

# NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



## Play Big, Win Big

*Sports tournaments collectively generate an estimated economic impact of \$985,500*

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 9, 2017

**ROCKFORD, IL** — The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau celebrates a 15-year partnership with the Illinois Kids Wrestling Federation (IKWF) as the tournament kicks off today. In addition, RACVB announces four additional Big Wins booked for 2017 and 2018 – America’s Table Tennis Team Championships, American Amateur Baseball Congress (AABC) World Series, North American Fast Pitch Association (NAFA) Masters East World Series and the 2018 USA Ultimate Division III College Championships. Collectively, participants, coaches and fans who travel to the region for the new tournaments will impact the region to an estimated tune of **\$733,500** during their stays.

Rockford is the longest-running host of the **IKWF youth wrestling state competition** which is once again taking place at the **BMO Harris Bank Center** from **March 10-11, 2017**. Approximately **1,000 top wrestlers** in Illinois, boys and girls, ages 10-14 will compete for championship accolades in the tournament. This three-day event is projected to generate an estimated **\$252,000** while visiting Rockford. Tournament details and a schedule of events can be found at <http://www.ikwf.org/stateinfo.php>.

“This weekend we will have been here for 15 great years. The folks at the RACVB and The BMO Harris Bank Center/RAVE have been awesome to work with and the City of Rockford has been nothing but supportive of our event,” said Gene Lee, IKWF vice president and IKWF State Championships tournament manager. “I wouldn’t be surprised if we are here another 15 years.”

In addition, the four “Big Wins” tournaments are already projecting the next two years to be monumental championship event years as the RACVB continues to establish new and existing relationships with top sports tournament professionals in the industry.

“It’s a very exciting time for our community as we continue to raise our game and bring an impressive lineup of elite sports tournaments to our region. Our proven track record for booking world-class tournaments and events is a result of a strategic sales and marketing formula built for success,” said Lindsay Arellano, director of sales & servicing. “The RACVB team, along with our community partners, sets goals and then finds ways to surpass them. There’s no limit to what we can achieve, especially when we’re doing it together.”

“The Rockford Park District is thrilled to be selected as the host facilities for these tournaments. Over the last few years we’ve been working to set ourselves apart from others by expanding and enhancing our world class amateur sports facilities. Today’s announcement is a big win for the Reclaiming First initiative and another step forward in making the Rockford region the amateur sports destination of the Midwest,” said Louis Mateus, General Manager of Mercyhealth Sportscore Complexes.

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The Big Wins will utilize the community's many sports venues including; Mercyhealth Sportscore One, Mercyhealth Sportscore Two, the UW Health Sports Factory and the BMO Harris Bank Center.

## **SPORTS TOURNAMENT LINE-UP**

### **America's Table Tennis Team Championships**

**Date:** May 25-28, 2017

**Location:** UW Health Sports Factory, Rockford, IL

**Attendance:** 200 competitors will participate this year.

**Economic Impact:** Estimated 425 room nights and \$76,500 Estimated Economic Impact

**Quote:** "We are extremely happy to bring this tournament back to Rockford, IL, where it belongs. It's also going to be great to work with the RACVB, USA Table Tennis and the Rockford community once again to host this premier event in the region," said Ed Hogshead, ATC founder and tournament director.

### **American Amateur Baseball Congress (AABC) World Series ([www.aabc.us](http://www.aabc.us))**

**Date:** July 21-26, 2017 (9U World Series), July 28-August 2, 2017 (10U & 11U World Series) and August 4-9, 2017 (13U World Series)

**Location:** Mercyhealth Sportscore Two, Loves Park, IL

**Attendance:** 5,000 players, coaches and spectators

**Economic Impact:** 3,000 room nights and \$360,000 Estimated Economic Impact

### **North American Fast Pitch Association (NAFA) Masters Midwest World Series ([www.nafafastpitch.com](http://www.nafafastpitch.com))**

**Date:** September 8-10, 2017

**Location:** Mercyhealth Sportscore One, Rockford, IL

**Attendance:** 700 players ranging in age from 35–75 will be visiting from as far as Alabama, California, New York and Canada. Many Hall of Fame players will participate.

**Economic Impact:** 300 room nights, \$135,000 Estimated Economic Impact

### **2018 USA Ultimate Division III College Championships ([www.usultimate.org/college](http://www.usultimate.org/college))**

**Date:** May 17-20, 2018

**Locations:** Mercyhealth Sportscore Two, Loves Park, IL

**Attendance:** 700 players representing 32 teams and 1,850 spectators

**Economic Impact:** 850 room nights, \$162,000 Estimated Economic Impact

**Quote:** "Rockford has proven to be an exceptional host with first rate facilities and a dedicated staff at the RACVB and Rockford Park District. Rockford is uniquely situated between some of the biggest ultimate communities in the Midwest," said Byron Hicks, USA Ultimate manager of events. "We are looking forward to a great tournament weekend in 2018."

***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)***

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