

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



Region Wins Big as Sports and Conference Schedule Grows in 2015

RACVB Announces 13 First-Time and Returning Events that will bring \$2.6 Million in Economic Impact to the Region

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 19, 2015

ROCKFORD, IL — The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau announced on Thursday the addition of 11 sports tournaments and two special events that will take place in the Rockford Region in 2015 and 2016. Collectively, participants, coaches and fans that travel to the region for the tournaments will impact the region to an estimated tune of \$2.6 million during their stays.

These 13 events make up just a small fraction of the expected economic impact from anticipated events booked in 2015 by the RACVB. **In 2014, there were 300 total events booked, resulting in 102,721 room nights and an estimated economic impact of \$16,122,000.**

"Announcing these 13 Big Wins is a great way to kick-off the RACVB activities for 2015," RACVB President and CEO John Groh said. "What we are really excited about is the diversity of these events and that we have secured several new events for the region to go along with our long-term partner events such as this weekend's IHSA Girls State Bowling Finals, now in its 23rd year in Rockford."

The announcement was made at the Flodin Boys & Girls Club in Rockford, which will host the 2015 National Collegiate Table Tennis Association Midwest Regional Championships this weekend, Feb. 20-21.

Groh highlighted first-class facilities, local partner agencies and exceptional customer service as the main reasons that tournament and conference directors continue to choose Rockford as their destination.

Rugby Illinois Secretary Adrienne Cortes said, "Rugby Illinois is excited to return to Rockford over Memorial Day weekend for the Middle School and High School State Rugby Championships. The Rockford Park District and Rockford Ravens Rugby Club were most helpful last year when we brought the State Championships to Rockford for the first time in making sure that the event ran smoothly. Also, we appreciate the help and support the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau gave to us in planning the Championships."

Groh noted that visitors help to fuel the regional economy during their stays by not just experiencing the tournaments and events that they are attending, but by also staying in hotels, shopping at local stores and dining at the region's restaurants.

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13 BIG WINS LINE-UP

IHSA Girls State Bowling Finals

Date: Feb. 20-22

Location: Cherry Bowl, Cherry Valley, IL

Attendance: 740 bowlers will compete this year.

Economic Impact: Estimated 500 room nights and \$100,000 EEI

Note: This is the 23rd year the bowling finals have been held in the Rockford region.

2015 National Collegiate Table Tennis Midwest Regional Championships

Date: Feb. 21-22

Location: Flodin Boys and Girls Club, Rockford, IL

Attendance: Players from 14 states totaling 24 teams and featuring more than 160 athletes will participate.

Economic Impact: Estimated 450 room nights and \$81,000 EEI

Quote NCTTA Midwest Region Administrator Kevin Li said, "NCTTA is honored to name Rockford, Illinois the site of one of our feature competition, the Midwest Regional Championships, which will feature Olympic level table tennis from some of the best players in the country."

Ultimate Frisbee Chicago Invite 2015

Date: March 27-29, 2015

Location: Sportscore One and Sportscore Two in Rockford and Loves Park, IL

Attendance: 150-plus teams expected with a total of 5,000 players, fans and guests attending.

Economic Impact: Estimated 1525 Room Nights and \$274,500 EEI

Note: The tournament is run by Luke and Kelly Johnson, natives of Illinois who both share a passion for Ultimate Frisbee. It is the largest Ultimate Frisbee tournament in the United States.

Quote: Tournament Director Luke Johnson said, "The Chicago Invite Ultimate Frisbee Tournament will enter its eighth year this March, but for the first time will move away from the Chicago area to Rockford, IL. The move comes as Rockford's Sportscore One and Two facilities continue to be the premiere location for Ultimate Frisbee events. Over 150 ultimate teams in 6 divisions will play for 3 days of competition, crowning champions in the College Men, College Women, High School Boys, High School Girls, U16 Mixed, and U13 Mixed age groups."

2015 Rugby Illinois High School and Middle School State Championships

Date: May 24-25

Location: Sportscore Two, Loves Park, IL

Note: This is the second straight year RACVB and the Rockford Park District were selected to host the event for Rugby Illinois.

Attendance: Approximately 30 high school teams, 10 middle school teams from the throughout the state. In addition to the players, more than 2,000 spectators are expected.

Economic Impact: Estimated 250 room nights and \$45,000 EEI

Quote: Adrienne Cortes, Rugby Illinois Secretary, said, "Rugby Illinois is excited to return to Rockford over Memorial Day weekend for the Middle School and High School State Rugby Championships. The Rockford Park District and Rockford Ravens Rugby Club were most helpful last year when we brought the State Championships to Rockford for the first time in making sure that the event ran smoothly. Also, we appreciate the help and support the Rockford Area Convention and Visitors Bureau gave to us in planning the Championships."

2015 National Softball Association North B State Championships

Date: June 26-28, 2015

Location: Sportscore One in Rockford, IL (Rockton Athletic Fields will be used if necessary)

Attendance: 60 teams expected and approximately 2,500 players, fans and guests total.

Economic Impact: Estimated 1425 Room Nights and \$256,500 EEI

Quote: NSA Illinois State Director Bob Biehl said, "I've always had a great experience in Rockford during past events, and it's again an excellent time to host the NSA state tournament here in the Forest City."

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2015 Midwest Challenge Cup

Date: June 27-28, 2015

Location: Sportscore Two, Loves Park, IL

Note: This is the first time that the Rockford Region will host this event.

Attendance: Nearly 500 players making up 20-24 teams will participate in the event.

