

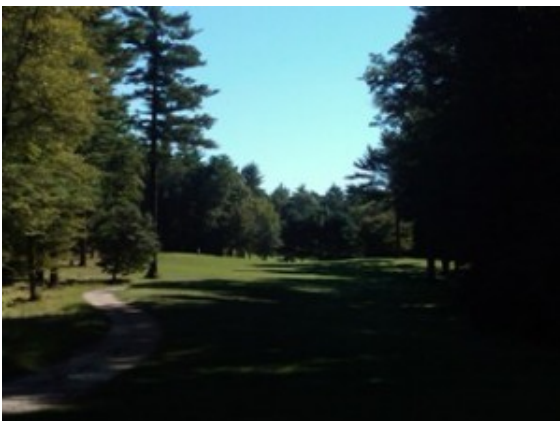
Rochester Golf Course



By
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Nestled among the cranberry bogs and tilled soil lining the country roads of Rochester lies the Rochester Golf Course. Less than a 20 minute drive from downtown New Bedford, this local gem is one of the best golf deals in the area. The Rochester Golf Course is a reminder of what a golf course can be when it's done right. It's not the biggest course around, or the newest. It succeeds because it has what other courses do not: A unique character that matches not only the town it occupies, but the people who golf there.

The Rochester Golf Course was opened in 1969 by co-owners and course architects Humphrey Tallman and Cliff Chase. After more than 40 years, the Tallman's are still involved with the daily operations of the course. Humphrey's son Stu is the superintendent, while Stu's son Alden is the assistant superintendent.



A view from the 3rd tee.

The course itself consists of 18 holes measuring 5,300 yards

from the blue tees, with par being 69. Many golfers playing here for the first time look at the yardage and see a par under 70, and feel like they are in for an easy round. I have played many times with people who think they will overpower the course because it is short. At the end of their round, they are left with that deer-in-the-headlights look when their score doesn't add up to the one they had envisioned. The lesson they learn is one that any new visitor to RGC will learn: What the course lacks in length, it makes up with a personality.

Trees line most of the holes and squeeze the fairways, making tee shots more difficult. Add to that the water or sand elements scattered throughout the grounds and you're left with some truly challenging holes. Even on holes with open fairways, the shots seem claustrophobic. By the time you reach the 3rd green, you realize how precise you need to be with your shots, especially your irons. Driver is not always the best choice off the tee, making players use all the clubs in their bag. Big hitters cannot depend on bombing one down the fairway, and this alters the way many people play. Shot planning is also essential, because there are many areas on many holes that just aren't conducive to scoring well.



The putting green at Rochester Golf Course.

The greens here, a mix of poa annua and bentgrass, are some of the smallest around, and they are always kept in great shape.

While the greens can be on the slow side, your ball will always roll smooth and true. The size and speed of the greens put an extra emphasis on a golfer's short game. It is not always easy to land iron shots and wedges on the green, because there isn't much square footage there. When you do, however, you are rewarded by the ball staying there(for the most part), because even though the greens are small, they are receptive as well. RGC defends itself well because it makes golfers depend on their short game, which is a problem area for most.

If you haven't been to the Rochester Golf Course recently, there have been some changes to the course. The first, and most shocking change was made to the 6th hole by a bolt of lightning. Chunks of tree as big as refrigerators were found over 80-yards away, scattered throughout the woods. The tree happened to be only one in the fairway. What was once a hole with an obstacle down the right side is now wide open, making your tee shot much easier.

Also, the 10th green was totally redone, changing a small, relatively flat green to a one that can have putts with multiple breaks, depending on pin location.

Changes like these, along with other subtle changes(retaining walls, steps up to the tee box,etc.) are made annually, further enhancing the charm and appeal of the course. The course is constantly improving and giving golfers more, even though the price has gone up just \$1 in the last 6 years.



The wind turbine, which helps power RGC.

RGC is also a very 'green' golf course. The most obvious example of this is the giant wind turbine located between holes 12 and 13. It harvests wind energy, creating electricity to power their carts and pump houses (and saving them thousands of dollars in the process). Recycling is done weekly, and not just for redemption. They also collect all the plastic bottles and paper waste on the course and dispose of it properly.

All these reasons, along with many others, make Rochester Golf Course an ideal place to play golf. Southeastern Massachusetts has many golf options, but RGC is a unique experience. Most courses are better played from a golf cart; at Rochester, it is better to walk. Many courses have a hole they can point to as a 'signature hole,' but Rochester has so many unique holes that it's hard to choose just one.

You can visit the new website for Rochester Golf Course, and you can also find them on Facebook.

For my money, there is no better place to play golf in the area.

Rates:



Wayward tee shots are punished at RGC.

Weekdays

- \$15/9 holes
- \$25/18 holes

Weekends & Holidays

- \$16/9 holes
- \$27/18 holes

Carts

- \$10/9 holes
- \$20/18 holes

*Share a cart for half price. For example, two people sharing a cart for 18 holes would cost \$10 per person.

Season Pass

- \$400 for 20 18-hole rounds, a savings of \$100.
- \$240 for 20 9-hole rounds, a savings of \$60.

Lessons

PGA Golf Professional: Rusty Gunnarson

Call clubhouse to schedule a lesson (508.763.5155)