

# UNIQUE & WORTHY

AUTUMN AT THE PAR-4 11TH AT WORTHINGTON MANOR

It's not a mountain course, although clearly it plays to mountain views and occasionally offers a mountain feel – like on the drop-shot par-3 17th with a forced carry over a deep ravine. And it's clearly not a parkland course, even though the par-3 sixth plays almost perfectly flat over a beautiful blue yet antagonistic pond.

It's hard to characterize Worthington Manor Golf Club. Perhaps it's that Jekyll and Hyde persona where you never quite know what comes next that established the course just two minutes off Interstate 270 as one of the Middle Atlantic's finest when it opened almost 20 years ago and has kept it there.

Head pro and general manager Ed Coyle has kept an even hand on the keel since the doors opened. Last year, Kirk Walburton came on as the head superintendent and has done wonders with the conditions at the course in Urbana, Maryland.

The layout has changed little, a testimony to how good the Brian Ault design was when it opened. Even regulars have barely noticed the minor tweaks to bunkers and fescue waste areas.

One thing you won't find at Worthington Manor is straightness. Aside from the par 3s, almost every hole moves elegantly in one direction or the other. Ault did a masterful job cutting fairways, greens and bunkers

into the movement of the terrain, creating a succession of holes that never require an awkward shot from a hanging fairway lie. Keep the ball in the fairway and you always have a good chance. However, off the fairway or in one of Ault's artistically shaped bunkers, well, that's another story.

That's not to say some fairway shots aren't extremely challenging. The par 3s are all stomach-churning shots. The par 5s can be reachable, although your second shot will always require a touch of daring. And just arriving on the green doesn't assure par. Fast and pure, putting at Worthington Manor requires a delicate touch.

These days in public golf in the Middle Atlantic

players rarely come across a course that combines great conditions with a great layout and outstanding service. That's what makes this place unique and worthy. ■

## MINDING THE MANOR [www.worthingtonmanor.com](http://www.worthingtonmanor.com)

**Need to know:** Black tee: 7,034 yards (74.7 / 145); Blue tee: 6,525 yards (72.4 / 137); White tee: 6,058 yards (70.0 / 132); Red tee: 5,206 yards (70.1 / 127). **Worthington & the USGA:** Worthington Manor is the only Maryland club to host each of the USGA men's qualifiers: U.S. Open (1999, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015); U.S. Amateur Four-Ball (2015); U.S. Senior Amateur (2013); U.S. Mid-Amateur (2012); U.S. Public Links (2010); U.S. Amateur (2001, 2002, 2008); U.S. Senior Open (2007).