

CD Scene: *The Whoreshoes*

The Whoreshoes Are Ringers

By Julia Park

That's a horseshoes joke, that headline – according to the official *Rules of Horseshoe Pitching for Masters* Web site, a ringer is when the shoe completely rings the stake, giving the player three points. Why the arcana? Because these gals with the name I can't spell out in front of my mama do indeed hit the spot.

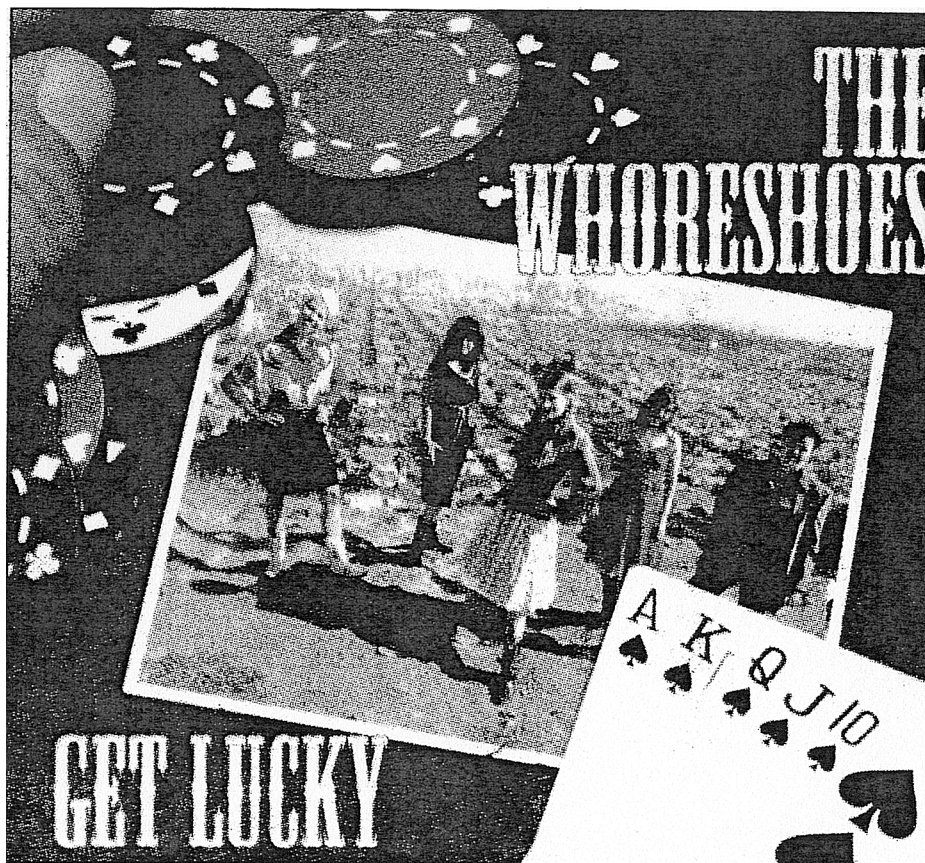
"The rules to horseshoe pitching vary according to country, area, town and even pub or fair. The following are the rules as understood to be generally played in North America where the game is most popular. These rules are comprehensive for friendly play." Why, heck, that could apply to these gals and their CD as well. A truer Americana-folk sound would be hard to find. You can practically smell the washtub and taste the corn cob pipe.

Their latest CD, *Get Lucky*, shows off these fine gals overlooking what at first glance appears to be a lettuce field, but another look shows it to be the suburbs of god-only-knows-where. It's a fitting reminder that despite the country-girl apparel and twangy sound, these women met in a North Beach (San Francisco) strip joint and do live in the here-and-now.

Call them many things, including Whoreshoes, but don't call them "contemporary country." The genre-sobriquet "sucks," according to pianist, washboard, spoons and ukelele player Camilla Lincoln in a recent *sfgate.com* interview. They'd much rather be known for what they do best – revive and reinvent the pure sounds that honest farm and working folk have sung for many a year, from the Dustbowl, hillbilly homestead, Ozarks or wherever.

The Whoreshoes are Joni on fiddle, accordion, mandolin, guitar, vocals; Camilla on piano, ukulele, spoons, washboard, banjo, vocals; Lala on lapsteel, banjo, guitar, vocals; Emily on guitar, mandolin, spoons, vocals; and Diana on bass, fiddle.

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Their songs hit all the customary notes, with a whiskey kick: "Well Dressed Honky Tonk M" is your typical country wailer, but take a double shot of "Cigarettes and Whiskey," the Scot traditional "Nancy Whiskey" (with *fabulous* penny whistle and spoons-a-rattling), "Drunken F day," and "Rye Whiskey." Not for the teetotaler, or Friend of Bill. "Orleans Parish Prison" gives you a jolt of zydeco, and off they go. Every song is a toe-tapper; every one makes you long for sim days, a hound dog, a porch rocker and a fat jug of moonshine to blow along.

Check the girlies out live onstage in San Francisco soon: Jan. 14 at Annie's Social Club, Jan. 15 at Mission Twang Night at *Amnesia*, and Feb. 2 at the San Francisco Bluegrass and Old Time Festival. (Details online at Myspace and the Web site.)

Visit them on Myspace at www.myspace.com/thewhoreshoes. They can be heard on the air at KALX (Berkeley), KALW (San Francisco) and www.ramradio.net and also on their site at www.thewhoreshoes.com. 🎵