

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



RACVB Announces Table Tennis Celebrity Smash, Family Festival, and Rec-Pong Tournament in Celebration of 2019 North American Olympic Table Tennis Trials in Rockford

Events take place throughout the city Sept. 5-Oct. 5

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 29, 2019

Rockford, IL – Today, the Rockford Area Convention and Visitors Bureau announced several community events in support of Rockford's first-ever Olympic Trials – the 2019 International Table Tennis Federation North American Olympic Table Tennis Trials to be held at the BMO Harris Bank Center on October 5, 2019.

With the Trials fast approaching, the RACVB has coordinated **three premier events** for residents, visitors, fans of table tennis and all interested in the Olympic movement. Events include the **RKFD Loop bar league** set for **Thursdays in September**, **City Market Celebrity Smash** on **September 20**, and **Rally RKFD, presented by Northwest Bank**, downtown street festival **October 5**.

"These events not only show our support of sports history in Rockford, they also show support for the men and women of Team USA who will be vying for a spot in the 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympic Games," said RACVB Director of Sports Development, Nick Povalitis. "We're excited to host such a large-scale event and are proud to say the road to Tokyo goes through Rockford!"

RKFD Loop

The RKFD Loop is a four-stop **recreational table tennis tournament that will crown the 2019 RKFD Rec-Pong Champion**. The qualifying series will take place for four weeks in September, with one tournament per week on Thursdays at area bars and sports pubs. Entry is free with draws limited to a maximum of 16 players per location. Players can register onsite at each participating bar. The four qualifier winners will advance to play in a Final Four city championship tournament on Saturday, October 5 with the semifinals (2:30 p.m.) and finals (6:30 p.m.) at the BMO Harris Bank Center, the site of the Olympic Trials.

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RKFD Loop Dates and Locations (Tournament play begins each night at 7 p.m.)

- Sept. 5 – Hope and Anchor
- Sept. 12 – Casey's Pub
- Sept. 19 – Olympic Tavern
- Sept. 26 – District Bar & Grill

Free giveaways will be provided at each stop. Qualifier winners will win four free tickets to the 2019 ITTF North American Olympic Table Tennis Trials and will play on the floor at BMO Harris Bank Center on October 5. The 2019 RKFD Loop Rec-Pong Champion will receive a trophy and other surprises.

CITY MARKET CELEBRITY SMASH

Join us at the City Market on Friday, September 20 for the City Market Celebrity Smash, an event that will feature eight of Rockford's biggest local celebrities competing for bragging rights and city supremacy. First serve is at 5:30 p.m. at the Indoor City Market, adjacent to the outdoor City Market space.

The RACVB will also be onsite with surprise giveaways for fans and spectators throughout the night.

RALLY RKFD, presented by Northwest Bank

RALLY RKFD is Rockford's official FREE all-ages pre-Trials festival taking place on Saturday, October 5. Gates open at 11 a.m. on Main Street between Mulberry and Elm Streets. The festival will include food and beverages, music, table tennis, bounce houses and a ceremonial ping pong ball drop at the intersection of State and Main.

The ping pong ball drop is open for community participation. Individual ping pong balls may be purchased for \$5, and a five-pack for \$20. Balls can be purchased online at www.RockfordOlympicTrials.com, or in person at the RACVB or the BMO Harris Bank Center box office **Tuesday, September 3**. The dropped balls closest to the target will win cash prizes of \$500 for first place, \$250 for second and \$100 for third. All net proceeds of RALLY RKFD benefit RACVB's Charitable Foundation.

Festival gates will close at 3 p.m., paving the way for the community to rally to the BMO Harris Bank Center for the 2019 ITTF North American Olympic Table Tennis Trials.

The RACVB, BMO Harris Bank Center and ITTF North America welcome all regional residents to become part of the city's sports history by attending the Olympic Trials and supporting Team USA. For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit: www.RockfordOlympicTrials.com. All-day passes or single session passes (3 p.m. or 7 p.m.) are available for purchase.

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About RACVB: RACVB is responsible for promoting the Rockford region as an attractive travel destination and enhancing its public image as a dynamic place to live and work. Through the impact of travel, RACVB strengthens the economic position of the region and provide opportunities for people in our communities. www.gorockford.com

The International Table Tennis Federation is the governing body for all national table tennis associations. The ITTF oversees rules and regulations and seeks technological improvement for the sport of table tennis. The ITTF is responsible for the organization of numerous international competitions, including the World Table Tennis Championships that has continued since 1926.

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