

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



1,500 Athletes Coming to Downtown Rockford for Illinois Kids Wrestling Tournament

Tournament visitors to spend an estimated \$350,000 while in Rockford

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 10, 2015

ROCKFORD, IL — The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is pleased to host the Illinois Kids Wrestling Federation (IKWF) state tournament at the BMO Harris Bank Center from March 12-14, 2015. This is the 13th consecutive year the IKWF tournament will take place in Rockford, making Rockford the longest-running host of this youth wrestling state competition.

"It is an honor to welcome the IKWF organization, wrestlers, their families and friends back to the Rockford region. Our community and industry partners are committed to providing our visitors with a venue, customer support and overall experience that exceeds their expectations," said John Groh, RACVB President & CEO. "As a leading sports tournament destination in the Midwest, we understand tournament directors have options and appreciate that they continue to say yes to Rockford."

Over 1,000 top wrestlers in Illinois, boys and girls, ages 10-14 will compete for championship accolades in the tournament. This three day event draws nearly 1,500 athletes and coaches who are projected to spend an estimated \$350,000 while visiting Rockford. The RACVB is co-sponsor and orchestrates the Opening Ceremony and Color Guard presentation.

"We're glad to be partnering with the RACVB, City of Rockford and BMO Harris Bank Center as we host another successful IKWF tournament in the Rockford region. The venue and high level of customer service we've received have been key in accommodating the thousands of wrestlers, families and friends visiting for the weekend," states Gene Lee, IKWF Vice President. "Rockford has exactly what we're looking for in a host city."

New This Year: Hospitality Ambassadors will be assisting visitors on Friday, March 13

RACVB staff, community partners and volunteers will circulate throughout downtown Rockford on Friday from 2:30 – 4 p.m. handing out information sheets, maps and coupons that will help visitors get around with ease. This team of Rockford Ambassadors will answer questions guests may have and recommend where to eat, stay and play throughout the region. They will be on foot at various locations near the BMO Harris Bank Center.

Traffic and Parking Advisory

All downtown businesses and commuters are advised that traffic will be heavy for a short time the morning of Friday, March 13 as visitors arrive for the tournament's opening ceremonies. RACVB is collaborating with the City of Rockford and the BMO Harris Bank Center to help direct traffic and minimize delays for both commuters and visitors.

Parking will also be impacted by the tournament. All city lots and on-street parking will operate according to the posted time restrictions and daily rates (parking fees may apply to some lots and decks). For visitors, suggested parking locations available throughout the three-day tournament include the Pioneer Deck across from the Coronado (on North Main Street), the Hinshaw & Culbertson lot (on the corner of North Wyman Street and West Jefferson Street) and the YMCA south lot on Y Blvd. A map is available at GoRockford.com that includes information on shuttle service, directions and a full list of parking lots available for each day of the tournament.

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Itinerary

Thursday, March 12th

4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Weigh-in at BMO Harris Bank Center

Friday, March 13th

Session I

8:00 a.m.

Grand March with Parade of Wrestlers

8:15 a.m.

Color Guard Performance

8:25 a.m.

Welcome Presentations

8:40 a.m.

National Anthem

9:00 a.m.

Championship Preliminary Round

12:00 p.m. (approx.)

Championship First Round

Session II

5:15 p.m.

Jim Didi Coach of the Year Presentation

5:30 p.m.

Championship Quarterfinal Round

6:00 p.m.

Consolation Preliminary Round

7:30 p.m. (approx.)

Consolation First Round

Saturday, March 14th

Session III

8:00 a.m.

Championship Semifinal and Consolation Quarterfinal Rounds

9:45 a.m. (approx.)

Consolation Semifinal Round

Session IV

3:00 p.m.

Place Bouts (3rd, 5th, and 7th)

5:00 p.m. (approx.)

Parade of Finalists

5:30 p.m. (approx.)

Championship Bouts (2 mats on platform)

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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