

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



Puri Cup Kicks Off Two Mega Tournament Weekends in the Rockford Region

Both weekends to bring in over \$5 million of estimated economic

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 1, 2022

ROCKFORD, IL — The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (RACVB) welcomes the Rockford Raptors Soccer Club's Puri Cup back to the Rockford region. The **Puri Cup College Showcase** will take place **Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 1-3**. The **Puri Champions Cup** will take place **Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 8-10**. The multi-weekend tournaments will be played at **Mercyhealth Sportscore One and Mercyhealth Sportscore Two**. "We are always thrilled to host this popular soccer tournament and are looking forward to players, coaches, and guests utilizing two outstanding sports facilities. Soccer is a big part of so many families' lives, and has tremendous physical, emotional, and mental benefits along with teaching valuable life skills," said Louis Mateus, General Manager of Mercyhealth Sportscore Complexes.

The Puri Cup College Showcase includes **235 teams representing 8U-19U year old athletes** in boys' and girls' divisions. The high level of competition attracts college coaches to scout and recruit players. The Puri Champions Cup the following weekend is a competition for **350 teams representing mid to lower-level boys' and girls' teams in the U8-U19 age range**. These combined tournaments include teams traveling from across the Midwest. The combined Puri Cup tournament weekends make it the largest soccer tournament, and one of the largest sports tournaments, held in the Rockford region with an **estimated economic impact of \$5.2 million**

"We are extremely grateful to once again host this event. We want to thank all of our partners that make this event possible and all of the participating teams," said Frank Mateus, Rockford Raptors FC executive director and co-founder. "We would also like to thank our Raptors families for their continued support and hard work as well as the Rockford Park District and the RACVB. We would not be able to host an amazing event without those two organizations working behind the scenes to support this event. A lot of credit also goes out to Rockford area businesses and the community for making these outside teams feel so welcomed and excited about being back in the community."

There will be **two National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division 1** games during the Puri Champions Cup College Showcase free of charge.

- Saturday, April 2
 - 1:00 p.m. Valparaiso University vs. UW-Green Bay (Women's)
- Sunday, April 3
 - 3:00 p.m. Loyola Chicago University vs Northern Illinois University (Women's)

(More)

Additionally, during the first weekend the local Rockford Raptors team will play in the Elite Clubs National League (ECNL), a top-tier performance level which includes the Minnesota Thunder and Eclipse soccer clubs.

“Puri Cup is the largest soccer tournament held in the Rockford region and one that I love to attend each year. There are players traveling here from across the Midwest to compete and it’s always full of action-packed excitement during both tournament weekends,” said Lindsay Arellano, RACVB vice president of sales and servicing. “Speaking of excitement, it’s always great to see this large event directly impact our community as they patronize our local businesses and sell out several area hotels. A true win all the way around for the Rockford region.”

Additional information related to the tournament can be found at www.rockfordraptors.org. Admission is free for spectators.

***Rockford Raptors FC** is a Puma Premier Soccer Club located in Rockford, Illinois. This club was established in 1994 as one professional team in the former USISL (now called USL, a second division league below MLS) with the help of Dr. Wedgbury. The sole purpose was to create quality soccer training opportunities for Rockford’s youth. It is also responsible for providing \$70,000 in scholarships and financial aid for players and provides recreational leagues for more than 2,000 kids annually.*

***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*

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