and over and over in my mind. This, I thought, THIS is the big time.

But the real eye-opener came when I was in the tee box at the Royal Aberdeen Golf Club. As with Houston, I was there for an oil show. After I'd finished delivering magazines to every booth at the show, I treated myself to a few rounds at Scotland's legendary links.

When you stand at the first tee at Royal Aberdeen, you're looking out at the North Sea where the view includes several FPSOs anchored offshore. Newfoundland had a single offshore oil well at the time and I had a double handicap with scores usually in the high 80s. Did either of us really belong there? I admit I had doubts—but I also thought that this could be our future.

Twenty-one years later, I'm not a greenhorn anymore. Nor is the Atlantic offshore the same frontier region it was back then. We have our own FPSOs now to go with the original Hibernia gravity-based platform. The Terra Nova, White Rose and Hebron projects are all important (and valued) contributors to our economy. And judging from the recent record land sales offshore, there are even more projects on the short-term horizon. We're heading in the right direction here folks, towards the future I glimpsed all those years ago. (If anyone cares, my game has improved also: down to a 10 handicap and scores in the low 80s, occasionally dipping in the 70s with the odd foot wedge involved.)

One thing that hasn't changed: you'll still find me doing the rounds at the trade shows (nine of them a year), wearing out shoes and talking up our resource potential. Want to know more? We should get together for a round the next time I'm in town—18 holes gives me just enough time to fill you in.



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Hubert F. Hutton
Publisher

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902-631-4044
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