

# NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



## Elite Youth Rugby Competitors to Converge in the Rockford Region

*Teams from across the United States visiting; six divisions, 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 23, 2016

**ROCKFORD, IL** — The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (RACVB) welcomes top-notch youth rugby competition back to the region when it hosts the **2016 Midwest Challenge Cup** from June 24-26, 2016. This is the second consecutive year the tournament will take place at Mercy Sportscore 2 in Loves Park, IL. The Rockford region is one of five official 2016 RCT locations across the nation, a showcase series endorsed by USA Rugby as the pathway to collegiate rugby play, college recruitment and exposure, and selection to the high school All-America Teams.

Approximately 24 teams featuring 500 total players will compete in this prestigious event, generating an estimate economic impact of \$99,000. Teams from across the US will compete in six different divisions: boys and girls varsity (11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>), boys and girls junior varsity (9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>), and boys and girls middle school seniors (7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>).

"The Midwest Challenge Cup is a monumental event as elite players are scouted and drafted to national youth teams. Our state-of-the-art fields at Mercy Sportscore 2 and the accommodations we provide as a leading sports destination contribute to the overall success of each of the athletes and the tournament as a whole," said Nick Povalitis, Sports Destination and Sales Manager.

All teams will compete in two matches each day, up to the maximum of 90 minutes per day, according to World Rugby regulations. On Sunday, the champion and runner-up from each division will be awarded a trophy, and each player will be awarded medals. The Midwest Challenge Cup is open to all youth teams who wish to compete.

"Rugby Illinois has worked closely with the Rockford Park District and the Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau on both the RCT and their state finals and would like to thank both organizations for their help in putting on these events. The facilities at Mercy Sportscore 2 are fantastic and the number of fields allows us to run multiple games at the same time," said John Baderman, 2016 Midwest Challenge Cup tournament director. "The staff at Mercy Sportscore 2, led by Scott Pilkerton, has been a major factor in the smooth planning, set up and running of Rugby Illinois' tournaments the last three years. Every detail has been taken care of with a friendly and helpful attitude. Nothing is ever too much trouble: just what's needed when running big events like this."

For more information about this event please visit <http://www.usarugby.org/rct/>.

*RACVB exists to drive quality of life and economic growth for the citizens of Rockford and Winnebago County through tourism marketing and destination development. [gorockford.com](http://gorockford.com)*

###

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Andrea Mandala, Marketing & Communications Manager: 815.489.1664/  
[amandala@gorockford.com](mailto:amandala@gorockford.com)