

## Inglewood Golf Club, Kenmore, WA

Established 1919, Course Opened 1921

Course Architects: Robert Johnstone and A. Vernon Macan

Inglewood Golf Club was founded in 1919 on the shores of Lake Washington in what is now the City of Kenmore. Golf in the Seattle area, following World War I, found four golf courses: The Seattle Golf Club (1896), Jefferson Park Municipal Golf Course (1915), and the two now-defunct 9-hole University Golf Club (1914) and the 6-hole West Side Golf Club (1915) in West Seattle. There was also the 9-hole Earlington Golf and Country Club (1912), also defunct, in Renton.

Choices were limited for the Seattle resident seeking to take up this new game that had suddenly become so popular. There was a long waiting list for membership at the Seattle Golf Club; Tacoma Golf Club (1894) and Everett Golf and Country Club (1910) were too far, and Jefferson Park, where some 100,000 rounds per year was being played, too congested.

On March 21, 1919, forty-five men and women attended the first meeting to discuss the formation of the Inglewood Golf Club. The name of the club is derived from the Inglewood Farm on the northeast shore of Lake Washington.

According to the January 18, 1920 issue of Seattle Sunday Times, Club President J. G. Blake announced that two golf architects, Robert Johnstone, golf professional at the Seattle Golf Club, and A. Vernon Macan, of Victoria, British Columbia, was hired to lay out the course.

In addition, Blake announced the purchase of 210 acres of the Inglewood Farm for \$70,000.

Almost simultaneously, on the other end of Seattle, the Rainier Golf and Country Club (1919) also formed. They too hired Robert Johnstone, and later A. Vernon Macan, as their golf architects.

The two clubs grew up together, and in the early years, quite a rivalry developed in inter-club competitions between the two clubs.

**PICK ARCHITECTS**

Johnstone and Macan Will Lay Out Links for Inglewood on Shores of Lake.

Circular notice of progress being made in bringing the Inglewood Country Club into actual existence was given by Ed Brown, secretary, the latter part of the week, in which he said that Robert Johnstone and A. V. Macan had been engaged to lay out the course at the north end of Lake Washington.

The Victoria amateur declared "You have a very beautiful property," and the Seattle Golf Club professional added "It will make an exceptionally fine golf course."

The employment of Bob Johnstone emphasizes the fact that when the Lake Washington course is realized he will have had a finger in every golf pie cut, with but one exception, in this city. His plans carried in the building of the Seattle Golf Club, the Rainier Golf & Country Club and the municipal links at Jefferson Park.

Secretary Brown also notes that there are more than fifty names on the waiting list of the club, but the usual shrinkage is looked for through the non-payment of stock subscriptions, so he urges this as an opportune time to propose additional names for membership.

