

Million-dollar tournament where the

Words and pictures by
Rob Jewell

If your course was about to host a \$1 million tournament, you'd want it to look better than this, wouldn't you?

John Taylor, the landowner and the nearest thing to a greenkeeper at the course, doesn't worry about fast, smooth greens – or even cutting fairways. His only aim in staging a tournament is to raise money for building work – and have a fun day in the process.

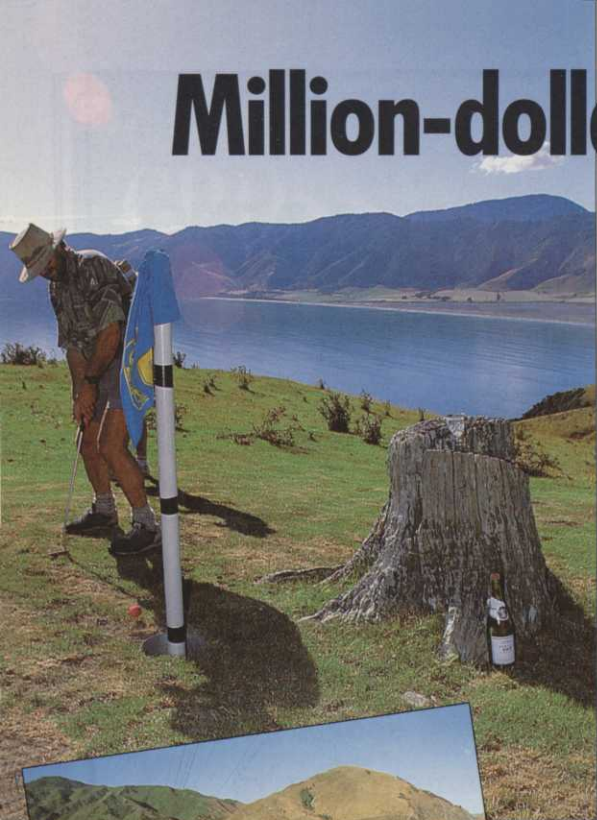
For the second year running the Nelson North Country Club, on a 1300 acre, 1300ft high New Zealand island, staged the "World's Most Outrageous Tournament".

Dreamed up over a pint or two of fizzy amber water, the hole names and rules of play give an indication of the nature of the event: Hanging Tree, Possum Refuge, 5 Speed Overdrive, Knutcracker Suite; "All holes are to within approximately 50% of the distance marked", "should you feel like having a bitch about anything, first check out the size of the president and immediate past president who shall have final jurisdiction over any disputes".

Then there is the island course itself. Mustering stock here used to take over six hours in the days before quad-bikes, so the caddy is a four-wheel drive pick-up



with straw bales for seats. "Fairways" are 2ft tussock grass. Greens are green, but mown by sheep and have never seen a mower, aerator or any modern-day



Top: the champagne glass in a tree stump which could net you \$1,000,000; Above: "caddy cars"; Right: on target



Whatever time of year, this busy greenkeeper needs the right tools behind him to keep the golf course superb. With the Workman 3000 Series which boasts a large flexible carrying capacity, four-wheel

stability and three-wheel manoeuvrability, that's precisely what he's got. Toro attachments or those of our keenest rival can be mid or rear mounted in almost any combination. It's another example of how we've worked to

greens are mown by **SHEEP**



The excellent attendance had nothing to with the sponsor's product. Nothing at all.



