

PQB GOLF

Golfing in Paradise by Bill Flower



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Rain nurtures fairway at Morningstar

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The torrent of rain this past weekend, which is forecast to continue throughout the coming week, has provided huge benefits, not only to our tinder dry forests provincially but locally to Morningstar Golf Course.

The reliance on Mother Nature to nurture the fairways might be a reality this season, but next year it should be just a back up according to Morningstar general manager Randy LaRoche.

Discussions are ongoing with the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) to resume effluent water usage for 2019 with an improved process for water quality.

For the immediate future, that will be the most significant positive news since the recent takeover by the receiver G Force Group and the addition of Laroche as General Manager.



A single golfer goes for birdie from the edge of the 14th green at the Morningstar Golf Course. BILL FLOWER PHOTO

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This transition has not only seen the course flourish again, but golfers and all members of the community can now add "The Grill on the Green" restaurant as a must stop.

Myra and I can now happily include Friday fish-and-chip night on our own list. Chef Mel didn't disappoint and even took a minute to say hello to us and share with us aspects of our meal. The Rockcod was literally fresh from the sea that day and yes if the chips are as crisp and hot as they were, "mmmmm" is all I can say. Specialty food nights run from Wednesday to Saturday weekly and "The Grill" will be open now right through the year, five nights a week Wednesday to Sunday.

Due to the wisdom and experience of superintendent Gord America, what water they have had

this summer was stored in holding ponds. It was allocated by hand watering tee boxes and greens and it certainly shows, they look and play as good as golfers desire.

His team of greens keepers have earned their keep. A simple thumbs up when you see them lets them know these improvements didn't go unnoticed.

A dozen doughnuts from Tim Hortons probably wouldn't hurt either.

The recent successful Blue Tie Golf Day tournament saw another donation of more than \$10,000 go towards prostate cancer research and hats off to the organizing committee for continuing to have Morningstar host the event.

As we look to the upcoming cooler months, Morningstar will dedicate time to a focused tree maintenance program as well as removing roots from under cart paths and aerating the greens among many aspects of continued course improvements. LaRoche went on to say "We are committed this fall in doing what a good golf course does."

It's no secret that the course is going to be purchased in the near future; it's a necessary step in the recovery process and also an exciting one.

A new ownership group in order to be successful will want to work with the local golf community and hopefully have the golfers, be they

members or casual green fee payers, interests forefront.

I fell in love with Morningstar many, many years ago and can't wait to tee it up there more and more. It possesses some great holes as well as having a really good practice facility. On a rainy day you can hit balls from under cover on the range.

If you're just plain bored, head to the pro shop and say hi to head professional Mark Forrest who has a great background in the industry as well as a wealth of experience in golfing and travel in Portugal.

Remember the rule though; if the pro shop is busy, keep your golf story condensed to that one good shot and not the whole bad round.

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