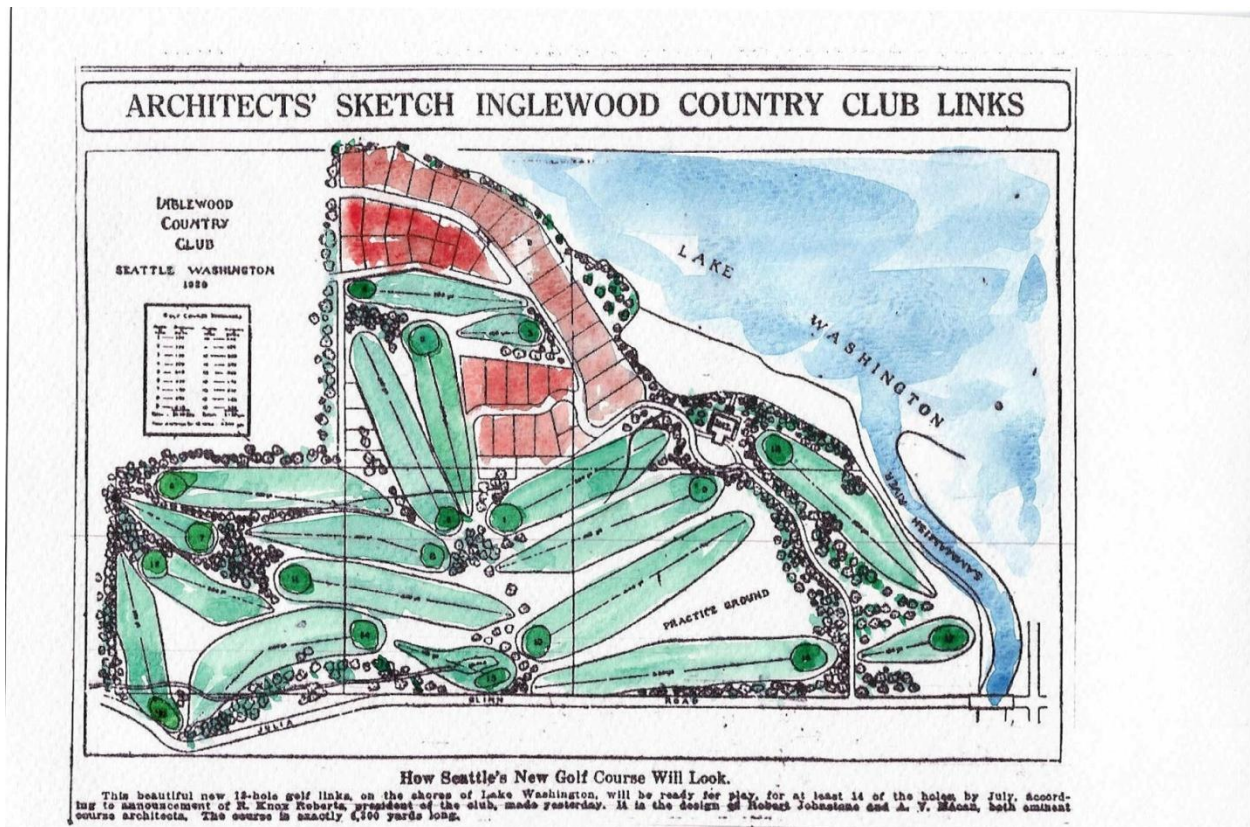
Work on the golf club house and the links is expected to start before the end of this month.

Club President J. G. Blake announced yesterday that on Friday the trustees had completed the purchase of the 210 acres entering into the scheme of club property for links and for the construction of club house and country homes.

The price paid was approximately \$70,000, the purchase being made of two owners, Alonzo E. Jackson of Portland and the Blinn Estate, of San Francisco.

The club president will complete the appointment of his committees at the regular weekly meeting next Friday.

The course laid out by Johnstone and Macan from 1920 shows a routing of holes which, remarkably, remain virtually unchanged ninety-five years later.



Course Architects' Plan 1920 (courtesy of Inglewood Golf Club)

Yardages for holes are:

1 – 380, 2 – 350, 3 – 150, 4 – 390, 5 – 410, 6 – 450, 7 – 170, 8 – 400, 9 – 410, Total - 3110  
 10 – 440, 11 – 400, 12 – 300, 13 – 370, 14 – 400, 15 – 170, 16 – 550, 17 – 180, 18 – 380, Total - 3190  
 Total 18 holes: 6300 yards

Johnstone and Macan knew each other well. One was a golf professional and the other a top-notch amateur (Macan won the PPGA Amateur in 1913). When it came to golf course architecture, however, Johnstone was old school, following the style of links design he learned in Scotland. Macan was the innovator, with some definite ideas about how a course should be laid out. They did not always agree, as seen in this humorous, retrospective story told in the Sept. 12, 1926 issue of the Seattle Daily Times. Perhaps the credit for the original design of Inglewood should go to Macan, Johnstone, and a bit to Hans Moon.

