

PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Golfer



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Thoroughbred

WHITE HORSE

already in full stride

WHY CHAMBERS BAY?

**BASEBALL'S BUCKNER
AT HOME IN IDAHO**

**SPA TREATMENTS AND GOLF
– WHO KNEW?**

**DISTINGUISHED SERVICE
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All the Pretty Horses

The beauty and brawn of White Horse BY BLAINE NEWNHAM

IF YOU'RE ON THE SEATTLE SIDE OF PUGET SOUND, YOUR WHITE HORSE ADVENTURE CAN BEGIN with a walk-on ferry ride to Kingston and end on what may be the finest finishing hole in the state of Washington.

The 20 minute ferry ride and free shuttle to the golf course are not the only things that are different at White Horse Golf Club, now nearing its first full year of play.

Also different are playing conditions that are so dry, regulars play summer rules all winter long. First-timers aren't sure they should drive their carts on the fairways during wet winter weather even though they are told they can. Different too is the double-ended practice range which has over two acres of natural grass hitting area.

A surprising difference is that White Horse was designed by a woman, and not a man.

And not just any woman.

"I didn't consider it a gutsy move to hire Cynthia (Dye McGarey) to design the course," said Bob Screen, the owner. "Not after I saw that the work she had done with her brothers, cousins

and uncle was better than anything else I looked at."

Screen's decision was validated by *Golf Digest* magazine, which selected White Horse one of America's "Best New Courses of 2007" in their "Best New Public Under \$75" category.

The "Best New" recognition of White Horse was the first given to a course designed solely by a woman in *Golf Digest's* 25 years of rating new courses. Cynthia Dye McGarey is the niece of world-famous designer, Pete Dye, and works for Dye Designs Group.

Although White Horse has been very popular with women – Dye designed it that way – there is no questioning that she also built a man's course.

White Horse is clearly one of the toughest tracks in the region from its back tees, with a rating of 74.9 and a slope of 144. Already, Pacific Northwest Golf Association officials have reviewed the course and deemed it worthy of consideration for one of its championships.



HOW IT BEGAN...

Looking for pasture land for his daughter's horse, Bob Screen bought 456 acres on a ridge between Kingston and Indianola in the 1980s.

It had been cleared of prime fir trees in the lumber industry's rush to send logs to Japan.

Looking for the property's best-use scenario, Screen read a comment by Karsten Solheim, the inventor of the Ping clubs, that there was need for more good golf in the stretches of north Kitsap County.

Screen sought Solheim out in a restaurant in nearby Suquamish run by Solheim's sister. Together, they walked the property. Solheim saw the gracefully undulating landscape and its makeup – sand – and gave a quick thumbs up.

"Perfect," he said.



Golfers coming off the ferry in Kingston to meet the White Horse shuttle.

Located three miles south of the Kingston ferry dock, between Kingston and Indianola on the Kitsap Peninsula, White Horse is the centerpiece of a residential development, but is open to the public with green fees that range from \$47 to \$63.

Almost every hole is separate from every other hole, with trees lining large, welcoming fairways and framing bunker-surrounded greens.

Because the course was built primarily on a deep sand base, White Horse and Chambers Bay are two of just the handful of courses in the region that played summer rules all winter long.

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Screen said, “I had an e-mail from a group that played Chambers Bay, then played White Horse. They said ‘We enjoyed White Horse even more,’ adding, ‘It was definitely worth the trip.’”

Like all new courses, the greens at White Horse were at first reluctant to receive approach shots, but they are improving. There has also been a campaign to keep the fescue rough surrounding greens and tees at a manageable height.

Screen said he was surprised how many players are taking advantage of the free shuttle service from the Kingston ferry dock, which is just five minutes away.

On some weekend days, upwards of 60 players have arrived on foot by ferry, cutting not only their costs, but eliminating time

waiting in line to drive on and off the ferry.

“Golfers are coming from all over the Pacific Northwest,” said Screen. “The positive response has exceeded our expectations. And everyone loves the practice range. All in all, it has been a great first year, especially when *Golf Digest* chose White Horse one of America’s Best New Courses of 2007. That’s like the ‘Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval.’”

Oh, and the finishing hole? It can be about as daunting as Doraf’s, a long par-4 that snakes around a huge lake and offers plenty – as much risk as reward.

The reward, though, is just being at White Horse.

AT A GLANCE



WHITE HORSE
GOLF CLUB

WHITE HORSE GOLF CLUB
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YARDAGE	RATING/SLOPE
GREEN TEES	
7,093 yards	74.9/144
BLACK TEES	
6,693 yards	72.9/138
BLUE TEES	
6,234 yards	70.7/133
WHITE TEES	
5,673 yards	68.2/125 Men
WHITE TEES	
5,673 yards	73.7/133 Women
GOLD TEES	
5,022 yards	70.5/117 Women
Green fees	
\$47 - \$63; Twilight rates available	
PGA DIRECTOR OF GOLF	
Bruce Christy	
GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT	
Erik Linsenmayer	

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