

COEUR D'ALENE, IDAHO: Golf Digest's biennial rankings of "America's 100 Greatest Golf Courses" has been the gold standard of awards since a postage stamp was five cents (back in 1962). This year marks a decade that The Golf Club at Black Rock made the prestigious fraternity. "It's an intensive evaluation," explained Shatana Pole, general manager at Black Rock. "Everything from shot values to resistance to scoring is critiqued."

The Golf Club at Black Rock is named for rugged outcroppings of black basalt that jut up throughout the property. Its steep crags, sunken marshes, and precipitous bluffs are eye-catching. Members have access to a private beach; a kids' camp; and the 31,000 square-foot clubhouse with a pool, spa, tennis courts, fitness center, and a 7,000 square-foot event center.

"Our members come from all around the country between May and September to escape the heat. Everything we do focuses on providing the finest in service without being overly pretentious. The summers are fairly dry, with little humidity, and we don't have to battle insects. With elevation at only 2,000 feet, you need not worry about thin air," advised Pole.

BEYOND GOLF

Earlier this year, the club purchased Black Rock Marina with 130 boat slips and Shooters Bar & Grill, providing members with easy access to Lake Coeur d'Alene and its 135 miles of shoreline.

"Our membership skews younger than many of our peers. Come Memorial Day [when Black Rock has its welcome back party] the golf course and lake are alive with activity," said Randee Goodwin, membership director. "Black Rock is in a strong financial position. The club is cash flow positive, debt free, and has increased its membership roster for each of the past eight years. With a strong balance sheet, the club continues to add amenities and services with an emphasis on the family dynamic. Black Rock is the ultimate playground. During the winter, access to five ski resorts is within easy reach, and during the summer, everything from sailing to horseback riding is at your fingertips. You will never run the risk of saying, or hearing, the words 'I'm bored.'"

For membership information and an additional peek at The Golf Club at Black Rock, visit BlackRockIdaho.com.

"NOTHING IS CONTRIVED. I already had long-range views, beautiful trees, and wonderful land contours to work with. The back nine is like an old vinyl album where you favor a cluster of songs. I feel that holes 10 through 14 are my favorite stretch of holes in my portfolio."— JIM ENGH, GOLF COURSE ARCHITECT