# DONE BY MOON'S LIGHT

\* \* \* *Ninth Green at Inglewood* \* \* \*

## Bob Johnstone Relates How When Doctors Couldn't Make Up Their Minds What to Do Another Did It for Them.



**W**HEN doctors disagree, or cannot make up their minds what to do; then, what to do? Hans Moon was caught that way once—forced to stand and wait while the doctors debated. Finally Hans caught up the cudgels himself and went to hacking. He made a fine job of it, too, as even the doctors sometime afterwards agreed.

In a reminiscent mood the other day, D. H. Traphagen, president of Inglewood Country Club, and Bob Johnstone, Seattle Golf Club professional, reviewed the building of Inglewood. Johnstone and A. V. Macan did the designing and "Trap" the construction work, with Hans Moon as foreman in charge. Hans is now in charge of maintenance of Broadmoor Golf Club, which course he built after the plans of Macan.

"Did you ever hear how the ninth green was built at Inglewood?" asked Bob of "Trap."

### Building of No. 9.

"Don't know that I have," replied the other, who added, "But it probably is the best fashioned of all the original eighteen greens."

"Which is a fact," quickly retorted Johnstone.

"Anyhow," continued the professional, "Macan and I, realizing that the ninth green was right in front of the clubhouse where everybody could see, and would judge the whole course by it, gave this 'show' hole lots of thought. It was, you know, one of the last to be built.

### Agreed to Disagree.

"We thought we had arrived at a definite size and shape of the green and its attendant bunkers, and so we told Hans Moon to meet us with his crew of scrapers and shovelers on a certain morning.

"Between the time of ordering Hans out and meeting him, both Macan and I, deeply impressed with the respon-

sibility of this ninth green, got to further debating in our respective minds, so that when all of us, Macan, Moon and I, met on the designated morning we, we architects discovered, we were as far apart as ever on just what should be.

Hans stood by, on one foot and then on the other, while his crew and his horses, hooked to the scrapers, enjoyed a rest. Finally, after spending several hours arguing and getting no nearer a solution, we called it off for the day and told Hans to appear again the next morning.

### Three Days' Grace.

"Well, the next day was a repetition of what had gone on the day before, much to the disgust of Hans Moon, although neither Macan nor I was disposed to hurry matters. We wanted it 'right.' Again we adjourned and set a meeting three days away.

"On the designated day and hour Macan and I appeared on the scene. Hans Moon and his crew and teams were not there. But the ninth green was. Hans Moon had put it there."

Even the bunkering had been done. And neither the bunkers, nor the green ever were changed.

## Inglewood Country Club

*View Looking North over #1 and #10 Fairways  
(Note 9's were reversed in 1931)*



*Course Architect A. Vernon Macan and Robert Johnstone*

View of course and Lake Washington (photo courtesy of Inglewood Golf Club)

On August 6, 1921, Inglewood Country Club officially opened:

More than 350 golf enthusiasts attended the opening of the new golf course and 225 played over the course during the afternoon, among them Bob Johnstone, professional at the Seattle Country Club, who tied with Clark Speirs for low medal score of 78. The lawn in front of the clubhouse was an animated scene. (Seattle DailyTimes, August 7, 1921)



Original Clubhouse 1921 (photo courtesy of Inglewood Golf Club)

Al Espinosa, from California, was hired as Inglewood's first golf professional in 1921 but resigned after two years to pursue a professional career on the PGA tour. Espinosa won nine times on the professional tour and was on the 1927, 1929, and 1931 Ryder Cup teams.

Walter Pursey followed. Born in England, Pursey came to the U.S. in 1924 and somehow found his way to Kenmore, Washington where he secured the job as head professional at Inglewood.

Walter Pursey, who for the next few months at least, will act as pro at Inglewood, played his first game of golf in America yesterday afternoon over the Lake Shore links when, accompanied by James G. Blake, he nonchalantly strolled over that hilly 18 holes in a cool 74 – 1 over par. Quite a gallery followed the new pro and the club captain around the links and it was the consensus of opinion, following the match, that Walter Pursey will "do." He is, aye verily, a sweet golfer. (Seattle Daily Times, May 16, 1924)

Pursey remained at Inglewood until 1940 when, ironically, he took the head pro's job at Rainier Golf and Country Club.



