



Perfect swing: overnight leader Lynnette Brooky, of New Zealand, in action yesterday.

Picture: ALLSPORT

Brooky off to a flying start



By **PETER STONE**
SURFERS PARADISE

Alex Mercer's parting words to New Zealander Lynnette Brooky after three days of intensive work on her golf swing, were: "Go win some trophies this year."

That was three weeks ago, and while there's nothing in the cabinet yet, she is off to a fine start in the \$500,000 Australian Ladies' Masters at Royal Pines with rounds of 66 and 65, to be 13-under at the half-way mark and four shots clear of American Kelly Robbins. Karrie Webb is a further stroke behind after a fairly nondescript — by her standards — two-under 70.

Webb, who is chasing her fourth consecutive Masters title, had some extraordinary loose swings. On the 15th she drove into the water, and then, after taking a drop, hit a big slice. She was lucky to finish with a bogey on the 480-metre par five.

Mercer, the renowned Sydney coach who also has charge of Steve Elkington's swing, has been working with 33-year-old Brooky since she was 16, firstly as part of his duties as New Zealand national amateur coach, and now simply because Brooky believes in him.

"I worked on my game over Christmas at home in Wellington

Australians on pace

MIAMI

It wasn't Australia Day, but it sure looked like it as a bunch of Aussies scored well in the first round at the US tour's Genuity Championship here on Thursday.

Robert Allenby headed the charge at six-under-par 66, but six of his compatriots also broke 70 on the Doral Resort's Blue Monster.

Canadian Mike Weir led the way with a 10-under 62, ahead of Americans Glen Day and Stewart Cink by two strokes.

Allenby was tied for eighth, while compatriots Stuart Appleby, Greg Chalmers and

think he'll be quite happy.' I hit balls for three days, and he was just quite amazed. He told me I was ready," she said.

What really stunned her was that Mercer told her she had one of the most consistent swings in golf other than that of Elkington, whose swing is regarded as just about the purest of them all.

When Brooky comes to Sydney she stays with Mercer and his wife, Shirley. After morning practice on

Paul Gow carded 67. Mathew Goggin and Steve Elkington were equal 25th on 68, Stephen Allan shot 69 and Ben Ferguson 70.

Greg Norman remained home after contracting a fever.

IN DUBAI Richard Green moved to within three strokes of Tiger Woods and Denmark's Thomas Bjorn on the opening day of the Dubai Desert Classic.

Woods and Bjorn finished with rounds of eight-under-par 64 and two strokes ahead of Ireland's Padraig Harrington and Spain's Jose Manuel Lara. Queenslander Peter Senior shot a 69. — AAP

bets at the TAB before heading home to watch the races. "It's just a wonderful life, a privilege to spend social time with him because you get to know the inner self of what a golfer is," she said.

Yesterday, Brooky was clearly enjoying herself on the Royal Pines layout along her way to seven under 65. She hit a five iron to the eighth to set up one of seven birdies of the day, and her playing partner Mardi Lunn remarked:

LEADERBOARD

Ladies Masters at the par 72
Royal Pines Resort course:
(Australian unless stated)

- 13 Lynnette Brooky (NZ) 66 65
- 9 Kelly Robbins (US) 68 67
- 7 Karrie Webb 67 70
- 6 Corinne Dibnah 68 70,
Diane Barnard (England) 65 73
- 5 Fiona Pike 70 69, Rachel Teske 71
68, Alison Munt 70 69

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LL:THE AGE
MARCH 2, 2001

having fun?" As it turned out, Lunn had a whole lot of fun herself later in the afternoon. Lunn, with rounds of 69 and 71, retired to the casino and won \$250 playing poker with 18-year-old Lee Picker, son of former Australian touring professional Ray Picker, who, like Lunn, comes from Cowra.

After the win, she handed \$100 to young Picker, saying, "Do what you can and we'll go halves". He promptly drew a royal flush (in hearts) to pick up a \$90,000 jackpot.

Laura Davies missed her first cut in the Masters, following rounds of 77 and 76.

For the past couple of years Brooky has been trying to organise her own women's professional tournament in her home city of Wellington, and she thought she'd succeeded only to see it collapse just before Christmas following a