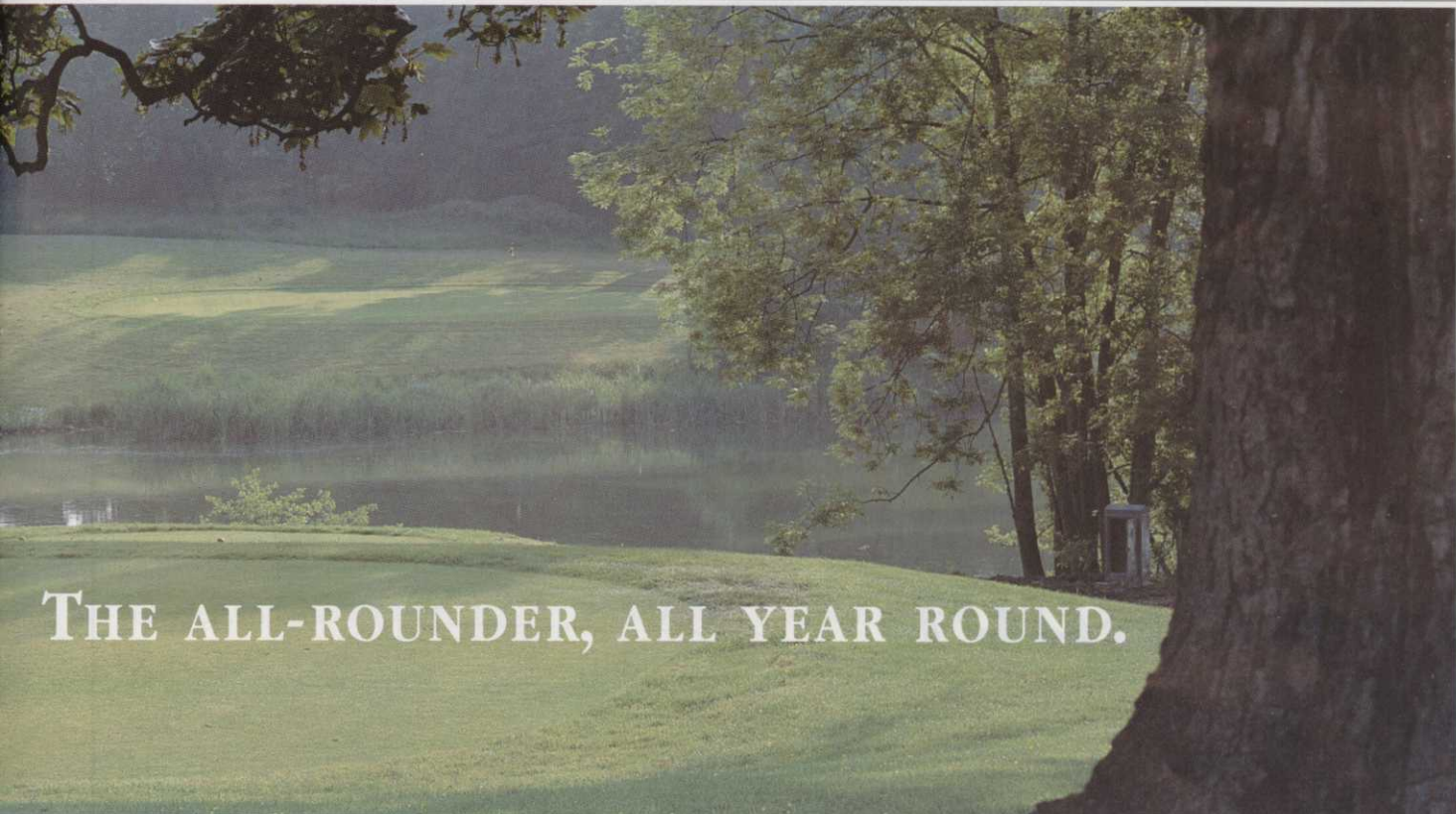
On which other course would you need a drill to tee-up?

equipment. The tees are firm – some are wooden platforms with a drill for you to use to site your peg.

Even if you can't take the course seri-

ously, you have to take the golf very seriously as most holes have prize-money to the tune of \$500-\$1,000. One hole has a car for a prize, and there is the \$1 million

hole. Okay, so it's not a million in sterling, but £375,000 isn't to be sniffed at! All you have to do is land your ball in a glass of champagne, 3ft off the ground on a tree



