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ALBANY COUNTY TO HOST 2023 PICKLEBALL, QUADBALL EVENTS SECURED BY ALBANY COUNTY SPORTS COMMISSION

Albany County's non-traditional sports travel market continues to expand and grow

ALBANY, N.Y. (Nov. 17, 2022) – Albany County's sports travel market for hosting non-traditional sports will continue to grow as Pickleball and Quadball events are planned for 2023 and beyond. The events were recently pursued by Discover Albany, Albany County's visitors and tourism bureau that has been named to manage the Albany County Sports Commission.

'Around the Post Pickleball,' a tournament organizer, selected Albany County for the inaugural Martin Luther King Jr. weekend Pickleball Tournament in January 2023. The organization committed to a two-year arrangement, planning to host their tournament at the Albany Capital Center beginning in 2023. The three-day holiday tournament will attract 150 athletes and officials and is expected to generate over \$167,000 in direct visitor spending. Invested in making this a long-term success for the region, Around the Post Pickleball Founder Scott Green will be hosting instructional clinics at the Capital Center from Nov. 20 to 21 to prepare for the tournament.

Quadball, once more commonly known as "Quidditch," will also be making its way into Albany County due to the strong local interest combined with Albany's regional allure of like-minded clubs and players. Quadball is a game built on principles of creating safe, inclusive and respectful communities while striving to be a leader in gender and racial inclusivity for all age groups. These events will be held at Afrims Sports Complex in Colonie, providing a facility to allow the sport to continue to grow.

"The Sports Commission designation makes the discussions with sporting event planners easier. We begin our conversations on the right page because planners know our destination understands the nuances and wrinkles of their process." said Jay Cloutier, sports commissioner and director of sales, Discover Albany. "The specialty sports like Pickleball and Quadball are fun to work with because as a close-knit destination, our partners are receptive to new events and the planners are anxious to tell their story and showcase their athletes and their competitions."

"We created the Albany County Sports Commission in April of this year to build upon the sporting events we consistently welcome to the MVP Arena and our County's many sports assets," said Albany County Executive Daniel P. McCoy. "These competitions already generate significant economic benefits for our County and in order to build on our success we need someone leading this organization who is thinking



outside of the box and looking to the future. I'm excited to have a proven leader like Jay at the helm as our Sports Commissioner who will build on our strengths and also target growing markets like pickle ball and synchronized skating that will only add to the enthusiasm of our Capital Region's athletes and fans."

Albany County has historically served as a destination for traditional sports like basketball, soccer and baseball, many of which have local event rights holders with wide regional and national draw. The non-traditional sports travel market grew significantly with the Eastern Synchronized Skating Sectional Championships held in Albany in 2020. The January 2020 event was the hosted for the first time in Albany at the MVP Arena and generated \$4.1 million in direct visitor spending over the four days of competition.

Non-traditional sporting events are often more flexible with dates and more easily supported with Albany County's complimentary destination services, in-kind support, and less reliant on financial incentives. Regional and National competition from other destinations for hosting privileges of mainstream events has driven demands for cash support and more desirable dates that could otherwise be successful.

For more information on the Albany County Sports Commission, visit albany.org/sports/rfp.

For more about Discover Albany, visit albany.org.

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About Discover Albany. *The Albany County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc. was established in 1976 to promote the civic and commercial progress of the community through increased development of conventions and tourism. Today, the organization is known as Discover Albany. Discover Albany currently represents more than 300 member businesses and assists each year in hundreds of regional meetings. Discover Albany also operates the Discover Albany Visitors Center and the Albany International Airport Information Center. The Albany County Convention and Visitors Bureau Foundation was established in 1993 to provide educational opportunities and work with other organizations to secure grants and funding to advance regional travel and tourism projects. For more information, call 518-434-1217 or 800-258-3582 or visit www.albany.org.*

