

# LIFESTYLE

The StarPhoenix Monday, June 28, 1999

## Mack drives off chill

### Wet weather strikes blue note at Gardens

By Cam Fuller  
of The StarPhoenix

The first Gardens concert of the SaskTel Saskatchewan Jazz Festival was enough to give the most optimistic organizer the blues.

About 50 people showed up at 4 p.m. Saturday to welcome Nigel Mack and the Blues Attack back to Saskatoon. About 24-hours worth of misty drizzle made the lush lawn behind the Bessborough Hotel un-sit-down-able. Thankfully, however, the rain moved on to depress some other community by the time Mack was well into his set.

It didn't exactly tap you on the shoulder, but you could detect a nice family atmosphere to the event. A new kids' tent with face painting and balloons was a welcome addition. It was also neat that Mack pointed out his parents in the audience and mentioned that they'd celebrated their 39th wedding anniversary the day before.

Musically, Mack and the drums-guitar-bass Blues Attack set a high standard for the three acts to follow with a crisp set of tunes that variously lamented and celebrated the twin dragons of infidelity and temptation. Someone Like You had cool Clapton-esque overtones while Gal Friday did the swing thing in high style. Mack switched from slide guitar to harp for the second half to play numbers like Trouble Times Three and Extra Extra. By the time he was done blowing, he'd blown the rain away.

Michael Pickett's return to Tune-Town was long overdue. "This is my first time in Saskatoon since 1974," the Toronto bluesman revealed. Pickett's band, highlighted by the incomparable Hammond B3 organ, sounded great behind its leader's raspy, life-lived vocals.



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**Nigel Mack Blues Attack**  
**The Kalispell Elks Club, Kalispell,**  
**Montana**

**Sunday, November 18**

The Nigel Mack Blues Attack arrived in Kalispell, Montana with a powerhouse performance. Playing mostly original material from his previous album "High Price To Play" as well as some smokin' covers (i.e. "Give Me Back My Wig"), Nigel led a 3-fronted assault on vocals, harp and slide guitar with more than able assistance from Jason Nowicki on lead guitar, Ryan Menard on bass and Steve Knelson on the drum kit.

This hard-working band from Vancouver, B.C. was finishing up a grueling two-month tour of the States and Canada, playing clubs such as Buddy Guy's Legends in Chicago and The Grand Emporium in Kansas City to sell-out crowds as well as in Des Moines, Nash-