

**MOM & POP'S: SIX 9 HOLE COURSES NOT TO MISS THIS SEASON**

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IDAHO

# GOLF

**Go Long**  
*Our pick on*  
**'11 Drivers**

## 9 Gem State **JEWELS** IDAHO'S SIGNATURE HOLES

**PLUS**

### **4 Swing Tips**

HELP FROM THE PROS

### **The Z-Factor**

HONE IN THE PERFECT PUTT

### **Teeing it Up**

IN THE TREASURE VALLEY

**THE ARTISTRY**  
OF **Don Knott**  
[Golf Course Architect]

by Mike McKenna

Jug Mountain Ranch, a Knott designed course in McCall. RIGHT: Course architect, Don Knott

# KNOTT

YOUR AVERAGE GOLF COURSE DESIGNER

## Don Knott follows his passion and builds dreams

**[W]**hen you get right down to it, it's actually easier to make it as a professional golfer than it is as a professional golf course architect.

Just about every weekend of the year, hundreds of professional golfers tee it up, trying for nationally televised fame and glory. But they can only play on one course at a time.

Don Knott is one of those lucky few people with the talent and tenacity to make the cut as a professional golf course architect. But he hasn't simply made the cut.

Don Knott has become one of the most highly respected golf course architects of all time. If there were a Master's Tournament for golf course designers, Don Knott would get a lifetime exemption.

### Golf is still golf

Don didn't always have a love affair with golf. A collegiate All-American swimmer at the University of California Berkeley and Army vet during the Vietnam era, the Northern California native didn't pick up the game until graduate school.

He started playing Berkeley's course simply because he loved the outdoors and had a passion for landscape design. But Don quickly "got hooked," as he puts

it, on the game and could often be seen riding his motorcycle to the local college course, carrying his clubs on his back.

Knott wound up landing an internship with the legendary Robert Trent Jones II (RTJ2) Golf Course Architects in Palo Alto, California. He quickly made his mark in the company and was hired on, eventually becoming RTJ2's Lead Project Architect and Senior Vice President of Design.

Don would then spend the next 26 years designing and helping to construct golf courses all over the world for the prestigious firm.

"The game is pretty traditional. It's been 18 holes for a long time," Don explains, shortly after returning from a trip to design another course in China. "Golf is still golf. People still hit the ball the same way as they always have. The key to all great courses isn't how much money they cost to build, it's that they fit into the natural landscape. A good golf course design makes it look like you haven't moved any dirt to make it, at least that's the goal."

### There has to be magic

Spanish Bay at Pebble Beach, The National Golf Club of Australia, The Prince Course in Kauai, Hawaii, Jug Mountain Ranch in McCall and the

White Clouds in Sun Valley are some of Don's most celebrated designs. He's also redesigned the highly acclaimed course at Stanford University, Seoul, Korea's Anyang Bnest Golf Club and the main course at Sun Valley.

**“The origins of the game are not based on scoring. The origins of golf are that it's an obstacle course through nature. You hit the ball and then you go see what your fate is.”**

**—Don Knott**

"It's hard to build a bad course on a great location," Don explains. "But there has to be magic to the location if it's going to be a truly special course. There's a reason Pebble Beach is so famous.

"Ideally, you get the combination of two things when building a course: a great location and a course that has great golf characteristics itself."

COURTESY JUG MOUNTAIN RANCH; COURTESY KNOTT & LINN GOLF DESIGN GROUP

As to just what “great golf characteristics” include, Knott recognizes that not everyone agrees. But the former President of the American Society of Golf Course Architects has found lots of success with his opinion on the matter.

“Of course, you have to have nice views. But there should also be a wee bit of mystery and intrigue,” Don explains. “The origins of the game are not based on scoring. The origins of golf are that it’s an obstacle course through nature. You hit the ball and then you go see what your fate is.”

### Idaho is just spectacular


“I still love the game and play when I can,” says Don, who left RTJ2 in 1999 to found the Knott & Linn Golf Design Group with fellow golf course designer, Gary Linn.

Based in Mountain View, California, Knott and Linn are still busy building courses across the globe despite the recent economic and development slump, which has put a halt to the construction of many new tracts in the U.S. and elsewhere.

“It’s not necessarily the best time to be a golf course designer. Most courses are built around housing, so when building new housing stops, so does golf course construction. But it is a good time to be a golfer. There are a lot of great deals out there right now,” Knott says. And one of Don’s favorite places to swing the sticks is Idaho.

