



Morningstar Golf Club has seen its membership grow rapidly this year. (Michael Briones photo)

# Morningstar Golf Club in Parksville back on the upswing

## New management aims to make club profitable in 2020

MICHAEL BRIONES / Jun. 14, 2020 3:30 a.m. / [LOCAL SPORTS](#) / [SPORTS](#)

Morningstar Golf Club is on the upswing again.

Two years ago, its owners filed for bankruptcy and went into receivership with debts of around \$13 million.

G. Powroznik Group Inc. of G-Force Group was appointed by the court as receiver and since taking over in June 2018, it has made it a goal to restore Morningstar's reputation as one of the premier golf courses on Vancouver Island.

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Last November, Barrie McWha and partners, Riva brothers Ray and Mike of Wedgewood Golf Management, were hired to take over the management of the Les Furber-designed course, which opened in 1991.

“Our job is to stop the losses and they have been significant,” said McWha, a lifetime member of the PGA of Canada. “The plan is to give people confidence that Morningstar is not going anywhere.”

The goal of turning the course around this year got off to a good start but ran into a major hurdle when Morninstar closed its operation for a month due to COVID-19 restrictions. McWha said it didn’t help but since re-opening on April 20, McWha said they encountered a resurgence in the number of people coming out to play golf.

“We’re better than we could hope for,” said McWha. “We’re ahead of our projections. I think it reinforced the fact that

golf is a healthy and safe endeavour in this times. So there's more people playing golf.”

During the closure, McWha indicated they were able to do some work to improve the course. The greens are now looking good, he said, and have been getting solid reviews from members.

Morningstar is preparing to host its first event, the local qualifier for the RBC PGA Scramble, on July 11. The event is open to amateur golfers, who can form a team of four players and vie for a chance to compete at the provincial qualifier to be held in Victoria Golf Club and hopefully in the national championships in October with a PGA of Canada professional playing on their team.

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Just recently, McWha said, Morningstar was awarded the 2021 Junior BC Golf Championships to be held June 28 to July 2.

“We’re pretty excited about that,” said McWha. “It’s going to be nice for Morningstar to be back in the provincial championship rotation.

On June 24, McWha said they will open the Morningstar Grill restaurant, with strict COVID-19 protocols in place as required by the provincial health authorities.

“It will be nice to have the restaurant open,” said McWha.

“We have a new chef and a great team of servers. We are all excited.”

Morningstar is still up for sale but there's no rush to do it right now, said McWha.

“Nobody is going to pay a reasonable price for it until we can show that it doesn't lose money,” said McWha. “We know what Morningstar used to look like and it will be again.”

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