



Clustered Spires Golf Club ~ Fan Favorite

Nick Ciattei

Staying at the top doesn't always come easy. Professional athletes and teams strive for it each season. For a golf course to stay at the pinnacle, it requires an incredible amount of consistency, which is rather difficult to obtain when you think about all the intricacies that go into putting out a great product year after year. So, for a golf course to be voted head of the class 17 out of 20 years, that would be something, wouldn't it? Well, Clustered Spires Golf Club in Frederick Maryland did just that being voted as "Best of Frederick" golf course by readers of *Frederick Magazine*. Clustered Spires took the honor again this year with a whole lot of heavy competition in the area.



Hole 1 Par 4

Clustered Spires Golf Club opened in 1991 as, believe it or not, the first public golf course in Frederick County. This amazes me considering that courses now number in double digits and population growth has vaulted the city of Frederick to become the second largest in the Free State. Located on what was once a dairy farm (remnants of the old barn still remain adjacent to hole #10), Clustered Spires flows

gracefully across 185 acres nearly void of distractions. The sound of the Monocacy River, which surrounds the layout on three sides, may be the only disturbance you hear. Ault, Clark and Associates designed a wonderful layout. Contracted by the city to create a first class championship golf course, the architectural team hit a proverbial Frederick Keys home run here. Golfers have fun and enjoy this course from the regular, senior, and forward tees but also appreciate this challenging, competitive course that reaches over 6900 yards from the tips. While the routing makes it easy to walk, you don't feel like the holes are on top of each other since maturing trees provide natural boundaries.

I felt that the course played a bit longer than the advertised yardages because you face many uphill approach shots. Right out of the gate, you have one at the first hole. Since the fairway is wider than it looks from the tee, favor the right side to avoid the water. The par 3 second is remembered for the red barn/maintenance building that serves as the backdrop. You will find most of the trouble to the right on the par 5 third.



Hole 9 Par 4

The modest, straight par 4 fourth plays to a deep green. Five, a gentle dogleg left par 5 and one my favorites on the front side at Clustered Spires, runs along the exterior property line. Look for trouble down the right side, and the fairway gets narrow

with two large pines down the left side closer to the green. A large pond sits just left of the putting surface on the par 4 sixth. Avoid the large bunker located greenside left on the par 3 seventh. As far as difficulty, both holes eighth and nine rank as the toughest par 4s on the outward nine. The former has the course's deepest green, which is also two-tiered, while the latter remains solid from start to finish.

The back side opens with a par 5 that normally requires three shots for most mortals. Several distinctive par 4s highlight this nine starting with the eleventh. Ponds border both sides of the fairway and a deep pot bunker sits right in the middle of the green's entrance. A testy dogleg right par 4 follows. Thirteen, the shortest par 3 on the course, plays to a hefty green surrounded by three traps. Encounter another par 4 at fourteen before traversing a terrific set of closing holes. Enjoy the sounds of the flowing river adjacent to the fifteenth, the only blind tee shot on the course. Navigate your second shot on this wonderful par 5 between the bunkers and trees for your best approach to a kidney shaped green. Sixteen, the last of the 3 pars and also the longest at over 200 yards, plays from an elevated tee. Two par 4s, the postcard-worthy seventeenth and the daunting 470-yard finisher, wrap things up.

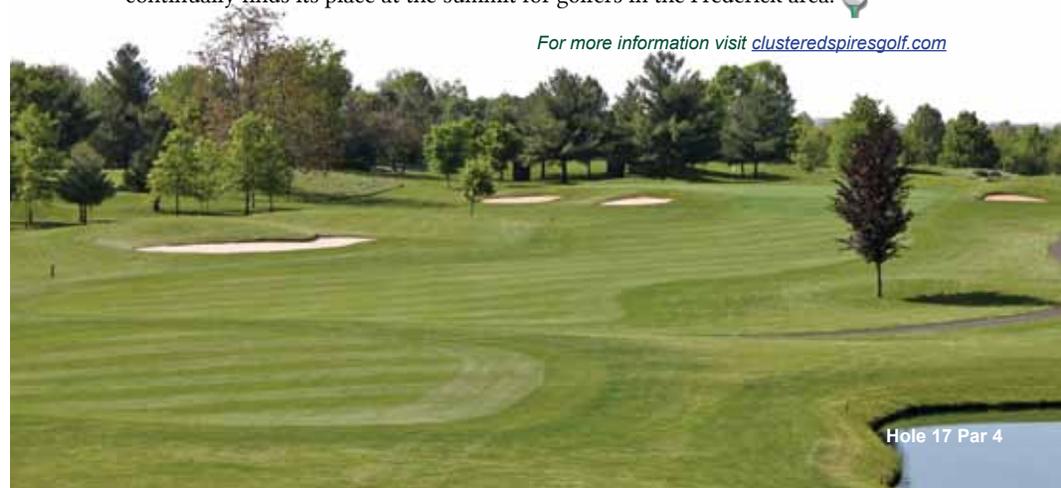


Hole 14 Par 4

Clustered Spires received its name from the grouping of 5 very old and distinct church steeples that decorate Frederick City's skyline. The superintendent at Clustered Spires, William Springirth, needs to be commended for rolling out country club conditions on one of the best valued public golf courses in Maryland. An annual tradition at the course, the Frederick City Amateur Championship, now observes its 24th year. It will be held on August 27th and 28th. Clustered Spires has one of the best practice facilities in the entire region. So if your game is a little rusty, you will not find a better place to work out the kinks. They also offer a discount range program to assist you with your practice.

As you can see, it should not come as a surprise that Clustered Spires Golf Club continually finds its place at the summit for golfers in the Frederick area.

For more information visit clusteredspiresgolf.com



Hole 17 Par 4