Walter Pursey, Inglewood's Golf Pro circa. 1930 (photo courtesy of Inglewood Golf Club)



Walter Pursey Wood Shafted Iron

The Great Depression hit the club hard. Membership dropped from 500 to 48 and the club was forced to declare bankruptcy in 1934. The club reorganized and operated for some time before declaring its second bankruptcy in 1940. This time the club was forced to close its course. The beautiful clubhouse was rented out to the U.S. Coast Guard for war-time use, and the course became a grazing ground for sheep. Following World War II, the club reopened in 1946 and in a matter of few short years returned to become one of the top championship courses in the Northwest.

Inglewood is also one of the storied golf clubs in the Northwest as told by Craig Smith in this Seattle Times article from August 16, 1987:

## **TOUGH, LOVELY INGLEWOOD INSPIRES SHARE OF LEGENDS - FATALITY, FEMMES FATALES FIGURE IN HISTORY OF KENMORE COURSE**

*Seattle Times, The (WA) (Published as THE SEATTLE TIMES) - August 16, 1987*

*Author: CRAIG SMITH*

*Inglewood Country Club in Kenmore, site of this week's seniors golf GTE Northwest Classic, routinely appears on lists of the state's most challenging and beautiful golf courses for good reason: it's tough, fair and gorgeous. If another category - most colorful history - were compiled, Inglewood would be on that list, too. Although every private club can produce stories of eccentric members and strange events, Inglewood's lore is so rich it gets retold at other clubs as well. After all, this is the golf club where:*

*A member who was playing alone bled to death on the ninth hole in the 1950s when his club broke and imbedded itself in his leg. It was the wrong hole for such an accident. Peacocks were kept on the adjoining property and their screech usually sounded like the word "Help."*

*"The peacocks would scream and screech," said Ivan Lottsfeldt, 79, a member since 1946. "Even if he had yelled for help, the theory is people may have heard something but wouldn't have paid attention to it thinking it was just the peacocks."*

*A doctor who was on the course played past the dying man, thinking he was just taking a nap.*

*When most of the course was shut down during World War II, sheep grazed to keep the grass from getting too long. The clubhouse and some of the property were used as a rest-and-relaxation site by the Coast Guard.*

*In 1954 a light plane made an emergency landing on the 18th fairway, then had to be dismantled for removal.*

*In 1973 an arrest for prostitution was made at a home bordering the 10th fairway. Clientele for the house of ill repute came from throughout the Seattle area (the place even had membership cards) and sometimes golf carts were parked in front of the establishment. Some members said they didn't realize what was going on until the police arrest. "I was so naive that it never occurred to me why all those women were in that house," one member said.*

*A deputy sheriff was shot and killed and two other deputies were wounded in 1952 when the club's dishwasher mistook them for safecrackers returning to the scene of a crime. An hour earlier, the dishwasher and two watchmen had been tied up by four safecrackers who escaped with \$6,800 from the safe and 25 then-legal slot machines. ("The club was a gambler's paradise in those days," recalls one member who joined in the early 1950s.) An offshoot of the robbery was the conviction of the chief of King County detectives for taking a bribe from the robbers.*

*During a Memorial Day tournament in the early 1950s the competing golfers and gallery reached the top of the hill on the fourth hole during the morning round and looked down to find the pin placement. Instead, they saw a man and woman entwined on the green, doing something other than putting. The story goes that the club pro at the time, Charlie Mortimer, turned the gallery and ordered, "Move back, back, back, especially you ladies!" Since then, some members have called the fourth hole "Lover's Lane."*

The Inglewood Country Club was a PGA Tour stop during the 1960s when it hosted The Seattle Open, and then the Senior PGA Tour during the 1980s and the 1990s. Today, it is considered one of the most demanding championship courses in the Northwest.

By Martin Pool  
fas1863@hotmail.com  
April, 2015