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# World Round-Up

ADAM LAWRENCE



## TARA ITI

*North Island, New Zealand*

**1** For a California-based developer to build a golf course in New Zealand might seem an esoteric choice, but according to architect Tom Doak, financier Ric Kayne decided that his home state's rigorous planning process made the distant option better. The nature of the Tara Iti site—rolling sand dunes set on the warm and inviting coast of Northland, the strip of land that protrudes into the Pacific Ocean north of Auckland—can't have hurt. Doak and his team worked on Tara Iti (with local architect John Darby providing assistance) for several years, and early reports and photographs seem to prove the architect's suggestion that it is among his best work. The course will be private, but non-members fortunate to find themselves in the area will be allowed a single visit.



## BALLYBUNION OLD

*Ballybunion, Co. Kerry, Ireland*

**2** It is a brave man who messes with a course of such stature, but Scottish architect Graeme Webster plans a major change to the storied Ballybunion Old. Manager John Bambury, who arrived in County Kerry last year fresh from Trump International in Aberdeen, says he quickly concluded that Ballybunion's poa-dominated greens were not up to snuff for a stalwart of the world's top 10. So he enlisted Webster and Anthony Bennett, whose family firm built the club's Cashen course for Robert Trent Jones Sr. in the 1980s. Two huge turf nurseries were built on either side of the club's practice range and sown with pure fescue that will be used to rebuild the Old's greens in a manic six-week project starting this month: The greens will be digitally scanned, cored to a depth of 14 inches, and rebuilt nearly to the same contours. The course should reopen next spring.



### OLD ELM

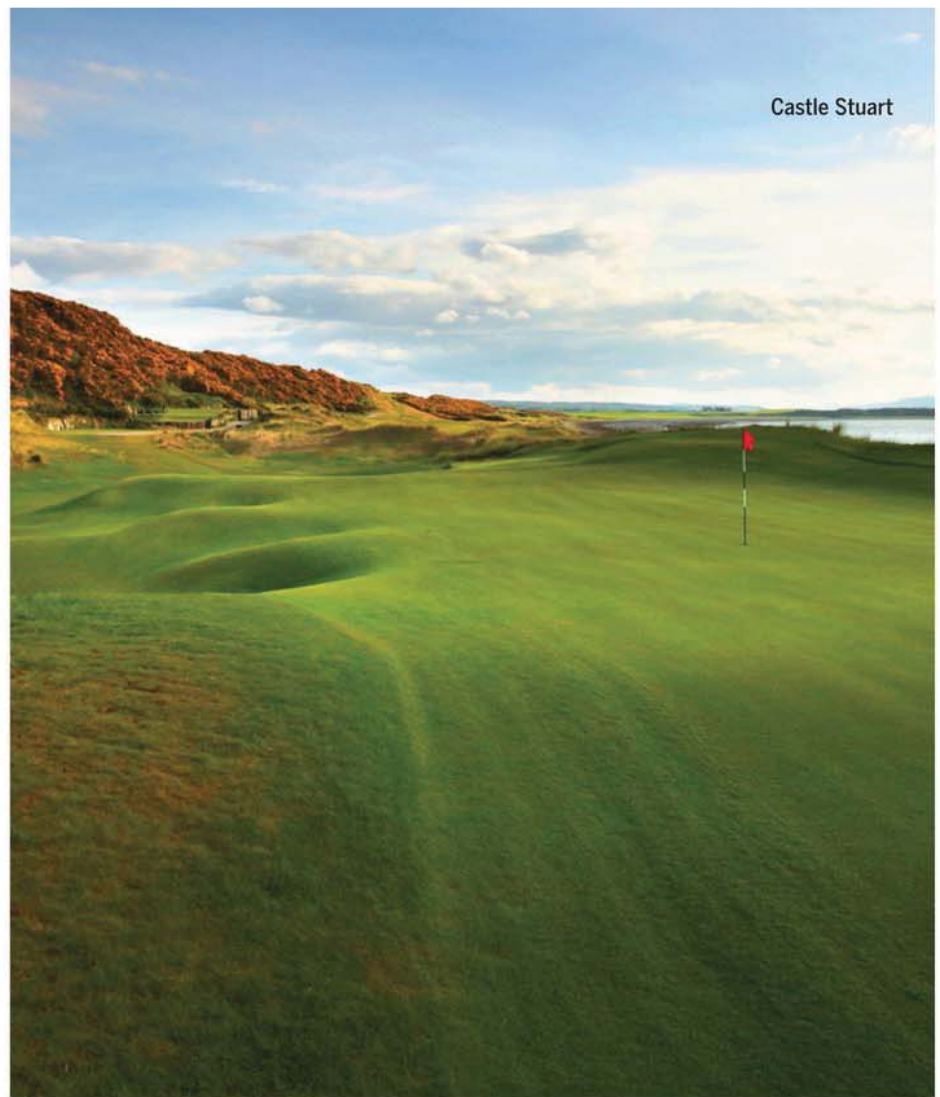
Highland Park, Illinois

**3** Ohio-based architect Drew Rogers has been consulting at Old Elm, one of Chicago's poshest clubs, for several years. The course was laid out by Harry Colt on his 1913 tour of the U.S., with construction overseen by Donald Ross, the only project in the world where these two giants are known to have collaborated. Rogers's work focused on tree removal, grassing lines, and bunker reconstruction. In a remarkable transformation, the formerly choked property is now quite open, with long views across the course and room for the remaining trees, mostly fine old specimens, to thrive and show their beauty. The project was meant to be largely restorative, but in a few places Rogers did some tweaking, such as at the dramatic downhill par-three 17th, where he made the steep and challenging green a little more forgiving.

### COUNTY LOUTH

Louth, Co. Louth, Ireland

**4** At County Louth in Ireland, a central work of the great English architect Tom Simpson, Danish designer Philip Spogárd is walking the fine line between alteration and preservation. County Louth, which hosted the Irish Open as recently as 2009, remains in the mix for championship play, both at amateur and pro level. As a result, some of Simpson's old holes no longer stand up. At the par-five 2nd, Spogárd built an entirely new green, while at the par-three 5th the putting surface was small and severely sloped, limiting the number of pin locations. Spogárd commissioned a digital survey of the green (should future maintenance methods allow reconstruction of the original), then slightly flattened the back left corner and tied it into an extension of about 1,100 square feet. This increased the pinnable area by 150 percent, while retaining the strategic ideas implemented by Simpson.



### CASTLE STUART

Inverness, Scotland

**5** Castle Stuart owner/co-designer Mark Parsinen will collaborate with Arnold Palmer's design team on a second course at the resort in the Scottish Highlands, with work to start in early 2016. Palmer architects Thad Layton and Brandon Johnson will work on the project, but the King himself visited before the Open Championship. The routing takes the course on a broadly out-and-back journey to the southwest of the existing 18. Says Johnson, "For us, the chance to design in the field is a great opportunity. It will be a lot of fun, but it's also a chance to buck the received wisdom that a big-name design firm just draws plans and then leaves it at that."