Economic Impact: Estimated 650 room nights and \$117,000 EEI

Quote: Rugby Illinois Secretary Adrienne Cortes said, "Rugby Illinois considers Rockford to be an ideal location to attract high performance teams from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa and Indiana to participate. We have already received a commitment from Michigan that their teams will attend, and we look to attract teams from Missouri, Kentucky, Ohio, Nebraska, Texas, Florida, and California."

Note: The USA Rugby event is a hot-bed of great talent as scouts will be on hand to select players for the elite USA Rugby Stars v Stripes Camp. This is a U19 showcase on the USA Rugby High Performance Player Pathway.

American Amateur Baseball Congress Willie Mays 10U World Series

Date: July 1- August 5, 2015

Location: Carlson Boys and Girls Club and Boys and Girls Club Baseball Complex at Lawn Drive.

Attendance: 16 teams from around the country with more than 1,000 players, fans and guests expected.

Economic Impact: Estimated 1,175 room nights and \$211,500 EEI

Note: The tournament was previously held in Puerto Rico for the past 20 years. Rockford last hosted the Willie Mays tournament in 1981. The Rockford Boys and Girls Club has a 35 year relationship with AABC.

US Youth Soccer 2015 Olympic Development Program (ODP) Region II Showcase and ID (Identification) Camps

Date: July 9-16, 2015

Location: Sportscore Two, Loves Park, IL

Attendance: Showcase will feature 140 teams with 2,520 players, Development Camp will feature 393 players, and ID Camps will feature 540 players.

Economic Impact: Estimated 2,700 room nights and \$337,500 EEI

Quote: Jen Fickett, US Youth Soccer Region II Administrator, said, "We chose to return to Rockford for our 2015 events because both Sportscore Two and the RACVB have been great to work with, and Rockford is a central location for our 14 states."

Note: Region II pulls players from 14 Midwestern states for this event. This event is a great showcase for athletes ranging in age from 12-17 years old. Many college coaches and scouts are on-hand.

2015 Midwestern Open Lacrosse Championships (Elite Tournaments LLC)

Date: July 18-19, 2015

Location: Sportscore Two in Loves Park, IL

Attendance: More than 2,500 players, fans and guests are expected to participate.

Economic Impact: Estimated 1250 Room Nights and \$225,000 EEI

Quote: Elite Tournaments, LLC, Owner Scott Price said, "Elite Tournaments chose the Rockford area because of its central location to teams from throughout Illinois and the Midwest. Sportscore Two meets the requirements that we have for all of our events, which include top amenities, close proximity to restaurants and hotels, first class fields, ample parking, and a strong parks department to partner with."

USSSA (United States Specialty Sports Association) Girls Fast pitch 14u "B" World Series

Date: July 28- 31, 2015

Location: Sportscore One (Additional fields TBA)

Attendance: 60 teams will be featured with more than 900 athletes participating July 28-31. For June 19-21, there will be 80 teams and 1,200 athletes, and July 3-5 there will be 80 teams and 1,200 athletes.

Economic Impact: Estimated 2,500 room nights and \$387,000 for July 28-31 / Estimated 540 room nights and \$129,600 EEI for June 19-21 / Estimated 540 room nights and \$129,600 EEI for July 3-5.

Note: Rockford has hosted different age groups for USSSA Fast Pitch World Series since 2009. In addition to the Girls Fast pitch 14u, USSSA also will host two other state tournaments in Rockford this summer. The USSSA 12u "B" and the 13u "B" tournament will be June 19-21, and the USSSA 14u "A", 16u "A", 14u "B" and 16u "B" will be July 3-5.

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Illinois Rural Water Association – Northern Conference 2015

Date: October 25-27, 2015

Location: Giovanni's Convention Center

Attendance: Approximately 150 attendees from around the state

Economic Impact: Estimated 265 room nights and \$34,715 EEI

Quote: Membership Services Coordinator Heather McLeod said, "We have hosted our Northern Conference in Rockford for 7 out of the past 10 years. Rockford has proven to be a great place to hold our conferences, because it is more centrally located for our attendees, and there are plenty of options for food and nightlife activities nearby for everyone after our conference closes down for the day. I am looking forward to returning to Rockford in the fall to host our 11th Northern Conference!"

Note: The conference returns to Rockford for the first time since 2010.

2016 National Dart Association (NDA) Regional Tournament

Date: Jan. 8-10, 2016

Location: Clock Tower Resort, Rockford, IL

Participants: 250 regional players.

Economic Impact: Estimated 450 room nights and \$81,000 EEI.

Quote: Kim Paugh (NDA Membership Services and Development Kim Paugh said, "NDA is excited to bring a soft-tip electronic dart tournament to Rockford, IL, January 8-10, 2016. Rockford offers a convenient and affordable tournament location for our members and players, and we hope to have a record turn-out for this event. NDA Regional Tournaments provide a fun and affordable experience for players of all ages, and NDA tournaments have more winners than any other tournament of this size."

American Motors Owners Association 2016 International Convention

Date: July 25 – August 1, 2016,

Location: TBA throughout the city

Attendance: 400 cars from around the world will be showcased.

Economic Impact: Estimated 1,400 room nights and \$184,055 EEI

Note: All the cars features are the AMC brand such as the Gremlin and the Pacer. Many of the cars were manufactured in Kenosha, WI.

RACVB is a private, non-profit organization established in 1984 to champion efforts to promote the Rockford Region as an overnight visitor destination. The RACVB adds wealth to the region's economy by investing in marketing programs that grow tourism. gorockford.com

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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