“Jug Mountain Ranch in McCall is one of my favorite spots, and the 360° view you get at the courses in Sun Valley makes it a really special place,” says Knott, who travels to the Wood River Valley each Summer to play in the Danny Thompson Memorial.

“It’s one of my favorite states. The whole mountain scene in Idaho is just spectacular,” Don declares, professing the type of admiration for the Gem State that golfers all over the world have for his work.

There may be more than 28 million golfers in America alone, but there’s only one Don Knott, and players all over the country are certainly happy he made the cut as a golf course architect. 

# GEM STATE JEWELS

[IDAHO'S SIGNATURE HOLES]

by Mike McKenna

Legendary golf course designer Robert Trent Jones, Sr. is said to have coined the term "signature holes." The theory being that every course should have at least one hole that is its signature—a hole that's unique, beautiful and memorable.

And while it's often tough to choose a single hole that truly highlights a course, most courses have at least one such hole that is so visually stunning, challenging or distinct that the memory of it long stays with golfers and even gets played their in dreams.

Here we highlight an executive course's worth of Idaho's signature holes.

☛ Celebrating just its eighth season, it hasn't taken the Headwaters Golf Club at Teton Springs Resort in Victor very long to establish itself as one of the premier golf destinations in the Northwest."

## HEADWATERS GOLF CLUB

SIGNATURE HOLE: #10

YARDAGE: 170

PAR: 3

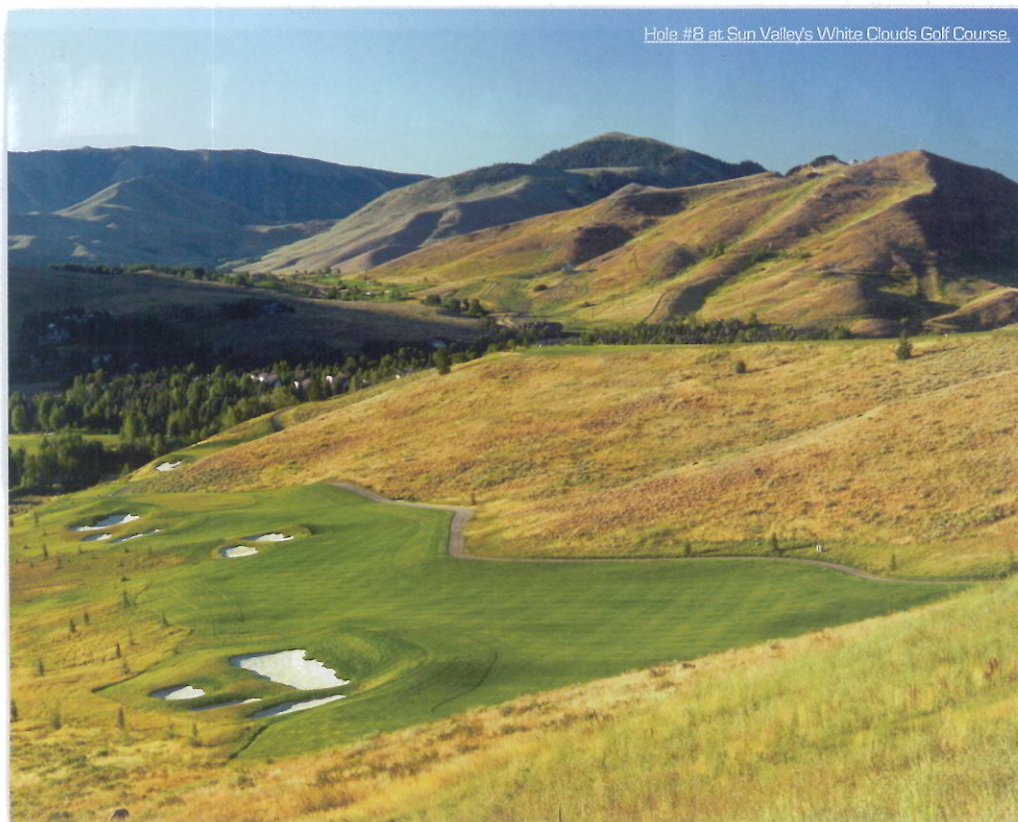
Celebrating just its eighth season, it hasn't taken the Headwaters Golf Club at Teton Springs Resort in Victor very long to establish itself as one of the premier golf destinations in the Northwest.

Considered a must-stop for golf enthusiasts visiting the greater Yellowstone National Park area, Headwaters was designed by Byron Nelson and is known for being both beautiful and challenging.

