

N.S. golf courses make the cut

Travel and Leisure magazine singles out four
By BILL SPURR Features Writer

You don't have to be from here to appreciate the quality of our golf courses.

The current issue of Travel and Leisure Golf magazine has a cover story on golfing in Atlantic Canada, in which Nova Scotia courses figure prominently.

Writer Robert Thompson includes four Nova Scotia courses among the seven he highlights, with Highlands Links heading the list.

"A stretch of finishing holes to rival any in the world," Thompson writes of the Ingonish course. "Rustic, razor-sharp and as thrilling a golf experience as can be found at any public course in North America."

Travel and Leisure Golf says the best time to golf in Atlantic Canada is from mid-June until the end of October and that the main consideration when planning a trip should be when Highlands Links opens.

Highlands Links is the only course awarded five stars by the U.S. magazine, but the Fox Harb' Golf Resort and Spa in Wallace gets four.

"So finely maintained you'll be hard-pressed to find a single unfilled divot," writes Thompson, a golf columnist for the National Post.

The Bell Bay Golf Club in Baddeck earns 3 1/2 stars and praise for its exceptional practice facilities, and Glen Arbour in Hammonds Plains is singled out as a course with "multiple remarkable holes" and also gets 3 1/2 stars.

Other recommended visits are Dundarave and Crowbush Cove in Prince Edward Island and the Algonquin in New Brunswick.

Nova Scotia courses that get honourable mentions are Dundee, Le Portage, Digby Pines and Northumberland Links.

It's not yet on anybody's list of the very best courses in the province, but the Guysborough facility formerly known as Belmont is getting a major facelift.

Under new ownership, the course now called Osprey Shores Golf Resort has hired John Stapleton to oversee improvements to both the course and the pro shop.

A release says the focus at Osprey Shores, a nine-hole track, is on "increasing the speed of the greens, contour cutting on the fairways to enhance green definition so golfers are guided to the hole and providing players with nicely manicured fairways to ensure a great golfing experience."

The new-look course is scheduled to be ready for golfers this week.