



## Rocky Point Golf Course ~ Memories Are Made Of This

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For many of us who have been playing this game for a long time, there are special courses that tug at the heart strings and bring back some wonderful memories. One such course for me is Rocky Point Golf Course. Many great times have been spent with both family and friends at this somewhat unheralded golf course. I say that because it seems Rocky Point never has received the accolades it deserves. Sure, it gets a nice three-and-one-half star rating from *Golf Digest* and is one of the stalwarts of the Baltimore County Revenue Authority golf contingent. But I've always felt that Rocky Point is one of the best municipal courses in the entire mid-Atlantic. Some of the views around this classic layout are keepsake worthy.



Designed by legendary Eastern golf architect Russell Roberts, Rocky Point opened in 1971 on the shores of the Back River where it meets the Chesapeake Bay in Essex. The four sets of tees range from 5370 for the ladies to 6683 yards from the blue tees. Every golfer who has played Rocky Point will tell you without hesitation that the course plays much longer than the advertised yardage. Gentle elevation

changes add extra distance to many of the posted numbers. Plus, you are basically playing at sea level which means your ball will not travel as far. Rocky Point has wide, inviting bluegrass fairways with the exception of a couple of short par 4's which Roberts has on each side. Large Bent/Poanna grass greens have subtle breaks in them for the most part.

The front nine at Rocky Point opens with a medium length par 4. Two fairway bunkers to the left are part of several that were added to the course six years ago. The green, like many on the outward side, has a nice opening that accepts bump and run shots. The second is also a par four playing in the opposite direction of the first, and at 425 yards from the back tees, it's a brute with its uphill terrain. After another of the three par 4's that gets you going at Rocky Point, you play the recognizable par 3 that is found at the facility's entrance. Hole five is a good par 5 where water comes into play down the left side as you approach the green. A fairway wood should set you up well on the short, but delightful par 4 sixth. Two bunkers frame the par 3 seventh where anything long will lead to a bogey or worse. One reoccurrence that I



seem to encounter on each trip to Rocky Point is how playing well on the par 4's leads to a decent overall score. Par is always a relic on the eighth, a tough par 4 that swings uphill after your drive. The ninth is similar, but about 60 yards shorter from the tee.

The back nine at Rocky Point winds through aged hardwoods and features scenic views of the Chesapeake, so try, as hard as it may be, to concentrate on the task at hand. The dogleg right par 4 tenth ends at a green with a water-scape backdrop. It's just beautiful! The par 3 eleventh is the hole in most golfer's retention bank. It is a signature, short par three with the bay to your right and river behind a large receptive green. The first of three par 5's on the inward nine is twelve, where a solid drive to the top of the dogleg gives you the chance to get home. Thirteen is one of this writer's favorites. Your second shot on this par 4 is to a green surrounded by four bunkers. Additional water views are thrown in as a bonus. After the long par 3 fourteenth, you face a rare treat in golf. Back-to-back par 5's are both under 500 yards but as different as night and day. Fifteen doglegs to the right and has an elevated green with water fronting the green. Most heroic shots going for the green in two that come up short roll back into the water. Sixteen is straightaway, slightly downhill and is an excellent scoring hole with two rough and tumble par 4's to close. Both seventeen and eighteen play with Rocky Point's reminiscent uphill glide, so take an extra club on your approaches. The later parallels number eight, and are considered the two toughest holes on the course.



My memories at Rocky Point include several charity outings in which I had the opportunity to participate. That still holds true today with the course playing a popular host for many events. A large pavilion makes for an perfect after-round landing spot with breathtaking views of the Chesapeake. Any trip around the links at Rocky Point Golf Course is a cherished souvenir that I always flash back on with much glee and joy. 🏌️

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