Washington National opens University Course

AUBURN, Wash. — Washington National Golf Club (WNGC) has unveiled the first of a two-phase development with the opening of the University Course, which will serve as home to the University of Washington’s men’s and women’s golf teams.

The public, 18-hole, par-72 layout, designed by golf architect John Fought, is owned and managed by Kirkland-based OB Sports.

The head coach of the Washington Huskies golf team, O.D. Vincent, is the son of Orrin Vincent, owner of OB Sports and a native of the Pacific Northwest. "It’s been a dream of mine to build a course worthy of hosting a major championship, and Washington National is that course," said Orrin Vincent. "It is all the more meaningful having been afforded the opportunity to do it in my hometown."

The University Course features five sets of strategically placed ryegrass tees, allowing golfers of all skill levels to play the course, which ranges from 7,304 yards from the back pegs down to 5,117 yards from the shortest markers. A large clubhouse deck overlooks the 18th hole and offers expansive views.

The most dramatic holes, perhaps, are the par-5 14th and the par-4 15th. Vincent modeled the 14th - a 435-yarder after Pine Valley's sixth, a hole so tough it's often called "Hell's Half Acre." Vincent's version skirts several bunkers and requires a downhill third shot that can send balls bouncing sharply off the back of the green.

The 15th hole, 342 yards long, plays to an island green against a backdrop of boulders, flowers and a waterfall. Precision is required to reach the green safely. "This," said Vincent, "is an Augusta hole."

Various details at the course expand on the college theme. The golf carts, for example, are gold with purple trim, the Huskies' team colors. Each cart is custom named for a Husky althlete, and inside the cart is a description of that "Husky Legend." For instance, the Warren Moon cart features a rundown of his collegiate and pro football careers. There's also one custom colored cart for each of the other Pac-10 Conference schools, complete with

Ernie Els Enterprises joins forces with Nicklaus Design

NORTH PALM BEACH, Fla. — Nicklaus Design has entered into a joint venture with Ernie Els Enterprises to pursue golf course design opportunities. The parties intend to develop, implement and market a golf course design business supported by the infrastructure of Nicklaus Design, and featuring the design work, strategies and endorsement of Ernie Els. Nicklaus Design, a division of Golden Bear International, Inc., the privately held company of golfer Jack Nicklaus and the Nicklaus family, will provide Ernie Els Design, Ltd. with the staff and technical support required to complete the conceptual and planning documents necessary to design a golf course. Support will include all computer-sided design work related to routings, strategies and

Oneida Nation's Shenendoah Golf Club ready for play

ONEIDA, N.Y. — The Oneida Indian Nation recently opened its 18-hole championship Shenendoah Golf Club adjacent to the Turning Stone Casino Resort in central New York. Playing to a par of 72 and ranging up to 7,129 yards from the back tees, the course provides a challenge for everyone from the high handicap to the most accomplished shooters.

Designed, constructed and maintained to tournament standards, golfers at Shenendoah will experience conditions normally reserved for tour professionals. "The Shenendoah Golf Club is a great tour-caliber course that is as fine a course as you will find anywhere in the United States," says Bob O'Brien, director of golf at Turning Stone Casino Resort.

The Oneida group chose course designer Rick Smith for his attention to detail and commitment to maintaining the integrity of the existing landscape. Recognized by Audubon International for his efforts in designing courses that preserve and enhance the environment, Smith has blended this 18-hole layout into its natural surroundings.