

# INSIDE BLUES

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## Whyte & White at the Wenatchee Convention Center

by Scott Higgin

What a way to open a concert series at the Wenatchee Convention Center. Robert Sandidge of R.L.S. Entertainment, with the help of co-sponsors The Rock's 106.7 Dave Keefer, Ben Wolk of Killer Kolor Big Prints and additional help from Blair and Jackie from Gold's Gym and the Wenatchee World's "Go," Sandidge brought to town two top acts, Ellen Whyte & Reflex Blue opening the show followed by the Charles White Band.

Ellen Whyte & Reflex Blue's debut release, "*Different Point of Blue*" won the (Portland, OR) Cascade Blues Association's award for "Best Album" and "Best Female Vocalist," and garnered nominations for "Best New Blues Band, and "Best Contemporary Blues Band."

So with great expectations I entered the Wenatchee Center. I immediately noticed what a great venue this was. A 600 capacity room, with large dance floor, and what looked to be a near sellout crowd. Ellen quickly filled the dance floor playing favorites from her CD "*Different Point Of Blue*" and from her new CD "*Here And Now.*" It wasn't long before she was down in the audience singing from table to table and getting the crowd fired up. This gal can just mesmerize an audience! The set ended with an encore and house full of blues fans worked into a frenzy. Would there be a drop off in energy during the intermission? No way!



The Charles White Band came out on burnin'. Charles took command and quickly showed why he won entertainer of the year from the W.B.S. Blistering guitar, great harp, John Savage and Bill Backstone on baritone and alto sax. Every musician in this seven member band is solid. The Charles White Band from Seattle, was recognized by both the Washington Blues Society (Entertainer of the year) and the Inland Empire Blues Society (1997 Best N.W Regional Album) for "*Not Easily Amused.*" A rare treat indeed to have him on the east side of the mountains because Charles entertains almost entirely in the Puget Sound area.

Both bands consistently give high energy polished shows and this was all that and more. Great music, great fun. From the size and reaction of the crowd I think blues has a future in the Wenatchee, Central Washington area...What dead zone?

Another class feature of this year's shows is the addition of Seattle based MotorBark Sound and Lighting to provide professional lighting and sound production. Want more information call Robert or Rio Sandidge from R.L.S. Entertainment Enterprises direct at (509)662-MUSC (6872) or for special low hotel "Concert Series Rates" call (800)57-APPLE.

P.S The last blues show in this series is Jan.30 with Too Slim & Taildragers and The King Biscuit Blues Band. Also If you happen to be in the Seattle area catch the Charles White Band at Larry's Geenfront in Pioneer Square. They play most Wednesday's and some weekends.

