

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



IKWF, RACVB Win Bid to Host First-Ever USA Wrestling Nationals in Rockford Region

2022-23 16U National Dual Championships Set for Indoor Sports Center

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 6, 2022

ROCKFORD, IL — In partnership with USA Wrestling, the national governing body of wrestling in the United States, and the Illinois Kids Wrestling Federation (IKWF), the Rockford Convention & Visitors Bureau (RACVB) is thrilled to announce the region's winning bid to host the **2022-23 USA Wrestling 16U National Dual Championships**. Set for June 7-11, 2022, and June 6-10, 2023 at Indoor Sports Center at Mercyhealth Sportscore Two in Loves Park, this marks the first-time that USA Wrestling will host a national event in the Rockford region.

The event, which features 15- and 16-year old boys competing on state association dual meet teams, will be co-hosted by **IKWF and RACVB**.

"USA Wrestling is pleased to bring one of its most popular age-group competitions, the 16U National Duals, to the Rockford community. The IKWF is a true leader within USA Wrestling, and will do a fantastic job as part of the host organizers. The Indoor Sports Center at Mercyhealth Sportscore Two is a fantastic facility, and we look forward to partnering with The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau for the next two years," said **Pete Isais, USA Wrestling National Events Director**.

The event will feature competition in the two Olympic styles of wrestling, freestyle and Greco-Roman. With athletes, coaches and families combined, the 16U National Duals are expected to draw more than 4,000 total visitors to the region each year. Over the two-year commitment, **tourism economic impact is projected to total more than \$3.1 million[^]** for the region thanks to visitor spends in transportation, retail, food and beverage, lodging, recreation, business services and space rental segments—yielding **\$133,847[^]** in additional local tax revenue.

"The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is thrilled to partner with USA Wrestling and the Illinois Kids Wrestling Federation for the 2022 and 2023 16U National Duals. We are, of course, ecstatic to help deliver a memorable experience for thousands of visitors to the Indoor Sports Center at Mercyhealth Sportscore Two. Because of IKWF's decades-long commitment to Rockford, RACVB is able to position the region as a destination for prestigious national events. We appreciate IKWF's loyalty to Rockford and know they will do an outstanding job as the 16U Nationals operations lead," said **Lindsay Arellano**, RACVB vice president of sales and service.

This 16U National Duals, previously called the Cadet National Duals, was created in 2000 in Pueblo, CO. Illinois becomes only the seventh state to host this competition, and **Loves Park is only the 10th host city**.

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“We are excited to welcome wrestlers to the facility for the first time and provide an outstanding experience to each athlete and their family,” said **Louis Mateus**, General Manager of Mercyhealth Sportscore Complexes. “The Indoor Sports Center at Mercyhealth Sportscore Two is a versatile venue, and Field 3 is the perfect location for such a prestigious sporting event.”

The athletes who compete in this event are traditionally among the best in the nation. Over the years, athletes who have wrestled in the 16U National Duals have gone on to excel at the high school, college and international levels.

16U NATIONAL DUALS HOST CITIES **(previously Cadet National Duals)**

2000 – Pueblo, CO
2001 – Englewood, CO
2002 – Greeley, CO
2003 – Greeley, CO
2004 – Greeley, CO
2005 – Kansas City, MO
2006 – Kansas City, MO
2007 – Kansas City, MO
2008 – Kansas City, MO
2009 – Rochester, MN
2010 – Rochester, MN
2011 – Daytona Beach, FL
2012 – Daytona Beach, FL
2013 – Daytona Beach, FL
2014 – Daytona Beach, FL
2015 – York, PA
2016 – York, PA
2017 – York, PA
2018 – Spokane, WA
2019 – Spokane, WA
2020 – Loves Park, IL (rescheduled due to Covid-19 mitigations)
2021 – Loves Park, IL (rescheduled due to Covid-19 mitigations)
2022 – Loves Park, IL
2023 – Loves Park, IL

For additional event details and a schedule visit <https://usawrestlingevents.com/event/2200115502>.

^ **Source:** Destinations International Economic Impact Calculator, Tourism Economics – An Oxford Economics Company

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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