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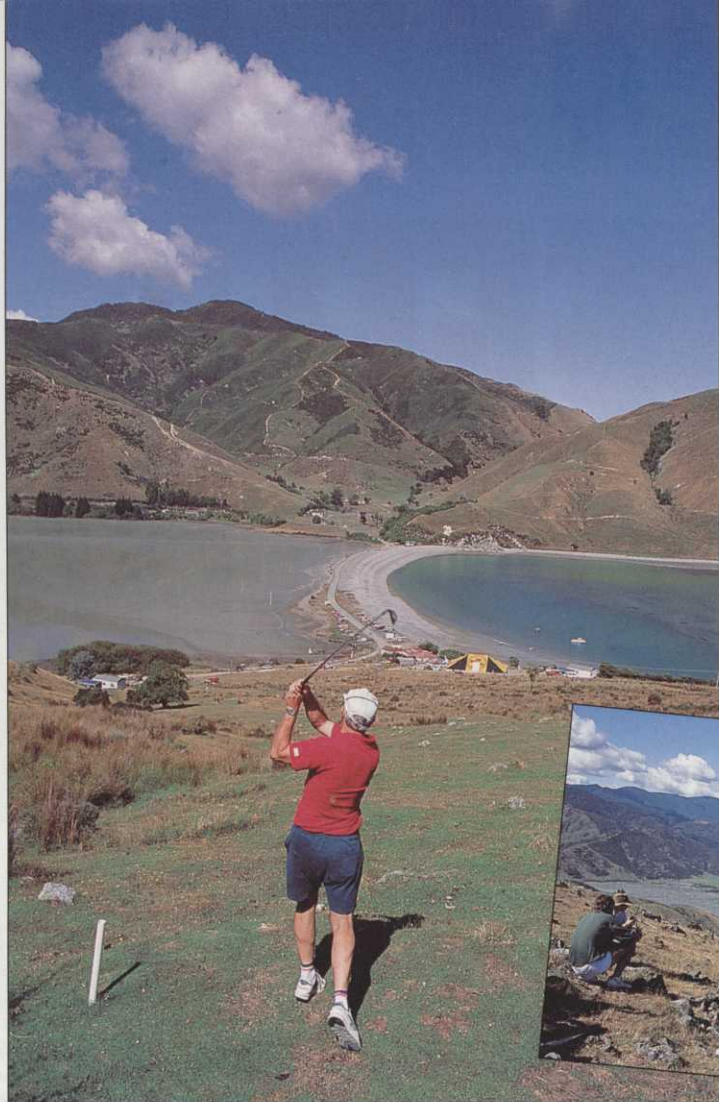
stump in the middle of the green – without spilling a drop!

The prize-money is covered by the \$60 (£22) entry fee which gets you a T-shirt, lunchtime barbecue, post-finish Hangi (meat cooked Maori fashion in a hole in the ground, moist, tender, delicious) and free drinks from the sponsor at the way-side tents like “Liz’s layby”, where all sorts of goodies and chat are available. Liz is club treasurer, and all club members help founder member John Taylor organise the event.

Results? You want results of a golf competition where the second rule states: “*The maximum number of clubs per player is three. Putter optional extra?*” Ah well, maybe you do.

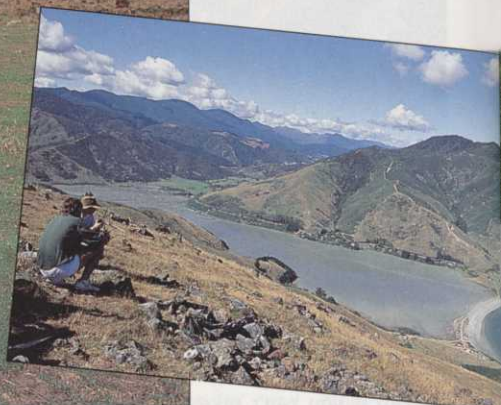
The target sum of \$15,000 was raised; no-one got the car, much less the \$1 million; but someone did get a hole in one at “Gentle Annie”, even though the rules state this hole “*Must remain a virgin hole. No hole in ones.*” Make of that what you will! George Parsons did – he was the man who got the ace despite the 80m length, 80m drop. It also gave him the title of overall winner.

This unique competition will happen once more on February 6, 1995, so start saving now!



Left: the ‘Knutcracker Suite’ – a chance to play spot the ball

Below: Great scenery and a long drop off the ‘Trigg Off’



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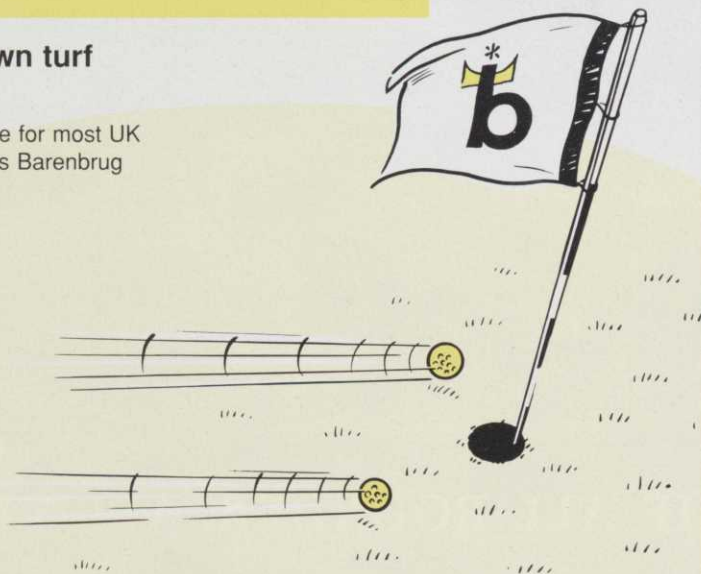
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