

Kauri Cliffs, mesmerising.



PLAYERS GUIDE TO NEW ZEALAND

A Bit Of Local Knowledge Is Always Handy In Unfamiliar Territory



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Bet you didn't know: Great, great, great grandson of John Logan Campbell, the 'Father of Auckland'

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Which was the first golf course you ever played? Can you remember what the day was like?

It was a course just around Wellington. Titahi Golf Course. A nine-hole public track with fences around the greens to keep the sheep off. That was a challenge, to avoid the sheep and the sheep shit. It only cost \$2 to play and was very exposed to the elements. Great to learn on.

Which other courses did you play when you were growing up?

I went over to Manor Park which is very close to Wellington. It's more of a private course, tree-lined and set in a valley.

Did you ever work at a golf club?

No, never on the course. I worked in telecoms when I was 16, for five years. I was

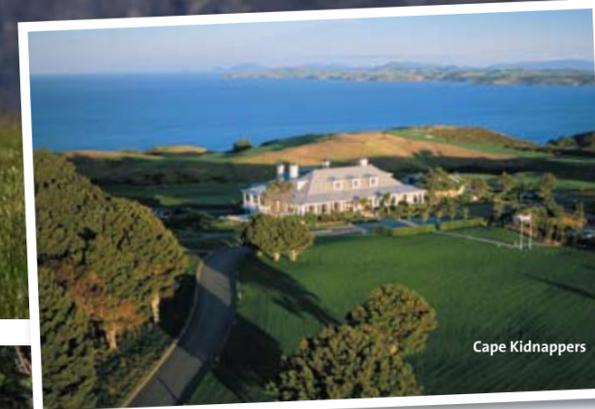
behind a computer trying to save a bit of money and managed to buy a car to travel to amateur events in. I slept in the back and hiked it around the country.

What's the best course in New Zealand? What makes it so good?

I really, really enjoy the Paraparaumu golf course. It's 45-minutes north of Long Eaton. It's a links course that's relatively untouched and totally natural. I think we've played the New Zealand Open there a couple of times, in fact we have. I won it in 2000. It was the course I always enjoyed as a kid and still do to this very day.

What are your next two favourite courses?

Kauri Cliffs and Cape Kidnappers are visually very beautiful. I think you get more mesmerised by the surroundings than by the golf courses. They're ok tracks, but it's



Cape Kidnappers

Paraparaumu Beach Golf Club. Try saying that after a few sambucas.

the combination of the courses and the views that make it worth the trip.

How does golf in New Zealand compare to the rest of the world?

The main sport is rugby so for me to play golf as a youngster it was quite tough. It was seen as a rich man's sport and no one really catered for junior golf. There were tonnes of courses to play on, but just no competitions to play in. That's changed now and there's a lot more kids taking up the game and foundations to help with competitions and development.

What kind of shots do you need to play good golf in New Zealand?

It's a bit like playing in Ireland. The weather can change very quickly so you need to have a good punch shot in your bag.

What do I need to pack for a trip?

All sorts. Winter woolies through to Bermuda shorts. There are so many extremes of weather and all can hit in one day. You can go from suntan to snow.

What should I do apart from play golf?

Go and watch a rugby game. Doesn't matter if it's Super 14 or an All Blacks game, just go and see one. Try and make it against Australia.

What are the best and worst things about New Zealand, in general?

The worst thing about it is that it's so far away from the rest of the world. It's a 24-hour flight. Some people may like the remoteness, but I think it works against us. One of the comments you often hear is how hospitable New Zealanders are. We're very sociable as a people.

Are there any courses in the world you haven't played yet, but would love to?

I'd love to play more in Ireland generally. I love links golf courses so that's definitely one thing I want to do. I've played Portmarnock, but I'd like to add several more to the list.

If you could have built any golf course, which one would it be and why?

St Andrews. Originally it was built the other way and so to have the vision to swap it over and create the layout that we play today was brilliant and bold. To have my name attached to that would be awesome.

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