

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



Rockford Region Scores Winning Bid to Host Illinois Sports Tradeshow

Sports Facilities, Hotels to be Showcased to Potential New Customers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 21, 2017

Rockford, IL - The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (RACVB) announces that the Rockford region has been selected to host the 2018 **Sports Illinois Huddle**. This is the first time the tradeshow will take place in the Rockford region. RACVB submitted the bid to host the conference, which will draw attendees from around the United States to the region **Sunday, May 20 – Tuesday, May 22, 2018** (a complete schedule of events and itinerary will be provided closer to the event date).

Sport Illinois Huddle is an educational conference/tradeshow produced by the Illinois Council of Convention & Visitor Bureau's **Sports Illinois** (a consortium of Illinois-based CVBs working in the sports tourism market). The tradeshow is attended by representatives of national governing bodies, event rights holders and tournament directors who take part in the two-day conference to connect with representatives from approximately 15 Illinois CVBs.

While the event is hosted to introduce the many exceptional facilities available within the state of Illinois for tournaments and events of all sizes, hosting the event directly in the Rockford region will allow RACVB the opportunity to introduce local sports tournament facilities to a large contingent of potential new customers. "Seeing really is believing," said Lindsay Arellano, RACVB director of sales and service. "We have high expectations that getting these important decision makers to the Rockford region will result in a significant number of new client events booked in to our region."

During the event, attendees will visit Mercyhealth Sportscore One and Two, the UW Health Sports Factory, as well as other public and private facilities. The host hotel for Sports Illinois Huddle is the Radisson Hotel & Conference Center. Other communities/regions that have hosted this conference include DuPage County, Chicago Northwest, Lisle, Chicago Southland and the Quad Cities.

"It was thrilling to hear the news that we won the bid to host the 2018 Sports Huddle. Our team is already in planning mode to ensure this is truly an incredible experience for a core group of key sports tournament decision makers," said Arellano. "Together with our hospitality partners, we are honored to have the opportunity to showcase our community to these visitors. It will be a team effort by all and we appreciate the dedication from our partners who are so instrumental in making events like this possible."

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Through its efforts and programs, the Illinois Council of Convention & Visitors Bureaus (ICCVB) enables its members to be more effective and efficient in attracting visitors to their communities. Sports Illinois members meet several times per year to discuss strategic ways to engage and attract local, regional and nationally recognized tournaments and events to Illinois through their combined sports tourism outreach and marketing efforts.

“On behalf of the Illinois Council of Convention & Visitors Bureaus and Sports Illinois leadership team, it is truly an honor to choose the Rockford Area CVB to host the Sports Illinois Huddle 2018. As a national leader in the sports travel industry, they will do an excellent job in bringing in national rights holders in many different sports to engage with the participating CVB’s from around the state of Illinois,” said Jayne DeLuce, Visit Champaign County president/CEO and Sports Illinois liaison. “The choice was tough, as there were several competitive host bids, which further shows our statewide commitment in making Illinois the top destination for sports tournaments, meetings and conferences, further creating economic impact for our communities.”

Sports Illinois is a niche committee of the Illinois Council of Convention & Visitors Bureaus and works closely with the Illinois Office of Tourism, focusing on promoting overnight sports events through direct marketing, education programs and networking activities, therefore creating a significant economic impact and enhancing opportunities for all in sports.

The mission of the RACVB is to drive quality of life and economic growth for our citizens through tourism marketing and destination development. www.gorockford.com

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