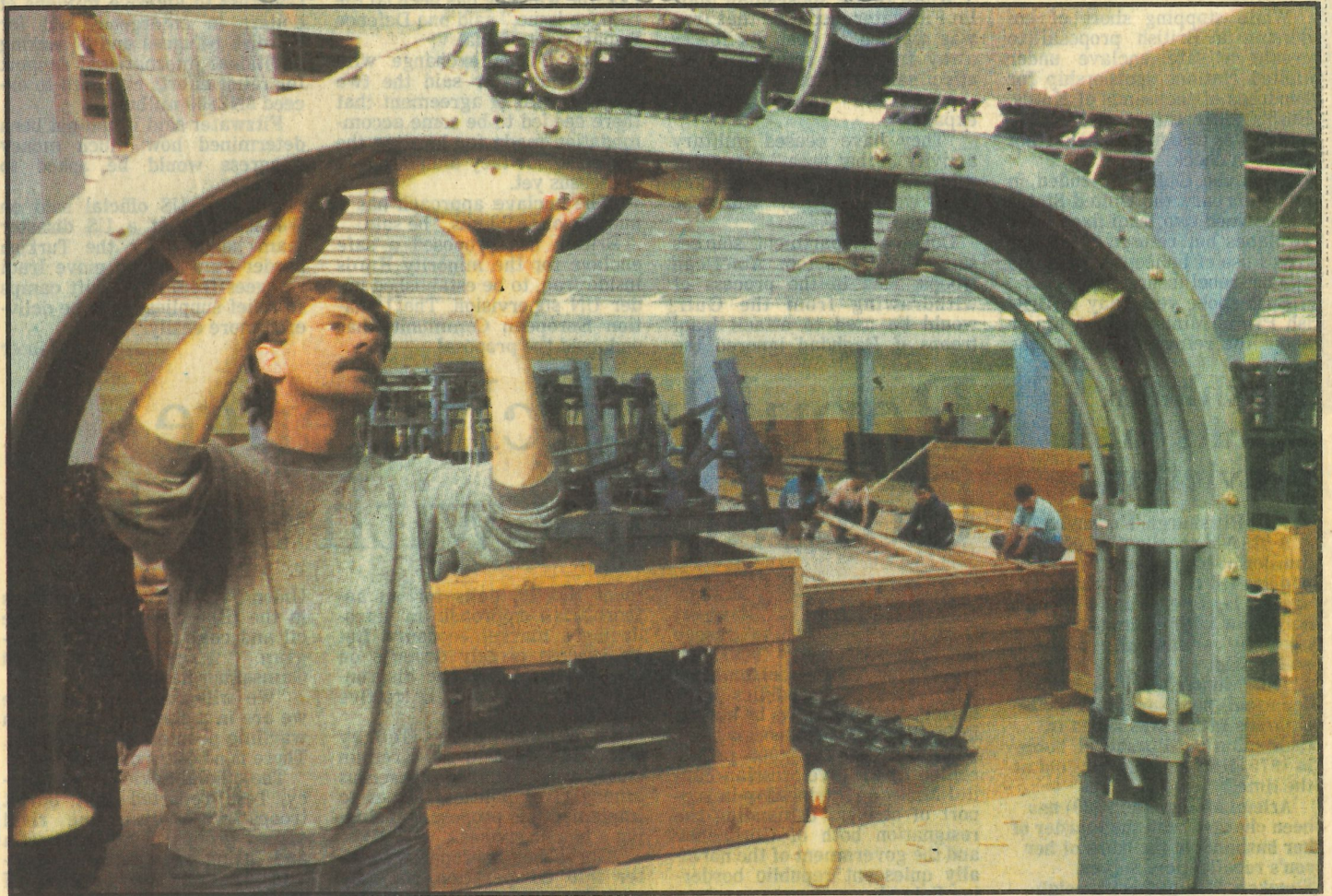


Ten-pin bowling centre on target



Chief technician for one of New Plymouth's new bowling centres, Ken Agar, checks out the ex-Japanese pin pick-up equipment. Bowlarama is expected to open at the beginning of May.

Photo: GLEN FERGUSSON

TARANAKI will soon boast its first international standard automated ten-pin bowling centre.

New Plymouth's Bowlarama supervisor Frank Szedlak yesterday said the 17-lane bowling centre on Dawson St, previously known as Clarks Shoes, was on target and expected to open early next month.

Meanwhile a second automated bowling centre, Taranaki Ten-Pin — also due to open next month — has been stalled by temporary financial difficulties, manager Graeme Riddick said yesterday.

"Basically, financial matters have held up progress," he said. It'll be struggling to be open by the May holidays."

The 16-lane \$500,000 complex, which will include a cafeteria, will be set up in a Gill St building.

The automated bowling equipment was

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being stored in Hamilton and would be transported to New Plymouth as soon as the building was vacated, he said.

Mr Szedlak believed New Plymouth was big enough for only one large bowling centre. "And we started first."

In reply, Mr Riddick said he was "looking forward to the competition".

Mr Szedlak said Bowlarama's equipment from Japan was now being installed. He refused to divulge the costs involved.

"We're very pleased with the bowling equipment. Most is new and some is refurbished. The centre is being set up to international standards and New Plymouth will be one of the best bowling centres in New Zealand. It will be an asset to New Plymouth," Mr Szedlak said.

New Plymouth was one of the country's last cities to have an automated bowling centre, he added.

About 15 local firms were involved in a major refurbishment of the Dawson St building.

Chief technician Ken Agar said the centre, owned by Laszlo Enterprises Ltd, would double as both an entertainment and competition centre.

A creche, snack bar and games room were part of the complex.

Plans for the future included the installation of air conditioning and an application for a liquor licence.

Mr Agar said he and others had set up New Plymouth's first bowling lane in 1979 for the Winter Show.

Two permanent lanes were later set up in the Queens Hall basement in the early 1980s.