The signature hole at Headwaters is the 10th. With the foothills of the Palisade Mountains providing the backdrop, this relatively short hole provides plenty of challenge. Surrounded by water and sand and with the wind normally blowing across the



Hole # 10 at Headwaters Golf Club in Victor.



Hole #8 at Sun Valley's White Clouds Golf Course.

breath and aim at the flag, and you just might end up with a birdie putt on this beautiful par 3.”

For more information check out [www.ridgecrestgolf.com](http://www.ridgecrestgolf.com) or call 208.468.5888.

## WHITE CLOUDS GOLF COURSE

**SIGNATURE HOLE: #8**

**YARDAGE: 523**

**PAR: 4**

Offering some of the most stunning views found on any course on the planet, the White Clouds Golf Course in Sun Valley is known for its striking topography. The ridge-lined course overlooks the picturesque Wood River Valley, the White Cloud Mountains and the Ernest Hemingway Memorial.

Opened in 2008, the long, links-style course was designed by Don Knott and is considered challenging by

any standard, with several long Par 5s and undulating fairways that yield few, if any, flat stances.

The signature hole at White Clouds is the 8th. Standing on the tee-box nearly 300 feet above the fairway below, take note of the wind before teeing off. It's important to hit a solid drive on this long, downhill

par 4. Anything hit too far left makes it a near impossible up-and-down.

**ADVICE:** Jeff Peterson is White Clouds' Director of Golf: "The ball will stay in the air forever, but will need to favor the right side of the fairway due to a severely sloped fairway and bunkers on the left. The long second shot plays downhill and



Hole #7 at Centennial Golf Course in Nampa.

“Offering some of the most stunning views found on any course on the planet, the White Clouds Golf Course in Sun Valley is known for its striking topography.”

should also favor the right side of this large undulating green. Misses need to be short and right.”

For more information, check out [www.sunvalley.com](http://www.sunvalley.com) or call 208.622.2251.

## GENTENNIAL GOLF COURSE

**SIGNATURE HOLE: #7**

**YARDAGE: 144**

**PAR: 3**

Centennial is known for its affordable rates and quality conditions and also for its large fairways, elevation changes and challenging greens that require golfers to stay on their toes as they navigate the course. The front 9 offers a gentle layout of rolling fairways and a canal that crosses several holes.

The signature hole at Centennial is the 7th. A challenging par 3 where the golfer must drive from an elevated tee, over the canal, to a large green. If you choose the wrong club and swing too small a stick, you might land in the water hazard or the bunker protecting the front right of the green. If you take too much club,



Hole #6 at Jug Mountain Ranch in McCall.

you might carry the ball over the green forcing a very difficult chip shot back to a green sloping away from the player.

**ADVICE:** Jim Brown, Centennial's Director of Golf, recommends, "Pick the right club and take dead aim at the flag so you can hit it close and make birdie on this fun little hole."

For more information visit [www.centennialgolf.net](http://www.centennialgolf.net) or call 208.468.5889.

**JUG MTN. RANCH**  
**SIGNATURE HOLE: #16**  
**YARDAGE: 597**  
**PAR: 5**

Winding its way through wetlands, high desert and heavy forests, Jug Mountain Ranch in McCall is part of the Idaho Golf Trail and is considered one of the best bargain courses in the Gem State. In 2008, *Golf Digest* selected Jug Mountain as one of the nation's best public courses for under \$75.

Designed by Don Knott, who refers to it as an "alpine links-style course," Jug Mountain is known for its panoramic views of McCall's East Valley and its wide variety of tee boxes that offer something for every skill level.

The 16th hole is a long dogleg right and is lined by thick groves of trees on either side. Boulder Creek crosses the fairway and runs along the right side of the green.

**Advice:** Craig Collins is

Jug Mountain's Director of Golf, "The tee shot is played to a generous landing area with Jughandle Mountain as your backdrop. Distance and accuracy are required for placement of the second shot into the narrowing fairway. The approach to the long undulating green is very challenging with a bunker short left and a creek right of the putting surface."

For more information check out [www.jugmountainranch.com](http://www.jugmountainranch.com) or call 208.634.5072. ©



## Trade in a pristine carpet of white for a pristine carpet of green.

### *Spring Golf Package*

Course opening day through June 5, 2011.  
18 holes of golf, a cart and one night's lodging for *only*  
\$124 per person double occupancy (\$173 single  
occupancy).

The package may be booked for multiple days during this time period.

### *June Golf Package*

June 10 through June 30, 2011.  
18 holes of golf, a cart and one night's lodging for *only*  
\$152 per person double occupancy (\$219 single  
occupancy).

Some black out dates apply.

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